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**CHANGING PERCEPTIONS, CHANGING
INTERESTS: A CONSTRUCTIVIST ANALYSIS
OF TURKISH – GREEK RELATIONS
1999-2010**

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1. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

2. The program of advanced study of which this thesis is part has consisted of:

- i) Research Methods course during the undergraduate study
- ii) Examination of several thesis guides of particular universities both in Turkey and abroad as well as a professional book on this subject.

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ABSTRACT**Bahadır ÇELEBİ****January 2012****CHANGING PERCEPTIONS, CHANGING IDEAS: A CONSTRUCTIVIST
ANALYSIS OF TURKISH GREEK RELATIONS 1999-2010**

The thesis aims to explain the changes in Turkish Greek relations since 1999 from the perspective of social constructivist theory of international politics. The thesis argues that constructivism explains the change in Greek Turkish relations better than rationalist theories of neo-realism and neo-liberalism, although rationalist theories have advantages in explaining the tension and rivalry. The thesis concludes that the relations between the two countries have reached to the point that the possibility of emergence of a war between two countries is much less likely and that both countries behave more conciliatory in their relations against each other compared to the past.

Key Words:

Turkish-Greek relations, détente, constructivism, identity, change.

KISA ÖZET**Bahadır ÇELEBİ****Ocak 2012****DEĞİŞEN ALGILAR, DEĞİŞEN ÇIKARLAR: TÜRKİYE YUNANİSTAN
İLİŞKİLERİNİN İNŞAACI ANALİZİ 1999-2010**

Bu tezin amacı Türk Yunan ilişkilerinde 1999 yılından beri yaşanan değişimleri inşaacı uluslararası ilişkiler teorisi bağlamında açıklamaktır. Tezin iki ana argümanı vardır: her ne kadar neorealist ve neoliberal rasyonalist teoriler devletlerarası çatışma ve rekabeti daha iyi açıklıyor olsalar da, inşaacı teori, rasyonalist geleneksel teorilere kıyasla, uluslararası politikadaki değişimleri açıklamada daha üstün bir yaklaşımdır ve Türk Yunan ilişkilerindeki değişim, inşaacı yaklaşımın perspektifiyle daha iyi anlaşılabilir. Tezin ulaştığı sonuç, Türk Yunan ilişkilerinin ulaştığı noktada iki ülkenin savaşma olasılığının daha önceki dönemlerle karşılaştırıldığında daha düşük olduğu ve bu ülkelerin birbirlerine karşı davranışlarında daha uzlaşmacı bir tavır sergiledikleridir.

Anahtar Kelimeler:

Türk Yunan ilişkileri, yumuşama, inşaacı teori, kimlik, değişim.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UN	United Nations
EU	European Union
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
AKUT	Search and Rescue Association
EMAK	Greek Rescue Team
LOS	Law of the Sea
CBM	Confidence Building Measures

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Turkey and Greece are two national enemies since Greeks gained their independence from Ottoman Empire in the 19th century and Turkish Independence War in 1922 although there were some short-lived and temporary detente processes between two countries. The national identities of Turkey and Greece have been shaped by a strong sense of enmity due to the events that were traumatic for both countries: Greeks' independence from the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century and the Turkish War of Independence in 1922. Perceptions of enmity have been reproduced by discourse and interactions between the two countries. A long-lasting image of Greeks in the minds of the Turkish people has been a 'traitor' while Greeks have long viewed the Turks as 'savages' and 'barbarians'. These images have been supported and reproduced by politicians, the press, leaders, and the education systems of Turkey and Greece (e.g. the history textbooks). Because of the mutually constructed self-other identities, the relations between the two countries have also turned into a zero-sum game, within which both Turkey and Greece viewed the other with suspicion and mistrust.

The rivalry and an imminent war between the two countries has always been on the agenda even though both Turkey and Greece were in the

Western alliance system against the threat of communism and both became the NATO members in 1952. The military spending of both countries have always been high in comparison to their economic size among the other NATO members even after the 1980's because of this rivalry.¹ The Cyprus issue and the Aegean problems always caused tensions and they even came to the brink of war almost for every ten years. To sum up, both countries' relations have been the most characteristic of the Hobbesian culture.

This began to change after 1999. The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem and his Greek counterpart Yorgo Papandreou have played a prominent role in the reconciliation process between the two countries. The effects of the earthquakes that hit both Turkey and Greece respectively contributed much to the development of empathy between the two societies and helped to form a peaceful atmosphere which developed in the context of good neighborhood relations. The aid teams of both countries helped each other during the earthquakes. The media and the public opinion also supported this positive atmosphere. Turkey's bid for European Union membership has also helped the detente process between Greece and Turkey by serving as a platform for Turkey to construct its identity along with the European collective identity. As the norms and values of European Union began to be institutionalized in Turkey, Turkey began to evaluate her

¹ Christos Kollias, "The Greek Turkish Rapprochement, the Underlying Military Tension and Greek Defense Spending", *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):106 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente."

relations with Greece in the lines with this new perspective. The bilateral relations improved in all areas; politics, economics, tourism, and cultural exchange. Some problems began to be taken as less of a threat to the national interests of each of these countries, such as Greece's skepticism to Turkey's European Union membership, and its treatment of the Turkish minority in the northern part of Greece. Turkey even lifted its decision that Greece's unilateral extension of its territorial waters would be taken as "casus belli" (reason for war) in 2010. All of these recent developments since 1999 have brought the two countries to the point they have never reached before. Although the enduring problems of Cyprus and Aegean have not been resolved yet and damage the reconciliation process, one can no longer speak of a Hobbesian culture as the main context of Turkish-Greek relations. This thesis has two arguments: the recent transformation of the relations between Turkey and Greece as outlined above cannot be adequately explained with the traditional mainstream rationalist theories of international relations and that the constructivist theory provides us with a better explanatory venue for analyzing the changes there occurred since 1999.

The rationalist theories of neo-realism and neo-liberalism focus on the material reasons behind the issues in international politics.² They analyze from the perspective of static state-centric understanding, which does not accept the process of state identity and interests construction as a part of

² For the rest of the thesis, the rationalist theories refer to neo-realism and neo-liberalism.

analysis. They regard interests of the states as a given and exogenous to the interactions between states. As such they do not include the ideational and non-material factors as part of their analyses, mainly, ideas, values, norms, and identities, the change in which can explain changes in state interests and behavior. For these reasons, the rationalist theories cannot sufficiently explain change in international politics although they are more able to explain the status quo.³ On the other hand, constructivism which has become one of the mainstream theories since the end of the 1980's has more analytical tools for shedding light on the changes in the international politics. Constructivism does not take the interests of the states as given; instead, it focuses on how these interests are formed by intersubjectively constructed identities and norms. It does not ignore the role of ideational factors in international politics and use a sociological point of view in explaining inter-state and inter-societal relations. Moreover, constructivism also looks at the issues from not only international and state level but also the domestic level. Hence, the advantages of constructivism in explaining change in international politics present an opportunity to account for the recent developments and changes in Turkish Greek relations since 1999.

The structure of the thesis is as follows: I first start giving a historical background. Here I focus on the main controversial issues and a short-lived

³ Rey Koslowski and Friedrich V. Kratochwil, "Understanding Change in International Politics: The Soviet Empire's Demise and The International System," *International Organization* 48 (Spring 1994): 215-216.

détente process. The controversial issues are crucial to understand the seriousness and the depth of enmity between the two countries, while a focus on the détente process is important in order to show that even under such difficult circumstances the two countries *could* initiate a process that resulted in more conciliatory and friendly relations. In the third chapter, I summarize the general characteristics of constructivism by resorting to the main scholars of the constructivist theory of international politics. I discuss different kinds of constructivism since it is not a unified theory but a combination of different constructivist perspectives. In the fourth and the last chapter, I analyze the developments between the two countries starting from 1999 to 2010. In the first part of the last chapter, I discuss the weaknesses of the rationalist theories in explaining the transformation in the relations between Greece and Turkey. In the second part, I turn to the Wendtian perspective to analyze the developments. Alexander Wendt's conventional constructivism helps understanding the change from a state-level perspective.

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TURKISH GREEK RELATIONS: HOW HAVE THE RELATIONS CHANGED?

The traditional Turkish-Greek animosity has some historic roots, which has shaped the identities of Turkish and Greek people and states. In this chapter, I will not discuss the details of the history of the relations between Turkey and Greece in a strictly followed chronological order. Instead, I will focus on the historical turning points and crucial cases, which influenced the identity formation of both nations and reflect the main characteristic of the relations between the two countries in each period. The historical background is important in terms of its impact on the dichotomous formation of Turkish and Greek identities as a positive self and hostile other and it is also important for explaining how the context of enmity emerged in the course of history. In addition, when we look at the history of the relations of Turkey and Greece, we can both understand the significance of the changes the relations have undergone especially after 1999 and realize the importance of the transformations in the mutual perceptions of Turkish and Greek people of each other and also the behaviors of both states. In what follows I will briefly discuss the Greek War of Independence, Turkish-Greek War and the

emergence of modern Turkey, the detente process during the 1930's between Kemal Ataturk and Venizelos, the Cyprus issue, the Davos process between Turgut Ozal and Andreas Papandreou in late 1980's. I will later focus on the developments after 1999 in order to show the transformation in the relations between the two countries. I will first discuss the capture of the leader of PKK, Abdullah Ocalan and the earthquakes that hit the both countries. I will later turn to the Turkish state's decision that Greek claim of 12 miles in the Aegean Sea is not counted as "casus belli" and that Greece is not a prominent threat to Turkey anymore.

2.1. The Greek War of Independence as a Traumatic Event for the Ottoman Empire

Today's modern Greece territory was under the Ottoman control for more than 400 years. Its territory is the closest to Istanbul and the Greek and Turkish people have been living together since the Turkish people conquered the Anatolia. Although they have been living together in such a long time, ironically, this shared history makes them apart instead of unify them.⁴ With the conquest of Istanbul, Ottomans protected the rights of Orthodox Greeks as minority in Istanbul and accepted the Orthodox patriarchate as the formal representative of the Greek community. Since that time the Orthodox Greeks

⁴ Ahmet o. Evin, "Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: An Assessment of the post-Earthquake Rapprochement" *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):5 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente"

have been the most important non-Muslim minority in the Ottoman Empire. For these reasons, the Greek uprising and independence left a huge trace in the minds of Ottoman Turkish administrators.⁵ Gaining independence also had an enormous impact on the Greek national identity. They called the Ottoman rule that they removed after eight years of struggle in the war of independence as "Tourkokratia", a word that refers to repressive dominance.⁶

The revolt led to a traumatic disappointment in Ottoman Empire. Significant amounts of documents in the Ottoman archives⁷ pertinent to the Greek revolt and independence have shown the importance of Greece in terms of Ottoman administrators and their perceptions. Although there were some other revolts against the Ottoman Empire, such as the Serbian and Albanian revolts, the Greek revolt resulted in the emergence of an independent Greece, which was the first nation who gained the status of fully independence from Ottoman Empire. Ottomans, for the first time encountered intensively with the new concepts, which were brought about by the French Revolution and the Enlightenment, such as nation, citizen,

⁵ Hakan Erdem, "Do Not Think of Greek as Agricultural Labourers" in *Citizenship and the Nation State in Greece and Turkey*, ed. Faruk Birtek and Thalia Dragonas, 67 (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).

⁶ Ahmet o. Evin, "Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: An Assessment of the post-Earthquake Rapprochement" *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):4 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente."

