



# All Azimuth

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## Methodological Poverty and Disciplinary Underdevelopment in IR

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### Abstract

*This article begins with the premise that the International Relations (IR) disciplinary community in Turkey has a problem: namely, it has failed to appreciate the importance of methodology. Rather, efforts to develop the local discipline and, subsequently, training within IR departments, have both emphasized ‘theory’, arguing that it constitutes the best route of elevating local disciplinary scholarship and enabling true dialogue with the core discipline. This article argues that, unfortunately, this focus has at best succeeded in encouraging the importation and assimilation of outside theories, and at worst, has helped to create a shell of a local discipline—ever increasing in size, but not in substance. It goes on to argue that only through development of students’ and scholars’ methodological competence can Turkish IR gain greater value in the global IR scholarly community, because methodology, its tools and approaches and the expertise needed to apply them in a competent and skilled manner, constitutes the universal common language of an academic discipline, and thus allows for genuine discussions and debates within a disciplinary community.*

**Keywords:** Methodology, International Relations discipline, core, periphery

### 1. Introduction

James Rosenau once referred to theory being “imagination”, and method being “art”. This special issue draws on that characterization to argue that without mastering the art of methodology, imagination remains confined to the mind. The works included in this issue are therefore devoted to the development of high quality research in International Relations, based on the principle that to achieve that best quality, we have to develop students’ and scholars’ methodological competence. Unfortunately, recent decades in Turkish International Relations training have seen an excessive emphasis on theory, while ignoring the ‘art’ of methodology. At best this focus has succeeded in encouraging the importation and assimilation of outside theories,<sup>1</sup> and at worst, it has helped in creating a shell of a local discipline—ever increasing in size, but not in substance. How would a greater focus on methodology have helped? I would argue that methodology, its tools and approaches and the expertise needed

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Ersel Aydınli and Julie Mathews, “Are the Core and Periphery Irreconcilable? The Curious World of Publishing in Contemporary International Relations.” *International Studies Perspectives* 1, no. 3 (2002): 289–303; Ching-Chang Chen, “The Absence of Non-Western IR Theory in Asia Reconsidered,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 11, no. 1 (2011): 1–23; Peter M. Kristensen, “How Can Emerging Powers Speak? On Theorists, Native Informants and Quasi-Officials in International Relations Discourse,” *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2015): 637–53; Yaqing Qin, “Development of International Relations Theory in China: Progress Through Debates,” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 11, no. 2 (2011): 231–57.

to apply them in a competent and skilled manner, constitutes the universal language of an academic discipline. While there are certainly different methodological approaches and tools, and there may be strong disagreements about which ones are better for various purposes, they nevertheless all provide a structured way of communicating ideas that otherwise can be dismissed as just opinions. Methodological approaches and tools therefore constitute a common language, one that allows for genuine discussions and debates within a disciplinary community and thus the accumulation of scholarship. Furthermore, the common language of methodology provides a means to scholars in the disciplinary periphery to speak with their colleagues in the core. In other words, through competent and effective application of established methods of research, scholars whose voices might otherwise be easier to ignore, are more likely to be understood and therefore heard.

One of the most disturbing problems I have observed over years of teaching and researching IR in Turkey, and the problem on which I lay the blame for much of the local disciplinary community's failure to grow substantively, is both a broad lack of appreciation for the importance of methodology as well as an overall inadequacy in knowledge of and competence in applying methodological approaches and tools. Unfortunately, methodology remains undervalued in most IR departments in Turkey. We see evidence of this in the students that emerge from these departments. It has become a sadly regular occurrence in graduate student thesis and dissertation juries to be presented with explicit research questions, a review of the literature, and an explicit methodology description, but when it comes to the analysis, no true application of the stated methodology. It is obvious there are problems in the methodology training we give to our IR students. At the most basic level, there is simply not enough training being given. A look at the curricula of 38 International Relations departments across Turkey shows that the vast majority, 30, offer just one or two methods related undergraduate courses. While four departments do offer three or more such courses, another four departments offer no methods courses at all! The numbers are roughly the same at the graduate level, with six schools offering no specific graduate level methods courses, and 29 offering just one or two.