⁷ Hakan Erdem, "Do Not Think of Greek as Agricultural Labourers" in *Citizenship and the Nation State in Greece and Turkey*, ed. Faruk Birtek and Thalia Dragonas, 67 (London and New York: Routledge, 2005). Ten percent of over 50,000 catalogue entries in only one the Hatt-ı Humayun (imperial decrees) classification is related to Greek War of Independence.

republic, freedom or nationalism during the Greek War of Independence and started using these concepts in their languages and also in their documents.⁸ Greeks were named as traitors who breached the dhimma pact between the Greeks and the Ottoman Empire which regulated the relations between the Islamic state and the non-Muslim minority.⁹ On the other hand, the Greek nation state formation is based on the War of Independence and they describe the four hundred years of the Ottoman rule as the standstill of the life of Hellenistic culture.¹⁰ The Greek War of Independence and the process after that is also important in terms of understanding the Greek aim of unifying all Greeks:

...the founders of the independent Greek state focused on instilling a strong sense of national identity, not only in the subjects of the new independent state but also in the Greek peoples throughout the Ottoman Empire. It was during the debates leading to the promulgation of 1844 Constitution that the phrase Megali Idea (The Great Idea) was coined; it soon came to be adopted as the fundamental principle of the modern Greek state, as well as the overriding goal of all Hellenes.¹¹

⁸Hakan Erdem, "Do Not Think of Greek as Agricultural Labourers" in *Citizenship and the Nation State in Greece and Turkey*, ed. Faruk Birtek and Thalia Dragonas, 68 (London and New York: Routledge, 2005). Ten percent of over 50,000 catalogue entries in only one the Hatt-ı Humayun (imperial decrees) classification is related to Greek War of Independence.

⁹ Ibid., p.65.

¹⁰ Ahmet o. Evin, "Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: An Assessment of the post-Earthquake Rapprochement" *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):4 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente"

¹¹ Ibid., p.6.

Thus, the identification of Greeks as the 'traitors' and 'the enemy of Turks' and vice versa can be traced back to the Greek War of Independence. The development in late 19th century and Balkan Wars, which resulted in the loss of territory in Ottoman Empire, contributed to the mutually constructed distrust and enmity between the two nations. In the next section, I am going to discuss another major event, the Turkish War of Independence which left marks in the history of the both nations and have been influential in the construction of national identities of both Greek and Turkish people and states.

2.2. The Turkish War of Independence and The Detente Process During the 1930's and the 1940's: Venizelos-Ataturk Initiatives

After the World War I, the remaining territory of the Ottoman Empire, mainly today's Turkey, was occupied by the Entente powers, the United Kingdom, France, Italy and also Georgia and Greece. Greece, with the help of the Entente powers, occupied Izmir and the western part of the Anatolia. The Megali Idea of Greeks which envisaged the capture of the earlier territories of the Byzantine Empire led them to march into Anatolia starting from Izmir. The Ankara government led by Kemal Ataturk fought against the Greek forces for national independence between 1919 and 1922. This war, defined as the national war of independence, has left a huge impact in the

collective memory of the Turkish people.¹² Greeks were depicted as the national enemy with the Turkish War of Independence. As Emmanouil Peteinarakis correctly describes it:

Each state has formed a perception of the 'other' that has greatly influenced their relations. Textbooks, historiography, and other literary works have promoted these perceptions. To Greeks, Turks are a barbaric enemy that enslaved nation for many years, actions violently and unethically. Turks have a mirror image of Greeks as a people who are violent, unfaithful, unreliable, cunning, and whatever slurs one might imagine.¹³

The perceptions of self and other and the image of national enemy reached its peak with the Turkish National War of Independence. While the defeat of the Greeks was championed as a national victory of Turks and the beginning of the new Turkish state, the Greeks called this defeat as a 'disaster'.

Interestingly enough, neither the bitterness of this war nor the national discourses of enmity or othering could prevent the detente process between two countries. Although the Lausanne Treaty provided a good environment

¹² Ahmet o. Evin, "Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: An Assessment of the post-Earthquake Rapprochement" *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):6 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente."

¹³ Emmanouil Peteinarakis, "The Kantian Peace and Greek-Turkish Relations" (Monterey, California: June 2007) 33-34. MA Thesis, published in Naval Postgraduate School.

for the border arrangement between the two countries, bilateral were not established yet.¹⁴ 1920's have passed with the discussion of the remaining problems like the situation of minorities in both countries, the exchange of populations, financial compensations for the losses of both communities during the war, and both countries came to the brink of war in 1928.¹⁵ After the election victory of Venizelos, Greece initiated a new foreign policy understanding which envisaged a friendly relationship with Turkey in order to break the isolation of international community on Greece because of the 1919-1922 war campaign in Anatolia.¹⁶ In 1930, with the help of this new understanding of Greek government and the personal contributions of Kemal Ataturk and Eleftherios Venizelos, only 8 year after the end of the war between two countries, and two years after a possible war, peace and reconciliation process has started.¹⁷ The visionary and great leaders of both countries, Ataturk and Venizelos, signed the Treaty of Friendship in 1930¹⁸ and made some other agreements in political, security and economic areas.¹⁹ The friendship and detente process continued from the 1930s to the 1950s and was strengthened when the two countries became the NATO members

¹⁴ Emmanouil Peteinarakis, "The Kantian Peace and Greek-Turkish Relations" (Monterey, California: June 2007) 33-34. MA Thesis, published in Naval Postgraduate School.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁷ Tozun Bahcheli, "Cycles of Tension and Rapproachment: Prospects for Turkey's Relation with Greece" in *Turkey's Foreign policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics*, ed. Tareq Y. Ismael and Mustafa Aydin, 162 (Hants, England: Ashgate, 2003).

¹⁸ James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapproachment: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 230.

¹⁹ Tozun Bahcheli, "Cycles of Tension and Rapproachment: Prospects for Turkey's Relation with Greece" in *Turkey's Foreign policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics*, ed. Tareq Y. Ismael and Mustafa Aydin, 162 (Hants, England: Ashgate, 2003).

in 1952. The common threat of the Soviet Russia led the two countries to place themselves beside the Western countries and joined the Western Alliance system during the Cold War. Nevertheless, this detente process came to an end with the emergence of the Cyprus problem in the mid 1950's.

2.3. The Cyprus Issue, Turkish Intervention in Cyprus, The Aegean Problem and the Turkish Minority in Greece

The peaceful relations since the beginning of the 1930's to the mid-1950s were cut when the Greek leaders started their Enosis campaign, the aim of which was to unify Cyprus with Greece, against the British rule in the island.²⁰ The union of Greek Cypriot and Greece concerned Turkey since it would mean the loss of its strategic power in the Mediterranean. With the signing of the Treaty of Zurich, Cyprus became an independent state. However, the emergence of an independent Cyprus did not solve the problem since there were some problems in the implementation of the constitution. These problems of implementing constitution led to an emergence of tension between Greek and Turkish communities in the Cyprus. According to Tozun Bahcheli, the Greek side violated the independence by voicing the Enosis and showed adversity against the

²⁰ Tozun Bahcheli, "Cycles of Tension and Rapproachment: Prospects for Turkey's Relation with Greece" in *Turkey's Foreign policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics*, ed. Tareq Y. Ismael and Mustafa Aydin, 166 (Hants, England: Ashgate, 2003).

Turkish community up until the Turkish military's intervention in the island in 1974.²¹ Despite the short-lived peaceful time period in 1959-1963²² between the Greek and Turkish community in the island, the government of Greek-Turkish federal state has failed in overcoming the tension and problems and eventually in 1963 the civil war between two communities occurred and lasted through 1960's up until 1974.

The unfortunate events of 6-7 September in 1955 in Turkey contributed the tension between Greek and Turkish side. In 6-7th September 1955, some Turkish nationalist groups attacked the properties of minorities in İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir.²³ These attacks aimed not only the Greek minority but also the Jewish and Armenian minorities. These events were condemned by Greece and Greece accused of Turkish government as supporting the assailants against the minorities in these events.²⁴ These events also paved the way that Cyprus problem became a national cause in Turkey.

Upon a military coup against Makarios by a nationalist junta in 1974, Turkey intervened in the island by using its right of intervention on the basis

²¹ Tozun Bahçeli, "Cycles of Tension and Rapprochement: Prospects for Turkey's Relation with Greece" in *Turkey's Foreign policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics*, ed. Tareq Y. Ismael and Mustafa Aydın, 166 (Hants, England: Ashgate, 2003)..

²² Alexis Heraclides, "Greek-Turkish Relations from Discord to Detente: A Preliminary Evaluation" *The Review of International Affairs* 1 (Spring 2002): 26.

²³ Dilek Güven, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Azınlık Politikaları ve Stratejileri Bağlamında 6-7 Eylül Olayları* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2009), 26-27.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 201-202.

of 1960 constitution since the military junta wanted to realize Enosis (unify with Greece).²⁵ The Turkish military intervention led to the establishment of a de facto Turkish Cypriot State in the northern part of the island. Since that time, the island has been divided into two parts and the northern part is protected by Turkish troops.²⁶ The de facto Turkish Cyprus state is officially recognized only by Turkey. Nationalist circles in both countries perceive the Cyprus issue as a national cause. Both Turkey and Greece regard themselves as the natural protector of Greek and Turkish community in Cyprus. Cyprus issue increased the concerns of Turkish public about Greek expansionism while it strengthened the fears of Greeks about Turkish aggressiveness. Cyprus issue is the hottest and most enduring problems between Turkey and Greece²⁷ and it still poisons the bilateral relations and Turkey's European Union talks.

The dispute over Aegean Sea has started to be a problem especially in the 1970's with the emergence of the oil crisis.²⁸ The need for new oil resources drew the attention of both countries to the Aegean Sea. The big amount of islands and islets in the Aegean render the problem very complex issue.

²⁵ Tozun Bahcheli, "Cycles of Tension and Rapprochement: Prospects for Turkey's Relation with Greece" in *Turkey's Foreign policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics*, ed. Tareq Y. Ismael and Mustafa Aydin, 167 (Hants, England: Ashgate, 2003).

²⁶ Emmanouil Peteinarakis, "The Kantian Peace and Greek-Turkish Relations" (Monterey, California: June 2007) 35. MA Thesis, published in Naval Postgraduate School.

²⁷ Alexis Heraclides, "Greek-Turkish Relations from Discord to Detente: A Preliminary Evaluation" *The Review of International Affairs* 1 (Spring 2002): 26.

²⁸ Emmanouil Peteinarakis, "The Kantian Peace and Greek-Turkish Relations" (Monterey, California: June 2007) 35. MA Thesis, published in Naval Postgraduate School.

Some of the Greek islands and islets are very close to the Turkish border. The problem of sharing the resources of the Aegean and the continental shelf dispute brought the two countries to the brink of war in 1976.²⁹ The modification in international maritime law in 1982 increased the tension between two countries. Article three of the 1982 Law of the Sea (LOS) Convention gives states the right to establish territorial waters of a maximum breadth of twelve miles from their baselines.³⁰ Turkey claims that the Aegean Sea is a semi-closed sea, so the situation in Aegean is unique while Greece thinks that they have right to extend their territorial sea to two 12 miles provided by international law. Turkey did not sign the Law of the Sea Convention since that time and declared that Greece's expansion of its territorial waters to 12 miles is a "casus belli" (the reason for war) for Turkey.³¹ If Greece increased its territorial sea to 12 miles, her share in Aegean would go up to 64 percent while Turkey's share would increase by less than 9 percent.³² Turkey claims that the Aegean Sea and its islands are the natural extension of Anatolian peninsula. For this reason, the Aegean is unique case and the problems between Turkey and Greece pertinent to

²⁹ Tozun Bahcheli, "Cycles of Tension and Rapprochement: Prospects for Turkey's Relation with Greece" in *Turkey's Foreign policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics*, ed. Tareq Y. Ismael and Mustafa Aydin, 161 (Hants, England: Ashgate, 2003).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

³¹ Michael Naoum, "The Greek-Turkish Rapprochement Process, 1999-2004: Paradigm Shift or Epi-Phenomenon" (Monterey, California: December 2004), 44. MA Thesis, published in Naval Postgraduate School as referenced in Wilson Andrew, *The Aegean Dispute* (Adelfi Papers, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1979) 5.

³² Tozun Bahcheli, "Cycles of Tension and Rapprochement: Prospects for Turkey's Relation with Greece" in *Turkey's Foreign policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics*, ed. Tareq Y. Ismael and Mustafa Aydin, 161 (Hants, England: Ashgate, 2003) as referenced in Wilson Andrew, *The Aegean Dispute* (Adelfi Papers, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1979)

Aegean should be solved between two countries. As a contrary to the claim of Turkey, Greece wants to bring the case before the international law.³³

The Aegean disputes also include the air space. Turkey is also restricted to the borders of Aegean islands air space. Thus, Turkey has so far rejected the ten miles air space claimed by Greece and defended that Greece could extend its air space to 6 miles just as its territorial waters.³⁴ Since both countries do not accept each other's claims on air space they send their air craft to Aegean Sea and this leads to 'dogfights' between air craft of both countries. The dogfights in Aegean are always a hot issue of tension that keeps the Aegean problem in the political agenda of Turkey and Greece.