Even when training is given however, it is rare to see it done in anything more than a mechanical manner—presenting the basics but making little effort to have students engage with them in depth. It has been my experience that presentation alone is ineffective in getting students to learn anything, let alone truly digesting a range of different methodological approaches and mastering various methods. I believe however, that if a student is exposed to the personal experiences of someone who uses a particular methodology, the engagement and subsequent learning potential is much deeper. This is the starting idea behind the works in this issue. I believe that if students hear how an individual scholar came to know about and use a certain methodology, if they read narratives of scholars' personal experiences with learning about and subsequently practicing the art of a particular methodology, they will not only better understand how and when to use them, they will not be afraid to do so.

With this in mind, this special issue is intended primarily for graduate students and young scholars in the field of International Relations who are searching for guidance in expanding their methodological research skills and repertoire. Its readers have probably taken a methodology class or two at university, and they have likely received advice about particular methods or approaches from a professor or a thesis supervisor, but they may still be wondering about the options open to them, and they may be unsure about how to choose

among them. The following articles may also be of interest to more experienced scholars who are curious not only about different methodologies used in IR, but also about the types of experiences their colleagues have had in learning about and using those methodologies.

This issue does not offer in-depth, step-by-step instructions on how to use the methodologies and methods discussed, nor does it in any way claim to be an all-inclusive exploration of methodologies in IR. Rather, it offers a look into 10 different methods and methodologies used for conducting research in IR, from the behind-the-scenes perspectives of scholars who have actually used them in their own work. In their articles, the authors in this issue provide background information on the method or methodology in question, including its history, primary questions it has been used to answer, and any major research programs and projects associated with it. They then share frank and honest insights into their own personal histories with the methods and methodologies: how did they decide to use them, what alternatives did they consider, what kinds of training did they receive and what kinds of obstacles did they face during that training? Finally, the authors explore their application of the method or methodology with respect to their current or past research, and why they found it the most appropriate for the research question(s) being asked.

## **2. How Do We Do Research?**

Research begins with genuine and well-informed questions. We may sometimes tell our students that there are no ‘bad’ questions when we’re trying to encourage classroom interaction, but in research, there may very well be ‘bad’ questions. The first kind of ‘bad’ question is one that is disingenuous. In other words, research questions should be real ones for which you are genuinely seeking answers. If you already know the answer (or believe that you do), then you are not involved in research, you are simply trying to prove a point. Questions also need to be legitimate. To draw an analogy, while inspiration may seem to come out of the blue, in fact it’s generally based on past experiences, observations, and so on. Likewise, a ‘legitimate’ research question should be based on something. It may emerge from past experiences or it may build on past research or seek to extend existing theory, that is, it may draw on a practical or a theoretical background, but it should extend logically from something. A research question that seems to come ‘out of the blue’ will likely address neither a practical issue nor a conceptual one, and is therefore probably not going to contribute to knowledge building. Thirdly, the question should be ‘answerable’. There is little point in asking questions that are impossible to answer, whether it be because they are worded in an overly general manner (e.g. how do social media impact voting practices?) or for practical reasons (e.g. a question requiring the collection of qualitative data over decades). To be ‘answerable’ therefore, questions need to be clear, precise, and feasible. Fourthly, ‘good’ questions should be important, in the sense that they will be of interest to others. The answers to the questions may have practical implications or not, they may contribute to conceptualizations or theory building, but they must at some level be of interest to a clearly identified audience. This is not to imply that the audience must be large, but it must be evident who the audience is.

Once ready with genuine, legitimate, answerable, and important research questions, researchers must then determine the best methodology for seeking answers to them. Perhaps the most fundamental point in selecting a methodology is that it be appropriate for answering the questions in hand, not the other way around. You should not, therefore, be adhering to a

methodology like an ideology, and trying to use it to answer everything. Methods are tools that we can develop skills in using, and the more tools you are able to master, the bigger your toolkit will be to address questions. With this larger capacity you will not only be able to answer more, diverse research questions effectively, but you will also be able to address the same research questions in alternative ways, thereby broadening your capacity to find answers to them. To draw on the old saying, ‘if a man has a hammer everything starts looking like a nail’, we might say that researchers with a limited set of methods in their repertoire will have an equally limited perspective on research. This issue is therefore both a starting point to understanding the kinds of methodological options that exist, and an acknowledgement of the vital importance that methodology plays in guiding the direction and value of our scholarship.

### **3. How should This Special Issue be used?**

As stated at the beginning of this introduction, this issue is intended primarily as a methodology guide for young scholars in the field of International Relations. First, it may serve as an accompanying textbook for classes on methodology in International Relations. In this case, it will be most effective in a complementary role to a more detailed training manual on various methods, offering the personal insights and experiences that show how scholars come to use certain methods and approaches. Secondly, it may provide suggestions to any researcher in the field who would like to explore alternative methodological tools and approaches or would just like to compare his or her own methodological experiences with others’. In either case, the issue aims to help everyone involved in International Relations research to expand their methodological horizons.

### **4. Articles**

The following articles offer insights into ten different methods/methodologies used in International Relations research. While by no means exclusive, the issue strives to present a diverse selection of methods and methodologies, deriving from various practical and epistemological approaches to research. As noted above, it aims to give a broad—though by no means exclusive—look not just at some methods/methodologies that can be used, but at how practicing scholars actually use them, and why.

The articles can be roughly divided as follows: four articles dealing with broadly quantitative methods of research, two embracing either explicitly mixed methods or a ‘beyond quantitative/qualitative’ approach, and four articles dealing with broadly qualitative methods of research. The remaining two—Aktürk’s opening and Travlos’s closing articles—adopt a slightly different take on the methodology question by addressing broader issues of research design rather than focusing on a particular methodology.

In his article, Aktürk provides a broad picture of Turkish foreign policy scholarship by looking at the research designs used in studies published over the last two decades and classifying them according to the temporal dimension of the causality relationship between their dependent and independent variables—or lack thereof. Basically, do the investigated cause(s) and outcome(s) unfold over long or short periods of time? He applies a model that draws analogies with natural disasters to clarify the temporal concept, for example, ‘tornado’ is used to describe events that are quick to develop and quick to end, while ‘earthquakes’ represent those that take a long time to develop but then the actual event is over very quickly.

Using the model, Aktürk explores political research conducted in Turkey. He finds that a large number of studies do not have clear independent variables, and despite claims to causality—generally of the ‘global warming’ type—they would more accurately be categorized as ‘non-causal description’ works. He ends by providing guidelines for overall research design in order to address this problem.

Belgin Şan-Akca’s article leads off the issue’s exploration of various quantitative methods in IR research by looking at the use of large-N datasets. She first provides a critical overview of work done on transnational dimensions of internal conflict and then gives an account of her personal experience in conducting research on how states and nonstate armed groups interact. In this spirit, her piece includes insights into both broad research issues, such as gaps in the existing research on internal conflicts, and specifics of her own decade-long experience of designing and building up the Dangerous Companions Project, including details on data collection and coding. She concludes with clear suggestions for future research in conflict studies and IR academic scholarship in Turkey.

Akın Ünver’s article first provides an excellent historical overview of Computational Social Sciences before delving into its specific application in International Relations research—Computational International Relations, or ComInt. As a guide to newcomers to ComSoc and ComInt, Ünver lays out five main approaches to mapping digital data: a) language/text, b) mapping, c) modelling, d) communication, and e) networks. By drawing closely on his own experiences, he provides insights into two critical aspects of training in ComInt, namely the technical foundation that students need in order to conduct such research, and, what he deems the even more challenging one, understanding the actual degree of technical skills that are necessary to learn. He then goes on to explore the specific application of ComInt to research on social media’s relationship with political processes and describes exactly how computational tools helped him develop his own scholarship in this area. Interestingly, despite an instinctive tendency to place computational methods firmly into the quantitative camp, Ünver argues that they are in fact appropriate for bridging the gap between qualitative and quantitative approaches and serving as the basis for true multi-method research design.

Continuing with computer-based methodologies, the article by Emre Hatipoğlu et al. looks specifically at the analysis of social media data in international relations research. After providing a background to automated text analysis in IR including past literature of its use and its primary terminology and techniques, the authors discuss how using data from Twitter in particular compares with analysis of more traditional international relations texts. In doing so, they also share their own experiences with learning about and becoming proficient in automated text analysis techniques and provide information on the types of training that an IR scholar needs in order to apply such methods. To illustrate the methodology further they provide detailed information on the development of one particular technique of conducting textual analysis on Twitter, the Longest Common Subsequence Similarity Metric (LCSSM), which automatically clusters tweets with content. Finally, they show how they have actually used the LCSSM technique to help analyze public opinion in Turkey towards Syrian refugees.