Another area of dispute concerning the Aegean is the so-called 'Grey Areas'. In 1990's, Turkey started questioning the status of some islands, islets and rocks which are very close to Turkey while Greece is against this claim by defending 'Except where a provision to the contrary is contained in the present Treaty, the islands situated at less than three miles from the Asiatic coast remain under Turkey's sovereignty.'³⁵ The 'Grey Areas' problem

³³ Colonel Michal N. Schmitt, "Aegean Angst: Historical and Legal Analysis of the Greek Turkish Dispute", Roger Williams University Law Review 2 (1996-1997): 15-16.

³⁴ Tozun Bahcheli, "Cycles of Tension and Rapproachment: Prospects for Turkey's Relation with Greece" in *Turkey's Foreign policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics*, ed. Tareq Y. Ismael and Mustafa Aydin, 163 (Hants, England: Ashgate, 2003) as referenced in Wilson Andrew, *The Aegean Dispute* (Adelfi Papers, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1979)

³⁵ Emmanouil Peteinarakis, "The Kantian Peace and Greek-Turkish Relations" (Monterey, California: June 2007) 37. MA Thesis, published in Naval Postgraduate School.

has added to the Aegean disputes in mid-1990's and it arose out from the blurring borders of territorial sea between two countries.³⁶ The Imra-Cardak rock crisis was based on this dispute of grey areas.

The Turkish Muslim population poses another controversial issue in Greek Turkish relations. After the end of the war in Asia Minor between Greece and Turkey in 1922, the Lausanne Treaty has been signed. The situation of Greek population in Turkey and the Muslim Turkish population in Greece were discussed in Lausanne and both sides determined the population exchange between the two countries. That decision dramatically changed the lives of millions of people from both sides. Around 1.5 million Greek left Turkey and some 500 thousands Turkish Muslims moved to Turkey in 1923.³⁷ Despite of this dramatic and strange decision, not the whole Muslims sent to Turkey and the Greeks to Greece. The Muslim population of the Western Thrace and the Greeks in Istanbul and in the islands of Imros and Tenedos stayed out of the decision of the Lausanne Treaty of population exchange.³⁸ Population exchange left marks in national memories of both Greek and Turkish public and it strengthened the sense of self and other.

³⁶ Alexis Heraclides, "Greek-Turkish Relations from Discord to Detente: A Preliminary Evaluation" *The Review of International Affairs* 1 (Spring 2002): 25.

³⁷ <http://www.culturalsurvival.org/ourpublications/csg/article/vestiges-ottoman-past-muslims-under-siege-contemporary-greek-thrace>, "Vestiges of the Ottoman Past: Muslims under Siege in Contemporary Thrace by Anastasia N. Karakasidou http adres her zaman icin sona gelir, ne zaman ulastin bu sayfaya bunlarin da not dusulmesi lazim. İnternet kaynaklarinin citation detaylarina bir goz atmalisin

³⁸ Mirca Madianou, "Contested Communicative Spaces; Rethinking Identities, Boundaries and the Role of the Media" *The Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31 (May 2005): 526.

The Muslim Turkish population is remarkably high in proportion to population of Greece. The exact number of the Muslim Turkish population is not exactly known. The Muslim population includes not only ethnic Turks but also Pomaks and Romas (Gypsies).³⁹ Pomaks identify themselves as Turks and the estimated population of whole Muslim in Western Thrace is between 100.000 and 120.000, which consist of the 1.3 percent of the population of Greece.⁴⁰ The Greek population in Turkey, on the other side, left 100000 after population exchange in 1923. This number has continued decreasing over the time owing to the 6-7 September Events and eventually only 2500 Greek people left in Turkey in 2006.⁴¹

The minorities in both sides have been a contentious issue between Greece and Turkey. Greece sees herself as the protector of the Greek minority in Turkey while Turkey feels responsible for the Muslim minority in the Greece. Greece and Turkey criticize and accuse each other for violating the rights of minorities. The minority issue sometimes is brought to the agenda of international organizations by Greece and Turkey like European Union and the United Nations. From time to time, the minority issue is manipulated by politicians of both sides in order to stalemate each other in international arena.

³⁹ World Directory of Minority and Indigenous Peoples, Official Website, Turks and Pomaks, <http://www.minorityrights.org/1533/greece/turks-and-pomaks.html>

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Wikipedia, 6-7 Eylül Olayları, http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/6-7_Eyl%C3%BCl_Olaylar%C4%B1

2.4. The Davos Process and the Short-Lived Detente in 1988

After the March 1987 Aegean crisis over continental shelf issue, which brought the two countries to the edge of war⁴², the mutual relations enhanced with the initiatives of Turgut Ozal and Andreas Papandreu after the two leaders met in the World Economic Forum's Davos Summit in 1987.⁴³ They agreed to start negotiations in order to solve their bilateral conflicts. They decided on arranging mutual visits, promoting tourism and cultural activities. Both leaders were aware of the fact that the military spending in both countries prevented them to make investments in other areas. here it should also be mentioned that Turgut Ozal wanted to give a message to the European community by maintaining peaceful relations with Turkey's European neighbors.

The most important development of this phase was that the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries aiming to establish a framework for Aegean disputes.⁴⁴ They also founded two committees in order to realize the development of these bilateral relations:

⁴² Panagiotis Dimitrakis, "Greek Military Intelligence and the Turkish Threat During the 1987 Aegean Crisis", *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 25 (May 2007): 100.

⁴³ Tozun Bahcheli, "Cycles of Tension and Rapprochement: Prospects for Turkey's Relation with Greece" in *Turkey's Foreign policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics*, ed. Tareq Y. Ismael and Mustafa Aydin, 161 (Hants, England: Ashgate, 2003).

⁴⁴ James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 217.

an economic committee for maintaining cooperation in trade, joint ventures, tourism etc. and a political committee who would determine the reasons of political problems and offer promising solutions.⁴⁵ The two states made some further gestures to each other during the Davos process in an attempt to signal a change in their perceptions of the other state. For example, the Turkish state lifted the visa for the Greek citizens and abolished the decree, which had restricted the property rights of Greek minorities, while the Greek state ended its objections against the Association Agreement between Turkey and the European Community.⁴⁶ These developments were called as the 'Davos Spirit' which emphasizes the reconciliatory turn in the behaviors of both states towards each other. Not surprisingly, this process did not last long. The Turkish violations of Greek air space and its provoking discourse on Muslim minority, the failure of the committees to produce new ideas and perspective on the problematic issues, the disturbing speeches of both sides' bureaucrats and finally the initiator of the process, Turgut Ozal and Andreas Papandreou's problems in domestic affairs caused the deterioration of relations and to put an end the 'Davos Spirit'.⁴⁷

In the next section, I am going to discuss the developments in the relations between Turkey and Greece in the 1990s starting with the Imia-Kardak crisis, and then turning to the capture of the PKK leader Abdullah

⁴⁵ Michael Naoum, "The Greek-Turkish Rapprochement Process, 1999-2004: Paradigm Shift or Epi-Phenomenon" (Monterey, California: December 2004), 44. MA Thesis, published in Naval Postgraduate School.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p44.

⁴⁷ Ibid.,p48,49,50.

Ocalan in Greek Embassy in Nairobi. I will later discuss the transformation in the relations by focusing on the earthquakes that struck both Greece and Turkey, the Helsinki Summit in which Turkey gained the status of candidate country for European Union membership, and the other major changes up to 2010 when Turkey decided to end its decision that Greek's expansion of its territorial waters to twelve miles would be considered as "casus belli" in detail. Since the main subject of the thesis is to analyze the transformations of the relations after 1999 from the perspective of constructivist theory, I will show the significance of the post-1999 period by comparing to the past developments.

2.5. The Major Changes in Relations: The Imia-Kardak Crisis, The Helsinki Summit, The Earthquakes and the Other Developments

2.5.1. The Developments Between 1996 and 1999: The Peak of the Tension

The developments after 1999 earthquake have a different characteristic, for the first time in the Greek Turkish relations' history. In the past, the detente and the reconciliation attempts came from above, from state officials, but in the case of the post-1999 period, the detente process has

been supported by a wide public opinion.⁴⁸ In order to understand this perception change in the people of both sides of Aegean, we should examine the incidents after the Imia-Kardak crisis.

The period between 1996 and 1999 witnessed intensively tense events. In order to understand the significance and the pace of the dramatic transformations in the relations of both countries from 1996 to 1999, we should first look at the uneasy events that took place in this period.

The Imia-Kardak crisis arose when Turkey claimed sovereignty over the small islets in the eastern part of the Aegean in January 1996.⁴⁹ Greek navy planted Greek flag to the first islets. In response, Turkish army planted Turkish flag to the second Imia islet passing through Greek naval forces.⁵⁰ The Grey Areas dispute, as I mentioned earlier, led to this problem due to the lack of certain boundaries between the territorial waters of Turkey and Greece in the Aegean Sea. Athens immediately rejected the claim of Turkey and the two countries came to the edge of war. The United States interfered with the issue and both countries removed their military forces around the

⁴⁸ Alexis Heraclides, "Greek-Turkish Relations from Discord to Detente: A Preliminary Evaluation" *The Review of International Affairs* 1 (Spring 2002): 18.

⁴⁹ James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 217.

⁵⁰ Wikipedia, Kardak Krizi, http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kardak_Krizi

Imia-Kardak rocks.⁵¹ This event increased the tension of both Greek and Turkish community. The publishing of the press of both countries provoked the tension. The language used in media reports about the crisis evoked the tension and enmity.⁵² For example, the Greek media depicted the landing of Turkish journalists on to the Imia/Kardak rocks as an assault, invasion, and provocative action of Ankara, while the Turkish media covered the possibility of the war as reflected in the headline of the Sabah daily: 'Turkey can overwhelm Greece in 72 hours'.⁵³

The Imia/Kardak crisis is important due to the fact that Turkey for the first time questioned the legal status of some islands and islets in the Aegean and used the term 'grey areas' in order to bring the sovereignty issue of the islands and islets into the agenda.⁵⁴ Furthermore, according to Oguzlu, the EU realized the fact that if it did not support the democratization movement in Turkey in the favor of the pro-EU segments in Turkish society, this situation might benefit the nationalist circles in Turkey.⁵⁵

⁵¹James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 217.

⁵² Katharina Hadjidimos, "The Role of the Media in Greek-Turkish Relations" Robert Bosch Stiftungskolleg für Internationale Aufgaben Programmjahr 1998/99: 9.
<http://www.greekhelsinki.gr/pdf/Greek-Turkish-Media.PDF>

⁵³ Ibid., p. 9.

⁵⁴ H. Tarik Oguzlu, "The Latest Greek-Turkish Detente: Instrumentalist Play for EU Membership, or Long-Term Institutional Cooperation?" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17 (July 2004): 347.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 347.

Another event turned up when the European Council made the decision that Turkey should improve her relations with Greece in order to enter into European Union. However, this decision did not yield rapprochement process between the two countries but caused more tense relations between them.⁵⁶ Turkey did not accept to give concessions to Greece and demanded from the EU that the same conditions and criteria were applied to other candidate countries by the EU. This led to the break of the hopes on the part of Turkey that the European Union could serve as a platform for maintaining peaceful relations between Greece and Turkey at least until the Helsinki Summit and the decision of EU to accept Turkey as a candidate country.

The S-300 missile crisis issue was also an issue of contention between Greece and Turkey. The decision of Greek Cypriot government to buy S-300 anti-aircraft missiles in order to put them into Cyprus as a part of Joint defense Doctrine between Cyprus and Greece was answered very rigorously by Turkey.⁵⁷ Turkey declared that she would not allow the installation of the S-300 missiles in Cyprus and if they were placed nevertheless, then that it would respond by taking any measure, even military, if necessary.⁵⁸ The tension decreased when the Greek Cypriot took the decision to put the missiles in Crete instead of Cyprus.

⁵⁶ James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 217.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

⁵⁸ Radikal Gazetesi, "S 300 Füze Krizi Kapıda", <http://www.radikal.com.tr/1999/03/08/dis/ege.html>

The PKK issue was the one, which affected the emotions of people of both countries more than the other contentious issues did. Turkey had already been accusing Greece for supporting the terrorist organization of Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) while Greece pointed out the Turkish state's violation of the rights of Kurdish people in Turkey.⁵⁹ The enmity of the nationalist people of Turkey was especially rooted in this support of Greece for PKK.⁶⁰

Turkey forced to Syria by military threat to expel the leader of PKK, Abdullah Ocalan. In autumn of 1998, Syria sent Abdullah Ocalan out of the country. He seek asylum from European countries. Greece, with the help of some Greek sympathizers, accepted him to her country in January 1999.⁶¹ However, Abdullah Ocalan was captured by Turkish military forces when he was in his road to Nairobi, Kenya to Greek embassy. This situation led to the public demonstrations in Turkey and events reached to the point that some people burned the Greek flags in squares of Turkey and declare Greece as eternal enemy.⁶² In both sides, the enmity reached the peak with these unfortunate events. The Turkish press provoked hostile emotions in the case of the capturing of Ocalan. Hurriyet newspaper gave a headline as 'panic and fear in Athens'⁶³ and 'the threat of "casus belli" frightened Greece'.⁶⁴ Turkish

⁵⁹ Turkish-Greek Relations, "Diğer Sorunlar.", <http://www.turkishgreek.org/diger.htm>.

⁶⁰ Ibid, <http://www.turkishgreek.org/diger.htm>.

⁶¹ James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" Cambridge Review of International Affairs 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 218.

⁶² Ibid., p. 218.

⁶³ Hurriyet, 16 February 1999 Tuesday, <http://webarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/1999/02/16/hurriyet.asp>

⁶⁴ Ibid., 17 February 1999 Wednesday, <http://webarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/1999/02/17/97051.asp>

media accused Greece as the enemy who helped the enemy of Turkey. It was hence of no surprise that the public opinion in Turkey towards Greece was characterized by anger and enmity after the capturing of Ocalan in Greek embassy.⁶⁵

2.5.2. The Rapprochement Period: 1999-2010

2.5.2.1. The Developments until the AKP Government

Despite the popular belief that Greek-Turkish rapprochement has begun with the earthquakes, the capturing of Ocalan in February 1999 ironically affected Turkish-Greek relations in a positive way before the earthquakes happened.⁶⁶ Ocalan's capturing by Turkey in the Greek embassy in Kenya resulted in the resignation of the three Greek ministers including the minister of foreign affairs who was responsible for supporting Ocalan escape. The resignations of ministers reflected Greek government's demands of not being seen as the supporter of terrorism in international arena.⁶⁷ Papandreou became the new Minister of Foreign Affairs whose foreign policy understanding and priorities were highly different and conciliatory from the

⁶⁵ Hürriyet Gazetesi, "Savaş Nedeni Sayarız Yunanistan'ı Korkuttu", <http://webarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/1999/02/17/97051.asp>

⁶⁶ Ahmet O. Evin, "The Future Of Greek Turkish Relations" *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 5 (September 2005): 396.

⁶⁷ Ahmet o. Evin, "Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: An Assessment of the post-Earthquake Rapprochement" *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):8 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente"

former minister Pangalos.⁶⁸ This was one of the very lucky developments in Greek Turkish relations. Turkey kindly welcomed the resignations of the responsible ministers in Greece and a relatively positive atmosphere emerged between the two neighbors.

In this new period, the NATO's military intervention in Kosovo in March 1999, just six weeks after the capturing of Ocalan, brought Turkey and Greece on the same side against the common threat of instability in Balkans and the possible change in the borders of the countries in the Balkan region.⁶⁹ The recently appointed foreign minister, George Papandreou after the resignation of Pangalos due to the Ocalan case⁷⁰ and Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Ismail Cem talked on the phone about the Kosovo issue and they shared the same stance towards the development in the regions. The phone talks continued in the coming weeks and both foreign ministers, Papandreou and Cem improved their personal ties with this way of contact.⁷¹

After this personal contact between the two ministers, Ismail Cem sent a letter in May 1999 to Papandreou in which he offered an agreement on

⁶⁸ Ahmet o. Evin, "Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: An Assessment of the post-Earthquake Rapprochement" *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004): 396-397 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente"

⁶⁹ James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 219.

⁷⁰ Michael Naoum, "The Greek-Turkish Rapprochement Process, 1999-2004: Paradigm Shift or Epi-Phenomenon" (Monterey, California: December 2004), 57. MA Thesis, published in Naval Postgraduate School.

⁷¹ James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 219.

combat against terrorism and peaceful solutions for contested issues between two countries.⁷² In June, George Papandreou answered kindly to Cem's letter, expressed his willingness of improvement in bilateral relations, and suggested establishing dialogue and cooperation in culture, tourism, environment, economic cooperation, ecological problems, drug trafficking, illegal immigration, and organized crime.⁷³ The meeting between Papandreou and Cem in the United Nations in New York followed this friendly letters and the two leaders decided to set up a working group, which consisted of senior diplomats in order to work on the measures for further improvement of bilateral relations and the reconciliation process.⁷⁴ Therefore, not the earthquakes but the developments that I have mentioned above marked the beginning of the reconciliation process between the two neighbors.⁷⁵

The earthquake on August 17 in 1999 broke out after Ismail Cem and George Papandreou's personal efforts to initiate a reconciliation process. The massive earthquake struck Izmit measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale. Only half an hour later, George Papandreou called his counterpart Ismail Cem offering whatever assistance Turkey needed and it was the first call that

⁷² Alexis Heraclides, "Greek-Turkish Relations from Discord to Detente: A Preliminary Evaluation" *The Review of International Affairs* 1 (Spring 2002): 21.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 21.

⁷⁴ James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 219.

⁷⁵ Ahmet o. Evin, "Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: An Assessment of the post-Earthquake Rapprochement" *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):8 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente"

Turkey got before any other country.⁷⁶ Greece sent the rescue teams, EMAK, Greek seismologist, two mobile hospital units with eleven doctor, fifteen nurses, six members of parliaments with medical training and two fire fighting planes in a very short period of time.⁷⁷ The Greek public, on the other hand, raised money for helping earthquake victims in Turkey. Even the Orthodox Church, which had been considered as the main provoker of the anti-Turkish campaigns, collected money to send Turkey.⁷⁸ The Greek media, which had been the prominent provoker of nationalist sentiments against Turkey, sent their men to Turkey, showed great interest in the earthquake, and covered the rescue teams of Greece in helping Turkish people in Greek media.⁷⁹ This had positive repercussions in the Turkish media as well. As Ayten Gundogdu summarized:

The mutual empathy expressed in the Greek and Turkish media following the earthquake in Turkey were the first signs of emerging common bonds between the two peoples. A Greek newspaper, *Ta Nea*, cried "We are all Turks" in its issue, following the earthquake in Turkey and a Turkish newspaper, *Hurriyet*, responded in Greek: "Efharisto Poli, File/ Thank You, Neighbor."⁸⁰

⁷⁶ James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 220.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 220-221.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

⁸⁰ Ayten Gundogdu, "Identities in Question: Greek-Turkish Relations in a Period of Transformation" *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 5 (March 2001): 7.

After almost one month, on September 7, another earthquake hit Athens. Turkey immediately responded to the earthquake by sending rescue teams of AKUT. Many people from Turkey offered assistance to Greece by calling Greek Consulate in Istanbul.⁸¹ The scale of the Athens earthquake was not as severe as much in Turkish earthquake. Nevertheless, the AKUT's efforts in Athens cemented the feelings emerged out with the earthquake in Turkey between two nations.⁸²

With these earthquakes, the image of enemy in the eyes of the people turned into the image of a friend who helps its neighbors in bad times. The perceptions of Greeks and Turks radically changed in the context of being a human who shared the same fate. The broad media coverage of both countries reflected a strong mutual sympathy between the two nations.⁸³

After the earthquakes, the communication between the people of both Greece and Turkey increased dramatically. There was a proliferation of groups, which aimed to bring the two communities together and made efforts to establish contacts between the academic, business, artistic, professional, and media communities and also between the municipalities of

⁸¹ James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 224.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 224.

⁸³ Ahmet o. Evin, "Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: An Assessment of the post-Earthquake Rapprochement" *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):4 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente"

both countries.⁸⁴ A Turkish and a Greek professor wrote an article, which called for immense efforts for maintaining peaceful relations in different areas such as universities, changing schools, lifting the hostile expressions in the textbooks, defense cuts and military confidence building measures.⁸⁵ These contacts between people of both countries created a convenient atmosphere for governments to take actions in order to improve relationships. In this context, the joint Greco-Turkish committee of senior official met in September 1999. This committee developed the idea of the construction of a new railway between Thessaloniki and Istanbul, via Alexandroupolis.⁸⁶ The committee met again in October in order to discuss private and public sectors including the areas of energy and technology.⁸⁷ These developments show that the governments and the foreign policies were affected by the public opinion, and that the domestic issues played a role in shaping the foreign policy preferences and behaviors. The 1999 earthquakes, as Ahmet O. Evin correctly puts, "...served to focus attention of both countries on their shared geography and shared feelings of sympathy, and led to an understanding of common destiny."⁸⁸ This feeling of sharing

⁸⁴ www.greekturkishforum.org as referenced in James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 225.

⁸⁵ Thanos Veremis and Duygu Sezer, "Greek-Turkish Peace: Fantasy or Possibility" *Kathimerini*, 11 September 1999 quoted in James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 225.

⁸⁶ James Ker-Lindsay, "Greek-Turkish Rapprochement: The Impact of Disaster Diplomacy" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 14 (Autumn-Winter 2000): 225-226.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁸⁸ Ahmet o. Evin, "Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: An Assessment of the post-Earthquake Rapprochement" *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):8 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente"

common destiny paved the way for the reconciliation process. It further helped to refresh the collective memory in a positive way.

Undoubtedly, the most striking development in the Turkish Greek relations was the Helsinki Summit. In December 1999, the European Council gathered in Helsinki and Greece supported Turkey's candidacy to the European Union. This development marked the end of the era that Greece blocked Turkey's candidacy for EU membership. This also meant the fundamental change in Greece's understanding. By supporting Turkey's accession to EU and Turkey's socialization into the EU norms and rules, Greece expected to build a bridge between Turkey's interests and EU's interests.⁸⁹ In this way, she expected Turkey to redefine its interests along the lines with EU norms and international law. Greece began to think that strengthening of the ties between Turkey and EU could engage Turkey in a more peaceful and conciliatory and less aggressive behaviors towards Greece.⁹⁰ Besides, the EU conditionalities and the norms of the EU such as the peaceful settlement of disputes between the EU countries also contributed to Turkey's implementation of a more constructive foreign policy towards Greece. With this shift in Greek foreign policy, Greece became one of supporter countries of Turkey's in its EU bid.

⁸⁹ Ahmet o. Evin, "Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: An Assessment of the post-Earthquake Rapprochement" *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):113 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente"

⁹⁰ Panayotis J. Tsakonas and Thanos P. Dokos, "Greek-Turkish Relations in the Early Twenty First Century: A View From Athens" in *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, ed. Lenore G. Martin and Dimitris Keridis, 111-112 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004)

However, the Helsinki Summit put some conditions in front of Turkey to become a full member. These conditions included the peaceful settlement of the disputes between Greece and Turkey, especially the problems in the Aegean and the ending of Turkish occupation of Northern Cyprus.⁹¹ These conditions proved that Greece' aim of solving the disputes with Turkey under the EU auspices is beneficial for Greece.