Fifth article delves deeply into quantitative analysis, with Özgür Özdamar’s presentation of the use of expected utility modeling and game theory in International Relations research. In line with the structure of all works in this special issue, Özdamar’s piece begins with a thorough look at the history of expected utility theory, which was developed to explain decision-making processes under uncertain conditions. He goes on to explain in detail the

model's theoretical foundations, how the model actually works, and the kind of data needed to use it. Following a narrative of his personal experience with learning about and using expected utility modelling, the author brings the abstract to life by giving a step-by-step account of how he applied such modeling and game theory approaches in his forecasting of future developments in international bargaining on the Iranian nuclear program.

Ali Fisunoğlu's article on system dynamics modeling on the surface involves another highly quantitative method of conducting research in political science or international relations, but the author highlights that in fact this approach can be seen as an alternative to the traditional dichotomous view of qualitative/quantitative research methods. Fisunoğlu shows how this is the case by first offering a history of system dynamics models and then describing how they have been used in the social sciences alongside a critical comparison of the approach with more traditional qualitative and quantitative methods. Drawing throughout on a frank discussion of his own experience, he goes on to inform the reader about the basic idea behind system dynamics models and carefully shows how they have been used specifically in studies related to arms races and the spread of interstate conflicts.

With İsmail Erkam Sula's article we reach a kind of mid-point in the collection, as the author consciously highlights a multi-method approach combining qualitative content based coding analysis with quantitative event data analysis. He walks the reader through the steps taken in developing what he designates as an 'eclectic coding scheme' using a Role theory framework, and then shows how it was applied to build up the Turkish Foreign Policy Roles and Events Dataset (TFPRED). To set the stage for this discussion, Sula first briefly reviews the literature both on how role theory frameworks have been applied and on the use of event data in foreign policy analysis. Following an explanation of his experience with designing and creating the TFPRED and showing the kinds of empirical results that can be achieved by using this methodological approach, he concludes with a critical assessment of its limitations.

In eight article, authors Senem Aydın-Düzgüt and Bahar Rumelili delve into a method that may be one of the most commonly named approaches to research in International Relations, but also, arguably, one of the most frequently misunderstood: Discourse Analysis. In their piece the two authors present a clear and very thorough overview of the conceptual and epistemological foundations of the approach, before moving on to an honest narrative of their personal histories with applying it. Finally, in their effort to demystify what Discourse Analysis is and how exactly it can be used, they provide a hands-on example of actual discursive analysis of a British newspaper article from the 1960s discussing the extent to which Turkey is—or is not—a part of Europe. Their article wraps up with a frank discussion of the challenges scholars may face in conducting discourse analyses and how best to overcome them.

Ninth article shines a light on the sometimes fraught disciplinary border between the fields of international relations and history, with Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık's look at the use of comparative historical analysis (CHA) in international relations research. The article begins with a detailed description of the main premises of CHA and how it evolved, and then provides a practical categorization of CHA approaches based on their varying modes and aims. In his comparison, Palabıyık guides the reader through the advantages and disadvantages of each form in order both to show how each might best contribute to research as well as to caution against practical difficulties that researchers might face in applying them. The article concludes with the author's in-depth discussion of his own experiences with using CHA, and

in doing so, he makes a powerful case for the importance of history-based research methods in IR scholarship.

Also treading the line between history and international relations is Egemen Bezci's work in tenth article, in which he focuses on a rigorous approach to archival research. Following his discussion of a broad 'international history' approach to historical studies of Turkish Foreign Policy, Bezci uses his own work on intelligence affairs to particularly highlight the challenges and risks of these types of methods, and archival research in particular. Drawing on his experiences he outlines not only the different types of archives he used, but gives strategies and tips for improving efforts at objectivity and accuracy, while recognizing the inherent flaws and obstacles that exist when relying on archived materials.

The last of the focused articles on specific methodologies is Alper Kaliber's look at another very commonly used method of research, semi-structured interviewing. In particular he discusses the idea of a reflectivist approach to this qualitative form of interviewing, one that argues that while this research tool should be recognized as having inherent political consequences, that does not mean it should be dismissed entirely. The approach instead proposes that the researcher assume a self-critical approach that consciously acknowledges his/her role and influence on the interview and interviewee. Kaliber's article first sets the stage by describing his own personal experience with learning about and using interviewing in his own research. He then provides a thorough background to the debates surrounding the use of interviewing as a data collection method. The remainder of the article gives the reader a clear description of precisely how, why, and in what ways researchers may use this tool, divided according to three stages of pre, during, and post-interview. Throughout, he addresses a variety of important issues, from practical details of interviewing to broader issues such as ethics and consent taking.