After the Helsinki Summit, the peace efforts continued in 2000. In January and February 2000, Foreign Ministers Papandreou and Cem visited each other's country and signed 9 bilateral agreements in soft political issues or low-confrontation issues such as tourism, culture, environment, trade and commerce, multilateral cooperation in Black Sea and southeast Europe region, organized crime, illegal immigration, drug trafficking, terrorism, agriculture and energy.⁹² Apart from all these, the two countries decided to work together to advance in high political issues. To this end, they developed Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) as the basis of more stable relationships and a platform to talk on the military issues.⁹³ In this vein, Turkey submitted some Confidence Building Measures in January 2000 that she agreed to apply and Greek side answered CBMs positively.⁹⁴ These CBM efforts produced a favorable atmosphere in which Greece and Turkey agreed

⁹¹ Panayotis J. Tsakonas and Thanos P. Dokos, "Greek-Turkish Relations in the Early Twenty First Century: A View From Athens" in *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, ed. Lenore G. Martin and Dimitris Keridis, 118-119 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004)

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

upon some military issues such as the dates of their NATO exercises. The two meetings of Papandreou and Cem on January and February of 2000 resulted in the establishment of the joint task force. The mission of this task force was to develop Turkish Greek reconciliation process and cooperation in Turkey's accession efforts to EU membership.⁹⁵ The task force helped strengthening the mutual trust between two states.

In 2001, some other salient developments came into existence. Turkey and Greece agreed on to eliminate the landmines on their borders in accordance with the Ottawa Convention of 1997 about the landmines.⁹⁶ More importantly, Greece set aside its mobilization of war against Turkey and changed status of prime threat of Turkey in 2001.⁹⁷ This decision officially announced that Turkey is not considered the top threat by Greece. In the same year, both countries made a decision of downsizing their military spending although Turkey had to make this decision because of the economic crisis.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Panayotis J. Tsakonas and Thanos P. Dokos, "Greek-Turkish Relations in the Early Twenty First Century: A View From Athens" in *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, ed. Lenore G. Martin and Dimitris Keridis, 117 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004).

⁹⁶ Alexis Heraclides, "Greek-Turkish Relations from Discord to Detente: A Preliminary Evaluation" *The Review of International Affairs* 1 (Spring 2002): 21.

⁹⁷ H. Tarik Oguzlu, "The Latest Greek-Turkish Detente: Instrumentalist Play for EU Membership, or Long-Term Institutional Cooperation?" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17 (July 2004): 344.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

Beside all of these developments in security area, economic relations also showed significant progression in the area of oil and gas transportation. Both countries decided on to cooperate on the EU funded project of Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe (INOGATE).⁹⁹ To this end, they agreed upon building a 177-mile gas pipeline as the first common investment on infrastructure project between Turkey and Greece in the early 2002.¹⁰⁰

In 2002, two Foreign Minister, Cem and Papandreou agreed that two countries start talking on the long-term bilateral disputes such as airspace over the Aegean Sea and ownership rights of minerals in the Aegean seabed.¹⁰¹ This decision revealed that the reconciliation process reached the level of talking not only on the issues of the law politics, but also the enduring disputes of high politics.

Turkey, after getting a member status from EU in Helsinki Summit, made some legal reforms and change in its constitution in order to get their legal systems comply with EU acquis. The Turkish Assembly approved three reform packages until the AK Party government came into power in

⁹⁹ H. Tarik Oguzlu, "The Latest Greek-Turkish Detente: Instrumentalist Play for EU Membership, or Long-Term Institutional Cooperation?" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17 (July 2004): 344.

¹⁰⁰ The Report of Energy Study Group of Turkish Economic Congress 2, http://www.enerji2023.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=179:tuerkye-ktsat-kongres-enerj-calima-grubu-raporu-2&catid=15:stratej&Itemid=222

¹⁰¹ H. Tarik Oguzlu, "The Latest Greek-Turkish Detente: Instrumentalist Play for EU Membership, or Long-Term Institutional Cooperation?" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17 (July 2004): 345.

November 2002. Turkey's struggle for being a member of the EU has been critical in the transformation of Turkish Greek relations since the EU norms have stimulated Turkey to develop more friendly relations with its European neighbor, Greece.

2.5.2.2 Developments During the Term of AKP Government Until 2010

The general elections in Turkey, in November 2002 resulted in the victory of AK Party. AK Party became the ruling party on his own with a very strong public support and it gained 363 seats in 550-seat assembly.¹⁰² Immediately after AK Party took the rule, it focused on the EU accession agenda. In December 2002, the European Council has decided, "the EU starts negotiation talks with Turkey without any delay if the European Council in December 2004, on the basis of a report and a recommendation from the commission, decides that Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen political criteria."¹⁰³ This decision stimulated the new government in struggling towards the EU membership way. In a two years time between 2002 and 2004, Turkey made many important legal and political reforms in order to fulfill Copenhagen

¹⁰² Ak Party Official Web Site, History of Justice and Development Party, <http://eng.akparti.org.tr/english/index.html>

¹⁰³ Copenhagen European Council, 12 and 13 December 2002, Presidency Conclusion, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/73842.pdf

political criteria. Finally, Turkey achieved to get a date from EU Council for starting negotiation talks in December 2004.¹⁰⁴

The council's decision was welcomed by Turkey although some of the conditions that EU put did not satisfy Turkey. In the negotiation framework, EU requires Turkey to develop neighborly relations with EU countries and solve its disputes in conformity with the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with UN Charter.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, EU demanded Turkey to continue its effort for realizing peace in Cyprus.¹⁰⁶ These conditions proved that Greek's aim of solving its disputes with Turkey under the EU auspices has been realized. If Turkey wants to be an EU member, it has to solve its disputes with Greece and Cyprus in accordance with the EU's demands and conditions.

After starting the negotiating talks with the EU, Turkey continued its democratization venture. The EU norms helped Turkey to develop positive behaviors towards Greece. Especially, the norm of "peaceful settlement of disputes" quickens Turkey to evaluate its problems from an amicable point of view in its foreign affairs. This positive atmosphere, which was brought about by democratization process had positive impacts in both domestic

¹⁰⁴ Brussels European Council, 16 and 17 December 2004, Presidency Conclusion, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/83201.pdf

¹⁰⁵ Negotiating Framework, Luxembourg 3 October 2005, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/st20002_05_tr_framedoc_en.pdf

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/st20002_05_tr_framedoc_en.pdf

politics and foreign affairs of Turkey. In this vein, Turkey attempted to make further steps in its relations with other states. Turkish-Greek relations also benefited from this process.

Karamanlis and Tayyip Erdoğan became close friends. Karamanlis, for example, participated in the wedding ceremony of Tayyip Erdoğan's daughter in Istanbul and he became the witness of the bride, Esra Erdoğan.¹⁰⁷ This friendship also helped bringing about positive developments in Turkish Greek relations.¹⁰⁸

In 6-8 May 2004, Tayyip Erdoğan visited Athens.¹⁰⁹ This visit has been the first visit of Turkish prime minister to Athens since 1988. Two leaders gave very constructive speeches. Karamanlis said that "the relationship between two countries is based on mutual trust."¹¹⁰ He also stated that Greece wanted to open a new page in relations and Greece supports Turkey's EU candidacy.¹¹¹ On the other hand, in his interview with the To Vima newspaper in Greece, Erdogan pointed out that the relations between Turkey and Greece have been developing consistently since 1999 and he also mentioned that there were 25 agreements have been signed in last 5

¹⁰⁷ Gündem Newspaper, http://www.gundemgazetesi.com/news/detay_05.php?h4_id=96

¹⁰⁸ AB Haber, Brüksel, "Erdoğan Karamanlis Dostluğu Newsweek'te: İlginç İkili", <http://www.abhaber.com/haber.php?id=293>

¹⁰⁹ Turkish Republic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Official Webpage, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/default.aspx>

¹¹⁰ Radikal Daily Newspaper, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=115583>

¹¹¹ Ibid., <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=115583>

years.¹¹² Both leaders emphasized that they aimed to develop relation in many different areas and both Turkish and Greek public support this process. Tayyip Erdoğan did not forget the Muslim minority living in Western Trace. He visited the region of West Trace, talked to the Muslim Turkish people, and listened to their complaints and problems. Erdoğan's visit of Western Trace and his meeting with Muslim Turkish minority was also unique since it has been to first visit after 52 years by a Turkish Prime Minister to Western Trace.¹¹³

It should be noted that Tayyip Erdoğan's visit has been realized just after the Cyprus memorandum in April 2004 in which Greek Cypriots rejected Annan Plan in the island. Besides, Republic of Cyprus was admitted as a member to EU without finding a solution to the Cyprus issue. Karamanlis and Erdoğan did not allow this memorandum case and Cyprus accession to EU cause damages in friendly relations of Greece and Turkey.

In 2008, another striking event has occurred in Turkish Greek relations. Greek Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis visited Turkey. Karamanlis has visited Turkey in 23 January 2008. Even the visit itself poses a great importance because Kostas Karamanlis was the first Greek Prime Minister

¹¹² Turkish Republic Ministry for European Union Affairs, Official Webpage, <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=34740&l=1>

¹¹³ Avrupa Batı Trakya Türk Federasyonu (European Western Trace Turkish Federation), Official Website. <https://www.abttf.org/html/index.php?link=detay&id=381&arsiv=1>

who visited Turkey after 49 years. In this respect, this visit means a considerable shift in Turkish Greek relations. It proved that Turkey and Greece are now the two neighboring countries, which realize mutual visits at utmost level. There are many Greek officials and businesspersons visited Turkey. They made many financial agreements on different areas like banking, media, tourism, etc.¹¹⁴ This visit as a kindly answer to Erdoğan's visit consolidate the recent developments in Turkish Greek relations.

In May 2010, Tayyip Erdoğan paid another visit to Greece. Twenty-one agreements in different areas including gas transportation line between Turkey, Greece and Italy has been signed.¹¹⁵ More importantly, Turkish and Greek officials talked about reducing in security spending of both countries.¹¹⁶ This is a remarkable development because for the first time both countries are planning to decrease mutual doubts by reducing their military spending. This also indicates that Turkey and Greece are not only making reforms on law political issues, but also high political issues like economy and security. Tayyip Erdoğan's visit in 2010 was also important since Turkey wanted to help Greece in dealing with its financial problems. Twenty-one economic agreements signed between two countries in different

¹¹⁴ AB Haber, Turkey and EU news Network, Brussel, <http://www.abhaber.com/haber.php?id=20678>

¹¹⁵ Hurriyet Daily Newspaper, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/planet/14733468.asp>

¹¹⁶ Ibid., <http://www.abhaber.com/haber.php?id=293>

areas such as tourism and energy during this visit and these agreements contribute to the Greek economy.¹¹⁷

All of these developments led to the changes in behaviors of Greece and Turkey. In 2010, Turkey changed its "National Security Politics Credential" which is an important document that Turkish governments resort to when they develop their both domestic and foreign policies pertaining to security issues.¹¹⁸ Turkey with this change do not regard Greece as the main external threat, beside it does not count the Greek decision of increasing its internal waters to 12 miles as "a casus belli", cause of war.¹¹⁹ Turkish government not only removed Greece from the first threat position but also it mentioned about the friendly relations with neighboring countries in its National Security Politics Credential. Greek government has already reduced Turkey to the second position in its threat perceptions in 2005.¹²⁰ Greek made this change 31 years later after it put Turkey as the first external threat to its national security during Cyprus War in 1974. On the other hand, Turkey's decision on changing the National Security Politics Credential, which is also called as "Red Book", marked a new era in Turkish security understanding. Some journalists and academicians after the change in Turkish threat perceptions against Greek discussed the necessity of Aegean Army, which is established

¹¹⁷ Ibid., <http://www.abhaber.com/haber.php?id=293>

¹¹⁸ Savaş Karşıtları Haber Sitesi, <http://www.savaskarsitlari.org/arsiv.asp?ArsivTipID=5&ArsivAnaID=60039>

¹¹⁹ Sabah Daily Newspaper, http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2010/08/23/kirmizi_kitapta_savas_degil_isbirligi_vurgusu

¹²⁰ Haber Vitriini Haber Sitesi, <http://www.habervitrini.com/haber.asp?id=165055>

for deterring Greek threat. These radical shifts in both countries demonstrate that the positive steps and change in the perceptions led to the change in behaviors and interests.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. General Characteristics of Constructivism in International Relations Theory

Constructivism has become one of the mainstream theories of International Relations especially after the second half of the 1980's.¹²¹ With the end of the Cold War, the bi-polar structure of world politics was disintegrated. Systemic theories of Neo-realism and neo-liberalism could not explain this tremendous shift in international politics.¹²² Many scholars of international relations studied on the role of the ideas in international politics aiming to explain this shift.¹²³ Some other scholars who labeled themselves as constructivist analyze this shift from different perspectives and constructivism gained salient importance in the field of International

¹²¹ Stephen M. Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," *Foreign Policy* 110 (Spring 1998): 29-46. and Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50 (January 1998): 324-348.