Konstantinos Travlos' closing article to the issue takes on the form of a dialogue, with the author guiding the reader through the theoretical and methodological decision-making processes that led to the final product. The reader sees both the full research text, exploring the issue of 'public' military mobilization on the part of weak actors during a dispute as a way of triggering third party intervention and subsequent accommodation by the stronger actor, as well as the author's running commentary about his thinking and how it guided his decisions about the final content of the paper. Travlos's detailed, thoughtful, and highly practical comments provide insights into all aspects of the research design process, from conception of the idea, through writing up the results, and reflect the author's own journey as a researcher.

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## Temporal Horizons in the Study of Turkish Politics: Prevalence of Non-Causal Description and Seemingly Global Warming Type of Causality

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### Abstract

*In this article, I critically evaluate the causal and temporal dimension of social scientific studies focusing on Turkish politics. A very important and yet often neglected aspect of social scientific analysis involves the temporal dimension of causal processes. The temporal dimension of causal processes has direct consequences for operationalization and measurement, and hence it is an essential component of research design. Does the dependent variable (outcome) of interest unfold over the short term or the long term? Do the hypothesized independent variables (causes) unfold over the short term or the long term? Paul Pierson (2004) provided a classification of four types of causality based on the temporal dimension of causes and outcomes using metaphors of natural disasters: tornado, earthquake, meteorite, and global warming. Operationalization and measurement of long term causes and outcomes pose a major challenge, compounded by the challenges of periodization of causes and effects. Unfortunately, a large proportion of the studies of Turkish politics do not have a clearly discernible independent variable (cause) to begin with, and they are thus better characterized as works of “non-causal description.” Moreover, many of the studies of Turkish politics tend to imply, but rarely state explicitly, a global warming type of causality (long term cause and long term outcome), which necessitates focusing even more intensively on such challenges of measurement and periodization. Yet the operationalization of the key (dependent and independent) variables is often missing even in articles published in reputable academic journals of Turkish politics and society. In the spirit of constructive criticism, I suggest a number of guidelines for research design in order to address the problems of causality and temporality discussed in this article, including awareness of multi-temporal equifinality.*

**Keywords:** Causality, conceptualization, operationalization, periodization, temporality

### 1. Temporal and Spatial Context of Causality: Identifying the “Epicenter” and the “Moment”

Causal processes occur in specific contexts that envelop and limit them in definite directions. Most importantly, each causal process occurs in a time-specific and space-specific context, which channels, shapes, and limits its various manifestations, consequences and influences.

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As such, the temporal and spatial peculiarities of specific causal relationships receive increasing attention in tandem with methodological advances in the social sciences.<sup>1</sup> The centrality of time and space for understanding the unfolding of causal processes is at once somewhat obvious and yet systematically neglected. One of the goals of this article is to raise awareness about the variable “concentration” of causal relationships in specific time(s) and space(s). As such, it would be very useful if scholars acknowledged and identified the specific temporal and spatial features of the causal relationship that they seek to explain in their research and publications. Simply put, there is no causal relationship, and no cause or effect, that is *omnipresent* across all time and in all spaces.

In terms of their spatial-temporal context, almost all causal processes are akin to earthquakes, which occur in a very specific moment (usually seconds) and at a geographically specific “epicenter,” measured in terms of their magnitude, which then diffuse in geographical and temporal waves to cover a specific territory, which is never the entire earth but rather a small territory within earth. The earthquake metaphor, which will be used in a different and more restrictive capacity later in this article, is also revealing in terms of the intimate connection or interdependence between the spatial and the temporal aspects of a causal process or influence. It is nonetheless curious that despite the increasing usage of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and geospatial technologies in general in order to capture the *spatial* dimension of causal processes, no *temporal* corollary to the GIS has been developed in a popularly useable and transferable format in order to capture the temporal dimension of causal processes. In this article, bracketing the spatial dimension of causality, however significant it may be, I will focus on the temporal dimension of causality, while reflecting on its various ramifications in the case of Turkish studies.

## 2. Temporal Dimension of Causality: Tornado, Earthquake, Meteorite or Global Warming

In an influential book chapter,<sup>2</sup> followed by an even more influential book,<sup>3</sup> Paul Pierson classified causal arguments into four different categories based on the temporal dimension of the main cause (independent variable) and the main outcome (dependent variable) in the hypothesized causal relationship. He labeled these four types of causal relationships with reference to natural disasters: Tornado (short term cause and short term outcome), meteorite (short term cause and long term outcome), earthquake (long term cause and short term outcome), and global warming (long term cause and long term outcome). Based on his conceptualization of these four different types of causality, Pierson launched a convincing critique of American political science for being excessively concentrated on a “tornado” (short term cause and short term outcome) type of causality, as evidenced by the articles published in the *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Politics*, and *World Politics*, the four leading American political science journals.<sup>4</sup> The excessive focus of American political science on a tornado type of

<sup>1</sup> For example, I attribute the increasing usage of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and geospatial technologies in social sciences to an increasing awareness of the critical role *spatial* factors play in the unfolding of causal processes.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Pierson, “Big, Slow-Moving, and... Invisible: Macrosocial Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics,” in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2003), 177–207.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Pierson, *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Pierson, *Politics in Time*, 98, Table 3.3.

causality was, and still is, the result of a disproportionate reliance on quantitative research methods, especially inferential statistics, which establish or hypothesize (or construct) causal relationships through correlations between narrowly time specific (e.g., GDP per capita in the year 2000) causes and narrowly time specific outcomes (e.g., weekly church attendance in the year 2000). As a result, Pierson recommended moving from a “snapshot” (variable-oriented, very short term) analysis that is hegemonic in American political science to “moving picture” (causal process oriented, long term) analysis, and drew attention to the fact that the founders of modern social sciences all adopted long term, process oriented explanations:

Contemporary social scientists typically take a ‘snapshot’ view of political life, but there is often a strong case to be made for shifting from snapshot to moving pictures. This means *systematically* situating particular moments (including the present) in a temporal sequence of events and processes stretching over extended periods... I seek to demonstrate the very high price that social science often pays when it ignores the profound temporal dimensions of real social processes... It is no accident that so many of the giant figures in the formative period of the social sciences—from Marx, Tocqueville, and Weber to Polanyi and Schumpeter—adopted deeply historical approaches to social explanation.<sup>5</sup>

As Pierson argued, a disproportionate reliance on the tornado type of causality as observed in the case of American political science, probably driven by quantitative methods, is likely to be problematic in trying to understand many of the causal processes in political and social life, in which either the cause(s) and/or the outcome(s) unfold over many years, decades, generations, or even centuries. Thus, Pierson’s critical review of the temporal topography of causal claims in American political science was a necessary and useful corrective to the mainstream scholarship. Reviewing and classifying all the articles published in the four leading American political science journals over five years (1996-2000), Pierson demonstrated that 51.8% of the articles published in the *American Political Science Review*, 56.6% of the articles published in the *American Journal of Political Science*, 49% of the articles published in *Comparative Politics*, and 24.4% of the articles published in *World Politics* were based on a tornado type of causality (short term cause-short term outcome).<sup>6</sup> In other words, with the notable exception of *World Politics*, which was identified as the leading journal publishing the largest proportion of articles analyzing long term causal relationships, the other three leading American political science journals disproportionately published research with arguments based on a tornado type of causality. Undoubtedly, as Pierson himself emphasizes, some of the significant social processes are based on short term causes leading to short term outcomes, and yet an excessive reliance on tornado type of causality could obscure the reasons behind some other outcomes of political and social significance, which have long term causes or long term outcomes.<sup>7</sup> However, I am also of the opinion that Tornado type of political outcomes constitute, at most a significant minority, but certainly not an outright majority of the most consequential and significant political outcomes of interest for social scientists. In a way, what I attempt to achieve in this brief article is to conduct a critical review of Turkish studies scholarship by focusing on the temporal dimension of causality, akin to what Paul Pierson has done in the case of American political science.

<sup>5</sup> Pierson, *Politics in Time*, 1–2. *Emphasis is in the original.*

<sup>6</sup> Pierson, *Politics in Time*, 98, Table 3.3.