¹²² Rey Koslowski and Friedrich V. Kratochwil, "Understanding Change in International Politics: The Soviet Empire's Demise and The International System," *International Organization* 48 (Spring 1994): 215-247 and Nina Tannenwald and William C. Wohlforth, "Introduction: The Role of Ideas and the End of the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7 (Spring 2005): 4.

¹²³ Nina Tannenwald and William C. Wohlforth, "Introduction: The Role of Ideas and the End of the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7 (Spring 2005): 3-12.

Relations.¹²⁴ The interpretive, ideational and social understanding of constructivism to international politics makes constructivism one of the mainstream approaches, which can explain the nature of international politics better than traditional mainstream theories of neo-realism and neo-liberalism do. Jeffrey T. Checkel called this shift as 'the constructivist turn in international relations theory.'¹²⁵

However, constructivism is not a theory, but an approach¹²⁶, which includes different kinds of constructivisms under the same umbrella. Therefore, it is difficult to determine the common features of constructivism. Notwithstanding this arduous task, in this part, I will explain the common characteristics of constructivism in IR theory and give a brief summary of the different approaches.

One of the basic claims of constructivism is that it bridges the gap between rationalist materialist theories and radical reflectivist theories,¹²⁷ in

¹²⁴ Maja Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations: The Politics of Reality* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004), 2.

¹²⁵ Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50 (January 1998): 324-348.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 325 and Steve Smith, "Social Constructivism and European Studies: A Reflectivist Critique," *Journal of European Public Policy* 6 (1999): 682.

¹²⁷ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (Spring 1992): 391-425.

other words, constructivism's role is 'seizing the middle ground.'¹²⁸ It covers the middle ground because:

Constructivism is interested in understanding how the material, subjective, and intersubjective worlds interact in the social construction of reality and because, rather than focusing exclusively on how structures constitute agents' identities and interests, it also seeks to explain how individual agents socially construct these structures in the first place.¹²⁹

Constructivism rejects the material ontology of rationalist theories and it also denies the epistemology of post-modernism which claims the reality is discursively constructed. As Emanuel Adler correctly puts it:

Constructivists who like post-modernists and post-structuralists follow an interpretive approach embrace the meditative position. While accepting the notion that there is a real world out there, they nevertheless believe that it is not entirely determined by physical reality and is socially emergent.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Emanuel Adler, "Seizing The Middle Ground," *European Journal of International Relations* 3 (September 1997): 319-363.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 319-363.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 324.

Constructivists, in general, accept the possibility of objective knowledge. Hence, they use the methodology of sciences in their empirical works.¹³¹ Where they differ from rationalists is that constructivists believe structure includes not only the distribution of material capabilities, but also social relationships and interactions.¹³² Shared knowledge, material sources, and practices are all parts of social structures.¹³³ This difference between constructivism and rationalist theories shows the ontological stance of both approaches.

Alexander Wendt, in his influential article "Anarchy is What States Make of It" characterizes the general features of constructivism. He predicates constructivism on Anthony Giddens's structuration theory and symbolic interactionist sociology.¹³⁴ In this vein, constructivism envisages that there is a mutually constitutive relationship between agent and structure.¹³⁵ This ontological stance gives the two unit of analysis –agent and structure- equal weight and allows analyzing state interests as endogenous to interaction with structures.¹³⁶ For example, self-help system is not an exogenous and given structure, that determines the agent's behavior, but rather a social

¹³¹ Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20 (Summer 1995): 75.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p 73.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p 73.

¹³⁴ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (Spring 1992): 394.

¹³⁵ Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23 (Summer 1998): 172-173.

¹³⁶ Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50 (January 1998): 326.

institution, which is constructed through state (agent) interactions. If political actors (states) do not behave on the basis of self-help understanding, then it would not exist anymore. Both agents and structures have constitutive power. Just like anarchy, identities and interests are socially constructed and they are endogenous to interaction, in contrast to rationalist stance that they are given and exogenous.¹³⁷

Rationalists assume that when political actors interact, they have already pre-existing preferences like interests. While neo-realists and neo-liberals are not concerned with where these pre-existingly given preferences come from, constructivists believe that conceiving how these interests are developed by actors is very insightful in terms of understanding international politics.¹³⁸ In this regard, identities and interests are independent variables in constructivist analysis, not a dependent variable as in rationalist theories. This perception of identities allows constructivists to explain change in international politics, since it takes interest as socially constructed

Constructivism believes that identities and interests have a constitutive power. They affect the actions and behaviors of agents.¹³⁹ Constructivists, in the sense, emphasize the role of ideational and social factors beside the

¹³⁷ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (Spring 1992): 394.

¹³⁸ Christian Reus-Smit, "Constructivism" in *Theories of International Relations*, ed Andrew Linklater, Christian Reus-Smit, Matthew Patterson 221 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1987).

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

material factors on shaping international political phenomena. According to constructivists, the social reality can only be understood through analyzing the intersubjective meanings attributed to them. As Alexander Wendt asserts:

Constructivists argue that material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded. For example, 500 British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the United States than 5 North Korean nuclear weapons, because the British are friends of the United States and the North Koreans are not, and amity and enmity is a function of shared understanding.¹⁴⁰

Thus, in order to understand international politics, we should consider the shared understandings and intersubjective meanings in which the material resources are embedded. Without considering the context which includes the shared knowledge and social meaning, the international political phenomena cannot be understood truly.

Constructivism's understanding of non-material, ideational and normative structures is highly different from rationalist theories' perception of non-

¹⁴⁰ Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20 (Summer 1995): 73.

material structures. As I mentioned above, constructivism argues that ideational structures have constitutive and causal power. Non-material structures have a role in determining the identities of actors. Interests are shaped by identities. As Alexander Wendt puts it: "identities are the basis of interests."¹⁴¹ Interests shape the actions of the actors. Consequently, non-material structures have a role in shaping the behaviors of actors. For instance, the United States defines itself as the most powerful protector of the democracy and human rights in the world. In the political atmosphere after the end of the Cold War, United States has defined its identity as the hegemonic power who is the watchman of democracy. This definition of identity makes the United States take actions against for example, Iraq, Afghanistan, or Bosnia. Eventually, the identity of a super power and the protector of democracy and human rights has shaped the actions of the United States and made her interventions in the other states' politics possible. At this point, it should also be mentioned that power is derived not only from material sources as rationalists assume, but also from non-material sources like ideas, knowledge, culture, and ideology in constructivist understanding. Both material and non-material sources of power are important in terms of grasping the true nature of international political affairs.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (Spring 1992): 398.

¹⁴²Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23 (Summer 1998): 177.

Rationalist understanding of society also differs from constructivist approach to society. Rationalists see society as a strategic realm in which self-interested actors follow their interests. Constructivists see the society as a constitutive realm¹⁴³ in which actors identities are shaped through the interactions.

All of the characteristics above bring about new perspectives on the main themes of international politics. The constructivist analysis of the anarchy, balance of power, self-help system, the relationship between state identity and interest, the meaning of power, the change in world politics,¹⁴⁴ and the relationship between domestic and international levels is very insightful in terms of understanding the international politics.

3.2. Different Constructivisms

Constructivism like other theories of international politics is not single and a unified theory; rather it is a combination of different approaches. Constructivists agree more on what they reject, but they are not that unified about what they propose¹⁴⁵ to the study of international politics. Constructivist scholars classify constructivism under different titles. For

¹⁴³ Christian Reus-Smit, "Constructivism" in *Theories of International Relations*, ed Andrew Linklater, Christian Reus-Smit, Matthew Patterson 223 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1987).

¹⁴⁴ Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23 (Summer 1998): 172.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

example, Christian Reus-Smit divides constructivism into two: systemic and holistic constructivism.¹⁴⁶ By systemic constructivism he means the systemic interactions between states as agents. Alexander Wendt is the advocate of this approach. He concentrates on the constitutive role of interactions between states.¹⁴⁷ This approach is not useful for analyzing the change in international system, since it just takes states as a level of analysis. Holistic constructivism, on the other hand, emphasizes the role of norms and rules in international politics. Holistic constructivists explain how domestic and international interactions affect the international political system. In this regard, they are more able to account for change in the system.¹⁴⁸ Kratochwill and Onuf's approach is holistic.

Jeffrey T. Checkel, on the other hand, classifies constructivism under three main titles: conventional, interpretative and critical/radical variants.¹⁴⁹ In his words:

Conventional constructivism examines the role of norms and identity in shaping international political outcome. These scholars are largely positivist in epistemological orientation and strong advocates of bridge-building among diverse theoretical perspectives; the qualitative, process-tracing case study is their methodological starting point. Interpretative

¹⁴⁶ Christian Reus-Smit, "Moral Purpose of the State: Culture, Social Identity and Institutional Rationality (New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press 1999), 165.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 165-166.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 168-169.

¹⁴⁹ Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Social Constructivism in Global and European Politics: A Review Essay," *Review of International Studies* 30 (2004): 230.

constructivists typically ask 'how possible' questions as opposed to the explanatory 'why' sort. Critical scholars add an explicitly normative dimension by probing a researcher's own implication in the reproduction of the identities and world he/she is studying. Discourse-theoretical methods are again emphasized; however, there is a greater emphasis on the power and domination inherent in language.¹⁵⁰

Emanuel Adler, however, divides constructivism into four categories.¹⁵¹ First group are modernists who accept that beside the interpretative methods, the traditional positivist methodology can be used. These modernists are divided into two different categories based on what they take as the main actors of international politics: state-centric and others who take the main actors as the prominent characteristic rather than certain categories.¹⁵² Third and fourth categories are gender-based and post-modernist constructivists who focus on non-material social factors and use the techniques such as Derrida's deconstruction or Foucault's genealogical method.¹⁵³ Since constructivism is a combination of different methodologically and epistemologically related approaches, the main point of all is that world politics is socially constructed.¹⁵⁴ This includes two basic

¹⁵⁰ Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Social Constructivism in Global and European Politics: A Review Essay," *Review of International Studies* 30 (2004): 230-231.

¹⁵¹ Emanuel Adler, "Seizing The Middle Ground," *European Journal of International Relations* 3 (September 1997): 335.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 336.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 336.

¹⁵⁴ Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20 (Summer 1995): 73.

assumptions. The first one is that the nature of international politics is not only material but also social and the second one is that the social structure of international politics shape the actor's identities and interests instead of only shaping their behavior.¹⁵⁵ Ted Hopf summarizes the common assumptions of modern /conventional and critical /post-modernist constructivists:

... [B]oth aim to denaturalize the social world, that is, to empirically discover and reveal how the institutions and practices and identities that people take as natural, given, or matter of fact, are, in fact the product of human agency, of social construction. Both believe that intersubjective reality and meanings are critical data for understanding the social world. Both insist that all data must be contextualized, that is, they must be related to, and situated within, the social environment in which they were gathered, in order to understand their meaning. Both accept the nexus between power and knowledge, the power of practice in its disciplinary, meaning-producing mode. Both also accept the restoration of agency to human individuals. Finally, both stress the reflexivity of the self and society, that is, the mutual constitution of actor and structure.¹⁵⁶

All of these characteristics of constructivism and its understanding of international politics provide rich insights in analyzing the international

¹⁵⁵ Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20 (Summer 1995): 73-74.

¹⁵⁶ Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23 (Summer 1998): 182.

politics. Furthermore, all of these characteristics provide advantages to constructivists in explaining change in world politics. In the next chapter, I am going to look into the constructivist theory's ability to explain changes in world politics.

3.3. Constructivism and Change in World Politics

One of the basic claims of constructivism is to explain change in world politics since it does not accept identities and interests as given facts and examines how identities and interests of the states are developed. The rationalist theories accept the identities and interests as given facts and independent variables to the analysis. This approach restricts the ability of rationalist theories to status quo analysis. When a radical change occurs in international system or relations of states and when their material capabilities do not change, rationalist theories cannot have enough tools for explaining these changes. By considering the norms, ideas, non-material institutions, and identities, constructivists have an advantage in explaining the formation of interests and identities, so the change in international politics. In this part I am going to account for how constructivist approaches explain change by looking at different works of different constructivist scholars.