<sup>7</sup> Pierson, *Politics in Time*, 98: “My argument is not that Quadrant I [Tornado] research is of little value. Rather, it is that there is a strong case for diversifying our bets. Choices about the scope of time covered in a particular analysis have profound effects... For a social science community largely confined to Quadrant I, a great deal of social life is simply off the radar screen.”

### 3. The Study of Turkish Politics: Between Non-Causal Description and Global Warming

In this article, I argue that the study of Turkish politics is characterized by the pervasiveness of non-causal description (i.e., studies without an independent variable) on the one hand, and an excessive focus on a Global Warming type of causality based on long term causes leading to long term outcomes on the other. In many ways, these weaknesses are not only different from, but even the apparent opposite of, what Pierson argued to be the problems of American political science. However, as I seek to demonstrate throughout this article, the pervasiveness of non-causal description and Global Warming type of causality in Turkish studies are indicative of far greater and more basic methodological problems than the problems implied by the pervasiveness of a tornado type of causality in American political science.

Secondly, even the seemingly long-term causes found in much of Turkish studies scholarship do not amount to the long-term “processes” that Pierson discusses. Rather, much of what can be classified as “long term” independent variables are either the result of very poor operationalization without any temporal specifications as to their beginning or end points (unclear starting point, and unclear end point, or no end point at all), and thus can be classified as being “long-term by default,” or they are *structural* variables that are, once again, long term by default because structural factors do not vary much in the short term. Therefore, strictly speaking, there are not very many studies employing a Global Warming type of causality as understood by Pierson either. Positing a long term process as an independent variable and as a dependent variable still necessitates an operationalization of its scope, temporal and otherwise (spatial, etc.), which is often lacking in the studies of Turkish politics.

### 4. Reviewing *Turkish Studies* and *Uluslararası İlişkiler*: Leading SSCI journals focusing on Turkey published in English and Turkish

There are many scholarly journals specifically focused on the study of Turkish politics, with different orientations, quality, and impact in the field. Among the journals solely or primarily focused on Turkish studies, which are also included in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), *Turkish Studies* is arguably the journal with the highest impact factor, and thus, the natural locus for a review of the current scholarship in this field.<sup>8</sup> The last six full years (2011-2016) of *Turkish Studies* includes a total of 217 articles published in 24 issues. Thus, on average nine articles were published in each issue, and 36 articles were published per year. This is a sufficiently large pool for gauging the distribution of the four types of causality that we are interested in. These articles were coded according to the temporal dimension of their main independent and dependent variables. In order to achieve a certain level of objective coding, not the author but a highly qualified research assistant who has taken the relevant methodology course, and who is well versed in Pierson’s typology, did the first round of coding for *Turkish Studies*. The current author reviewed and validated, and in very rare cases changed, the coding of the research assistant. Going through the abstracts of the articles first, and skimming the article if absolutely necessary, the independent variable and

<sup>8</sup> 2016 Impact Factor of *Turkish Studies* (the latest available as of this writing) was 1.029, which placed it 10th among all “Area Studies” journals in the world, and ahead of leading journals of Middle Eastern studies such as *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (impact factor 0.672, ranked 29th), as well as other well-known journals focusing on different regions of the world such as *Slavic Review* (impact factor 0.8, ranked 20th) and *Europe-Asia Studies* (impact factor 0.731, ranked 23th).

the dependent variable of each of these 217 articles were dichotomously coded as “short term” and “long term.” Such a coding normally generates four types of temporal causality that Pierson identified, which he labeled as Tornado, Meteorite, Earthquake, and Global Warming. However, even a cursory review of articles in the *Turkish Studies* reveals that there is a very large fifth category in the study of Turkish politics and society: articles without a clearly identifiable independent variable. These articles do not have a causal claim, and thus may be classified as articles based on, or providing, a “non-causal description.” (Table 1) In fact, there are 63 articles that can be categorized as “non-causal description,” while another 63 articles can be categorized as having a Global Warming type of causality with a seemingly long-term cause and a long-term outcome. These two categories together make up a large majority, 58 percent, of all articles published in *Turkish Studies*. Meteorites are a distant third, followed by Earthquakes, whereas Tornados are the least common, although they still make up 11.5 percent, corresponding to 25 articles.