In their seminal work, 'Understanding Change in International Politics: The Soviet Union Empire's Demise and The International System', Koslowski and Kratochwil argued that neo-realism, which is the dominant school of international politics, cannot provide a coherent explanation for the transformations taken place during and after the demise of Soviet Union.¹⁵⁷ They take the demise of Soviet Union as a case study for revealing how the change occurs with the transformation of norms and ideas.¹⁵⁸ Koslowski and Kratochwil argue that the three basic assumptions of neo-realism is at odds with understanding change in international politics. The first one is that international politics is an autonomous realm following its own logic; the second is that the international system is characterized with power, and the third one is that the dynamics of anarchical international system are determined by the distribution of material capabilities.¹⁵⁹ The end of the Cold War and the demise of Soviet Union showed that the change did not arise from the reasons that neo-realists envisaged. First of all, the bipolarity of cold war ended contra to the expectations of neo-realists that bi-polarity is durable. Secondly, neo-realists regarded the change as only possible due to a system-wide or hegemonic war or the creation of a different alliance pattern or with the emergence of another superpower or a sudden gap in the

¹⁵⁷ Rey Koslowski and Friedrich V. Kratochwil, "Understanding Change in International Politics: The Soviet Empire's Demise and The International System," *International Organization* 48 (Spring 1994): 215-247.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

military capabilities between states.¹⁶⁰ However, the end of the cold war was not determined by any of these changes, but was a result of the new ideas of perestroika and the 'new thinking' which were introduced by Gorbachev in the second half of the 1980's. At this point, an alternative theoretical framework should be developed and according to Koslowski and Kratochwil this alternative way is constructivism.¹⁶¹

Constructivism focuses on norms and their constitutive power on institutions. According to Kratochwil, as he explained in his book 'Rules, Norms, and Decisions', institutions are formed and routinized practices are established and regulated by norms.¹⁶² Norms are the basis of analysis of Kratochwil. Since the constructivism views the system as an artifice of a man-made (not only state-made) institutions,¹⁶³ the change in norms, so the change in institutions results in changes in the system. In other words, change in the system requires an alteration in the constitutive norms of the system.¹⁶⁴ When Joseph Stalin denied to accept the norms of the 19th century power politics in which the Great Powers played the game, the

¹⁶⁰ Rey Koslowski and Friedrich V. Kratochwil, "Understanding Change in International Politics: The Soviet Empire's Demise and The International System," *International Organization* 48 (Spring 1994): 217.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 216

¹⁶² Friedrich V. Kratochwil, "Rules, Norms, and Decisions: On the Conditions of Practical and Legal Reasoning in International Relations and Domestic Affairs" (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989)

¹⁶³ Rey Koslowski and Friedrich V. Kratochwil, "Understanding Change in International Politics: The Soviet Empire's Demise and The International System," *International Organization* 48 (Spring 1994): 222.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

international system evolved into the bi-polar, cold war politics. Another example is that when nationalism spreaded through all around the world, the nation state emerged as the main actor of the international politics. As we can see from these examples, the norms of the Great Power politics or nationalism had a constitutive effect on institutions of states or alliances. This suggests that the change in the norms may cause the change of the whole system.

Koslowski and Kratochwil accept states as institutions, constructed as a result of the reproduction of certain practices just like the international system¹⁶⁵. When the state is accepted as an institution, then the difference between the state level analysis and domestic level of analysis gets closer. Domestic politics has a role in changing the norms that states are predicated on. Thus, domestic issues have a constitutive power on state identity and interests. The Soviet Russia during the Gorbachev's time underwent this kind of change in the norms that Soviet Russian state depended on and the change in domestic politics and its practices which resulted in the transformation of the system. Gorbachev ended the Brezhnev Doctrine which was one of the main sources of the Soviet hegemony in Eastern European countries. This norm accepted that a threat to one country was considered a threat to all socialism. This understanding allowed the Soviet Russia to

¹⁶⁵ Rey Koslowski and Friedrich V. Kratochwil, "Understanding Change in International Politics: The Soviet Empire's Demise and The International System," *International Organization* 48 (Spring 1994): 223..

control Eastern European states. The end of this doctrine meant the end of the Soviet practices that emanated from this norm. For example, Gorbachev did not use force against the Eastern European countries, when a threat occurred against the communist party and he allowed the communist parties of the Eastern European countries to do reforms. Thus, the Soviet control over the East European countries lost its impact over the time with these new norms. Besides, the end of the Brezhnev Doctrine, Gorbachev's understanding of restructuring (perestroika) led to the change in the way that people thought and felt about the legitimacy of communism.¹⁶⁶ This new ideas resulted in the change in the practices of people, so the political actors and finally states.

The change in Soviet Russia's foreign policy understanding found a positive answer from the US. US did not provoke these changes in the Soviet Union and Bush decided to meet Gorbachev. These mutual gestures led to the end of the West-East conflict.¹⁶⁷ The changes in the ideas of one of the main superpowers of Cold War led to a gradual change in the international system, although the material capabilities of both superpowers remained unchanged.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ Rey Koslowski and Friedrich V. Kratochwil, "Understanding Change in International Politics: The Soviet Empire's Demise and The International System," *International Organization* 48 (Spring 1994): 237.

¹⁶⁷ Nina Tannenwald and William C. Wohlforth, "Introduction: The Role of Ideas and the End of the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7 (Spring 2005): 5.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Alexander Wendt, as a conventional constructivist, accepts the state as the main and unitary actor in international politics.¹⁶⁹ He divides the identity into two parts: collective and social.¹⁷⁰ His main concern is to explain state interactions through identity construction, and he ignores the role of domestic construction of identity while he focuses corporate identity.¹⁷¹ According to Wendt identities and interests of the states are socially constructed and they are constituted through state interactions. Thus, a change in international politics can be possible if states get engaged in new patterns of interactions.¹⁷² The new patterns of interactions bring about the new identities so the new interests. Although change is difficult because when a social institution is once constructed, it confronts states with social facts which reinforce the structure and states can desire a stable identity in order to maintain stability; yet it is possible.¹⁷³ For example, the Cold War ended because the Soviet Union and the US did not behave on the basis of an Hobbesian understanding anymore.¹⁷⁴ Thus, in Wendt's analysis, states are the main actors and the constitutive power comes from state interactions, not from the domestic realm.

¹⁶⁹ Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20 (Summer 1995): 72.

¹⁷⁰ Alexander Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation and the International State," *American Political Science Review* 88 (June 1994): 384-396.

¹⁷¹ Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50 (January 1998): 341.

¹⁷² Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (Spring 1992): 411.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 411.

¹⁷⁴ Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20 (Summer 1995): 74.

This understanding of Wendt is criticized by some scholars.¹⁷⁵ Wendt's understanding relegated the unit of analysis to state interactions. Domestic affairs, changing norms inside the state and human agency are overlooked in Wendt's analysis. Thus, from the perspective of Wendt's conventional constructivism which takes domestic identities of states, corporate identity, as given cannot explain the change in international politics adequately.¹⁷⁶ The norm based approaches which take the norms as the center for their analysis can explain change better than Wendtian constructivism since it focuses on the role of the norms at different levels.

Jeffrey T. Checkel in his article 'Constructivist Turn in International Relations examines the book of Martha Finnemore: *Constructing National Interest*. Finnemore argues that constructivist logic of appropriateness is a plausible tool for predicting human and state behavior just as rationalist' logic of consequences.¹⁷⁷ She studied how international institutions are able to shape state interests. In the case of UNESCO, the idea that national science bureaucracies should be established to promote science spread around the world as a constitutive norm and the states started to establish national science bureaucracies. In another case she examines poverty alleviation as a policy objective of the World Bank which emerged as a norm

¹⁷⁵ Michael Hoffman, "Concerning Alexander Wendt's Constructivism, Identity and Change", *GRIN-Verlag Für Akademische Texte* (Autumn 2005) p.5.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁷⁷ Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50 (January 1998): 330.

and led the states see the poverty alleviation as an interest of their own. Materialist and rationalist theories cannot explain the role of the diffusion of these norms and the corresponding changes in state interests in state behaviors.¹⁷⁸

Jeffrey T. Checkel also examines the book of Audie Klotz: *Global Norms and the Demise of Apartheid*. In this book Klotz seeks for an answer the question of why an important number of international organizations and states adopted sanctions to the Apartheid regime in South Africa despite their strategic and economic interests from South Africa.¹⁷⁹ Klotz put the norm of racial equality to the center of her analysis. This norm of racial equality led to the redefinition of state interests in spite of the material benefits of the pursuit of previous norms.¹⁸⁰ This reveals that the norms have a constitutive effect on state identity. Klotz by doing extensive case studies on USA, Britain and Zimbabwe showed how norms are being shaped at the national level and influence different groups and individuals in domestic realm.¹⁸¹ Klotz' analysis is more process-oriented than Finnemores analysis¹⁸² and she takes both international and domestic levels into consideration in explaining the changes in state interests.

¹⁷⁸ Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50 (January 1998): 331.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 335.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 335.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 335.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 336.

CHAPTER 4

THE ANALYSIS OF THE CHANGE IN GREEK TURKISH RELATIONS

In this section, I aim to show the weaknesses of the rationalist theories (realism and liberalism) in explaining the change in Greek-Turkish relations. In the second section, I move to a Wendtian analysis of Greek Turkish relations.

4.1. The Weaknesses of the Rationalist Theories in Explaining Greek Turkish Relations After 1999

Recently, some scholars claimed that the debate between rationalism and constructivism has become the prominent debate in IR theory.¹⁸³ This debate is of great significance because constructivism challenges the very central assumptions of rationalism such as anarchy as a given structure.¹⁸⁴ Constructivism does not accept the anarchy or some other features of international politics as a given fact, instead it accepts them as socially constructed through interactions between agents.¹⁸⁵ Since the meaning can

¹⁸³ Maja Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations: The Politics of Reality* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004), 3.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁸⁵ Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20 (Summer 1995): 73.

be redefined, identities may change, interests may totally go another direction and norms can play very crucial role in affecting the behaviors of the actors in international politics.¹⁸⁶

Rationalist theories assume that the anarchic nature of international politics is a given fact and this structure puts some limitations for state behaviors. For example, in the case of Turkish Greek relations, if we accept that anarchy and self-help system as a constraint of the anarchic system and if we also consider that the identities of Turkey and Greece naturally includes enmity against each other, we cannot explain the *détente* process in the relations after 1999. We could not foresee such a transformation in Greek Turkish relations from a rationalist perspective. Following a realist logic, the relations between Turkey and Greece should have remained as negative unless there were changes in their material capabilities or a change in the alliance patterns.

Rationalist understanding assumes that states change their behaviors if they think that they consider that they win more by means of such a corollary change. However, in the case of Greek Turkish rapprochement both

¹⁸⁶ Maja Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations: The Politics of Reality* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004), 4.

sides approach EU from an ideational perspective.¹⁸⁷ This means that Turkey especially after the Helsinki Summit started to redefine its identity as a European while Greece regarded Turkey as a European partner instead of a threat to its national interests. Thus, what happened in Greek Turkish relations after 1999 is more than a change in the cost-benefit material calculations of these states but is rooted in the changes in these states' ideational attitudes which in turn posed a change in the way they interpreted their interests.

Indeed, in order to give account of this transformation, one should focus on different levels and factors in order to assess their value. In this case, one should consider the role of political initiatives made by İsmail Cem and Yorgo Papandreu, Tayyip Erdoğan and Karamanlis', the role of the earthquake diplomacy, the roles of both countries' medias in the change in the public opinion in both sides, the EU norms, the 'new thinking' of the AKP government, mainly its "zero problems with neighboring countries. Without considering the role of these factors, we cannot fully understand the change in Greek Turkish relations. So just as Ted Hopf says, the complicated nature

¹⁸⁷ H. Tarik Oguzlu, "The Latest Greek-Turkish Detente: Instrumentalist Play for EU Membership, or Long-Term Institutional Cooperation?" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17 (July 2004): 340.

of Greek Turkish relation after 1999 necessitates more information than the material capabilities and their distribution as rationalist theories suggest.¹⁸⁸

Between 1999 and 2001 Greek military spending increased by 7.5 percent in real terms while Turkey's military spending decreased by 8.4 percent at the same time period partly because of the economic crisis in Turkish economy.¹⁸⁹ In such a situation, if we look at the case from a rationalist perspective, Greece was expected to behave more aggressively against its national enemy Turkey, since Greece has gained relatively more power in terms of military capability and Turkey had some economic problems inside. This would be non-surprising given the conflict-ridden history of Greek Turkish relations in which both states waited for the other's weaknesses in order to acquire relative gains over the other. So, while behaving in a more aggressive way would be a more rational behavior for Greece, Greece nonetheless chose to develop more conciliatory relations with Turkey between 1999 and 2001. This shows us that we need to know more about the dynamics of the relations than cost-benefit calculations that rationalist theories suggest in order to grasp the whole nature of the changing relations between two countries.

¹⁸⁸ Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23 (Summer 1998): 173.

¹⁸⁹ Christos Kollias, "The Greek Turkish Rapprochement, the Underlying Military Tension and Greek Defense Spending", *Turkish Studies* 5 (Spring 2004):106 in special issue "Greek Turkish Relations in an Era of Detente"

Another weakness of the rationalist theories is that they regard identities and interests as static, given, and as independent variables to the analysis.¹⁹⁰ So, rationalist theories are not interested in how identities and interests are being formed. They simply offer a systemic explanation for a change in the behavior, while presuming no change in the definition of either interests or the identities of the states involved.¹⁹¹ Besides, rationalist theories assume that states have only one identity, which are self-interested units.¹⁹² Can non-changing interests and identities indeed explain the transformation in Greek-Turkish relations?

Historically, Greece and Turkey have seen each other as enemies. They used every emerging opportunity to increase their relative gains vis-a-vis each other. For example, Greece has used its European Union membership against Turkey by isolating Turkey from the EU, while Turkey has used its power in NATO to keep Greece out in 1970's. Moreover, both countries used their Turkish and Greek minorities as a tool against each other. After 1999, on the other hand, Turkey started to redefine its identity from an EU membership perspective. Turkey, especially after Helsinki Summit Decision, started to comply with the EU norms so its foreign policy understanding also changed along with this new identity. Greece, on the other hand, changed

¹⁹⁰ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (Spring 1992): 392.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 392.

¹⁹² Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23 (Summer 1998): 175.

its policy of isolating Turkey from EU. Greece also started to see Turkey as a European neighbor instead of a national enemy. This identity change played an important role in the transformations of relations between two countries. Since rationalist approaches do not help us explain the changes in the interest calculation of Greece and Turkey, it does not provide us with a convenient milieu to account for the changes there occurred in the relations between Greece and Turkey.

Rationalist theories assume that material power is the most important source of power for the behaviors of the states. Constructivism, on the other hand, suggests that discursive power also matters in international politics.¹⁹³ Ideas and discourse have a role in determining policy preferences of states. Although some neo-liberals like Keohane believes that ideas play a role in determining the outcomes and that they have causal effects, he only restricts the role of ideas to the rationalist view that agents behave in a self-interested way.¹⁹⁴ Besides, Keohane thinks that ideas can only have causal power when they are institutionalized. While agreeing that states act in accordance with their interests, constructivists put emphasis on the constitutive effect of ideas in redefining state interests.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23 (Summer 1998): 177.

¹⁹⁴ Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane, *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1993), 4.

¹⁹⁵ Nina Tannenwald and William C. Wohlforth, "Introduction: The Role of Ideas and the End of the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7 (Spring 2005): 7.

The role of ideas in Greek Turkish relation after 1999 cannot be underestimated. After the earthquake, the idea of being neighbors and the discourse of the elites of both countries about being neighbors who share the same fate had an impact on the public opinion in both countries. The change in the public opinion mutually affected the policies of Greece and Turkey. Furthermore, the AKP's new foreign policy understanding of "zero problems with neighboring countries" also played a role in developing the relations between the two sides of Aegean. Turkey developed a friendlier attitude towards Greece in accordance with the new idea of zero problems with neighboring countries. Rationalist theories do not provide us with the necessary theoretical tools to analyze the constitutive role of ideas in Greek Turkish relations. In that sense, rationalist theories cannot capture the whole dynamics behind the change in Greek Turkish relations after 1999.

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned weaknesses of rationalist theories, one should give credit to their explanatory power in explaining the ongoing high political problems between Turkey and Greece. The developments between Greece and Turkey after 1999 did not yield the solution of Aegean Dispute or Cyprus Problem as yet. For this reason, the rationalist approaches have something to say about these enduring high political issues.

4.2. Wendtian Analysis of Greek Turkish Relations After 1999

Alexander Wendt is one of the most influential, if not the first, scholars of constructivism. His seminal work "The Social Theory of International Politics" paved way for constructivism to be one of the mainstream theories of international politics. His frame of "anarchy is what states make of it" has become the motto of constructivism. In this article, he summarizes the main characteristics of constructivist approach by giving references to the weaknesses of rationalist theories. He also aims to bridge the gap between post-modernist theories and rationalist theories. He accepts the basic assumptions of neo-realism such as that international politics is anarchic; states are rational actors and the main units of analysis.¹⁹⁶ However, he focuses on how international politics is socially constructed and how these social structures shape the actors' identities and interests.¹⁹⁷

Wendt emphasizes the importance of shared knowledge and intersubjective meanings. Self-help, for example, predicates on the shared understanding that states are self-interested actors, which do not trust each other and define their interests from this point of view. Thus, self-help and power politics are socially constructed institutions, which are produced by

¹⁹⁶ Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20 (Summer 1995): 72.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.71-72.

state interactions.¹⁹⁸ So, if the states stop acting on the basis of socially constructed self-help structure, it does not exist anymore.

When we apply this understanding of socially-constructed self help system into the Turkish Greek relations case, it is apparent that after 1999 Greece and Turkey stopped acting on the basis of self-help. The interactions that led to the emergence of a new shared understanding between two states started in February 1999 with the capturing of Ocalan. Ocalan's capturing by Turkey in the Greek embassy in Kenya resulted in the resignation of three Greek ministers including the minister of foreign affairs who is responsible for supporting Ocalan escape. This step was taken by Turkish state as an important gesture. Yorgo Papandreou became the new Minister of Foreign Affairs who is more moderate and amenable in comparison to Pangalos.

In March 1999, due to the Kosova War the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Greece and Turkey, Papandreou and Cem talked on the phone about the Kosovo War. Both states were in the same side, supporting Kosovo against Serbia. The interactions between Greece and Turkey during the Kosovo War took the relations one step further. In May 1999, İsmail Cem sent a letter to Papandreou in which he asserted his willingness to improve bilateral relations and he suggested to establish a dialogue on culture, tourism, environment

¹⁹⁸ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (Spring 1992): 392.

etc. This letter was the response of the Turkish state to Greece to the previous gesture of Greece in the Ocalan case. These mutual gestures brought the relations to a relatively good point. In August 1999, the massive earthquake hit Turkey. Greek state offered whatever assistance Turkey needs. This was yet another gesture from the Greek state, which improves the relations deeper. When another earthquake hit Greece on September, Turkey responded in the same way as its Greek counterpart. Interactions between two states were realized through the different levels of state institutions. Mutual phone calls, meetings and talks between the officials of two states increased. These interactions initiated a new process of changing identities. Thanks to these reconciliatory interactions, the two states started redefining their identities as the neighboring countries who share the same destiny rather than as national enemies.

The EU's Helsinki Summit's decision with the help of Greece lifting her objections to Turkey's candidacy in December 1999 was yet a bigger gesture. The coming years witnessed further positive moves on the part of both states. The Prime Minister of Turkey, Tayyip Erdogan visited Greece in 2004 after 16 years that the last visit paid by Prime Minister of Turkey to Greece. Kostas Karamanlis responded kindly and paid a visit to Turkey. This visit was the first visit of Greek Prime Minister after 55 years. In 2009, Turkish Minister of Foreign affairs went to Greece and Tayyip Erdogan visited

Greece in 2010 one more time. During these visits, Turkey and Greece signed many agreements in different areas especially in economy. The leaders of both states reflect their conciliatory and friendly attitude towards each other in their discourse. Moreover, these developments yielded to some other concrete results. Both Greece and Turkey changed their national security priorities. They lift their primary status of national threat to each other's security. Turkey also lifted its decision that she counts Greek states determination to increase its internal water to 12 miles.

These mutual interactions over time and the reciprocal play, have taught both sides to form relatively stable expectations about the other's behavior, and through these, habits of cooperation formed.¹⁹⁹ The constructivist analysis of cooperation assumes that the expectations are produced by interactions which influence state identities and interests.²⁰⁰ Turkish Greek case proved that these state interactions produced expectations from each other and subsequently these expectations lead to the change in identity and interests. Turkish state defined its identities as friendly neighbor of Greece and European member as Greece while Greece also defined its identity as the friendly neighbor of Turkey in their relations. This identity change resulted in that they have not seen their interests collide with one another.

¹⁹⁹ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (Spring 1992): 416.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.417.

Instead, they started thinking the improvements in their relations are in accordance with their interests.

To sum up, Greek Turkish relations after 1999 is an example of producing new identities and interests through the state interactions. The social relations of two states constructed a social structure based on shared understandings. This reconstitution process led to the change in their relations from an enmity to a more conciliatory friendship. In other words, Greek Turkish relations shifted from a Hobbesian anarchic culture to a Lockean culture in which Greece and Turkey mutually recognize their sovereignty while they have more confidence that their existence is not threatened.²⁰¹ Before 1999, fear and egoism of Hobbesian culture dominated Greek Turkish relations but after 1999, with the help of all these developments I mentioned above, relations redefined in Lockean understanding with more trust and new rooms for cooperation and positive identification.

²⁰¹ Alexander Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation and the International State," *American Political Science Review* 88 (June 1994): 389.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Since Greece gained its independence from the Ottoman Empire, and the emergence of Turkish Republic at the end of the war against the Greek army in 1922, a Hobbesian culture dominated the relations between Turkey and Greece. Although there were temporary détente processes, they continued seeing each other as the primary threat to their national security.

After 1999, however, the relations started to change. Interaction between both states increased. Earthquakes reminded both sides that they shared the same fate as a close neighbors and Greek and Turkish public developed friendlier opinion about themselves. Different parts of both Greek and Turkish society started establishing new relations between each other. Many civil society institutions collaborated with each other in different areas. Both states changed their positions on perceiving each other as a primary threat to their national security. Turkey changed its decision of "casus belli" about the internal waters of Greece. The dogfights between Turkish and Greek aircrafts over the Aegean decreased.

For all of these reasons, Turkish Greek relations seem highly different from the period before 1999. This would not have been possible without a change in the identification on the part of the each state vis-a-vis the other. The intersubjectively constructed identities helped them to develop their relations not in self-help terms but in terms of friendship. More importantly, they have begun to see that mutual cooperation, rather than hitherto-pursued conflict, is more in accordance with their interests. Greece began to consider a more democratic and powerful Turkey in line with its interests. How these changes occur given the conflict-ridden history of relations between the two countries?

Rationalist theories do not provide us with enough theoretical tools to explain the complex dynamics of this change because of its assumption that identities and interests are given and exogenous to the analysis. Rationalist looks at the distribution of material capabilities as the basis of international politics. Nevertheless, in the case of Greek Turkish relations after 1999, the distribution of capabilities cannot explain the change completely. But it should be mentioned that rationalist theory has still something to say about the Greek Turkish relations. The Aegean and Cyprus problems still pose threat to the reconciliation process. Rationalist theory can answer the question as to why these enduring problems of Aegean and Cyprus are still

in place although it cannot provide a sufficient explanation for the recent détente in the relations between the two countries.

This thesis has argued that the changing identities are in stake in the context of the recent transformation of relations between the two countries, and that constructivist approach gives us more insights in understanding and explaining this phenomenon. Wendt's constructivism shows us that how Turkish and Greek states' social relations construct new social structures in which they reconstitute their identities and interests. Wendt's constructivism also demonstrates that not the redistribution of material capabilities but the social interactions are the basis of changing behaviors.

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