Table 1- Articles in *Turkish Studies* according to the temporal dimension of their causality, 2011-2016

Outcome (DV)	Cause (IV)	Causal Temporal Type	N=217	Percentage of all articles
Short term	Short term	Tornado	25	11.5
Short term	Long term	Earthquake	31	14.3
Long term	Short term	Meteorite	35	16.1
Long term	Long term	Global Warming	63	29
Long or Short	None	Non-Causal Description	63	29

How representative is this distribution of Turkish studies scholarship in general? Could this very peculiar distribution of temporal dimensions of causal claims be biased due to the journal of choice? In an attempt to achieve a somewhat more representative sample among top journals in the field of Turkish studies, and to gain additional leverage for the analyses that follow, I decided to expand and diversify the pool of articles by coding another leading journal in the area of Turkish studies, this time published in Turkey and mostly in Turkish, and yet still included in reputable international academic indices. There are only three Turkish language journals included in the *Social Science Citation Index* that can be considered as covering political science and international relations, and these are, in alphabetical order, *Amme İdaresi Dergisi*, *Bilig*, and *Uluslararası İlişkiler*. Although the impact factor of all three is very similar, and unfortunately very low by the standards of SSCI, *Uluslararası İlişkiler* and *Bilig* have comparable impact factors (0.080 and 0.098 respectively) that are clearly higher than that of *Amme İdaresi Dergisi* (0).<sup>9</sup> More importantly, *Uluslararası İlişkiler* clearly focuses on international relations, which, given the prevalence of positivistic schools of thought in the field of international relations, might privilege, and hence “oversample,” more causal analyses. In other words, if anything, *Uluslararası İlişkiler* should have more causal analyses compared to most other social scientific journals published in Turkey.

Table 2 summarizes the codings of 149 articles published in *Uluslararası İlişkiler* between 2011 and 2016 (inclusive). Once again, not the current author but another graduate student (different from the coder of *Turkish Studies*) coded the articles first, in part not to bias the

<sup>9</sup> According to the 2016 *Journal Citation Reports*, the latest available as of this writing, *Uluslararası İlişkiler* was ranked 86<sup>th</sup> among 87 journals of international relations; *Bilig* was ranked 68<sup>th</sup> among 69 journals of area studies; and *Amme İdaresi Dergisi* was ranked 47<sup>th</sup> among 47 journals of public administration.

coding in the direction of my expectations and the available findings based on *Turkish Studies*. The findings are truly striking: 84 percent of all articles published in *Uluslararası İlişkiler* over six years either have a Global Warming type of causality or no causal argument, which together constitutes a hegemonic majority far greater than the corresponding proportion (58 percent) found in *Turkish Studies* for the same two categories. Equally significantly, there were no articles with a Tornado type of causality, and only four articles (corresponding to a mere 2.7 percent) with an Earthquake type of causality. Compared to the absence or near absence of Tornados and Earthquakes, there were a remarkable number of Meteorite type of articles, 20 in total, corresponding to 13.4 percent of all articles published in *Uluslararası İlişkiler*.

Table 2- Articles in *Uluslararası İlişkiler* according to the temporal dimension of their causality, 2011-2016

Outcome (DV)	Cause (IV)	Causal Temporal Type	N=149	Percentage of all articles
Short term	Short term	Tornado	0	0
Short term	Long term	Earthquake	4	2.7
Long term	Short term	Meteorite	20	13.4
Long term	Long term	Global Warming	81	54.4
Long or Short	None	Non-Causal Description	44	29.5

Despite significant and in part disciplinary differences, there are also two meaningful similarities between the composition of articles published in *Turkish Studies* and *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, which together reveal the “hierarchy” of temporal-causal claims in both of these journals: First, as already noted, articles that either have no independent variable (non-causal description), or independent and dependent variables that are both open ended or long term, constitute a very large majority of all articles published in both journals. Unfortunately, this is at least in part indicative of deeper problems in operationalization and measurement, even though there are articles that are exceptional in this regard. On the other hand, there are also a large number of “literature review” type of articles published in *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, which almost always (and understandably) lack a causal argument, and thus are at least in part responsible for the very large number of articles with a non-causal description in this journal of international relations. Second, among the three types of articles that have at least one “short term” variable, namely Meteorites, Earthquakes, and Tornados, there is a clear hierarchy: Meteorites are more common than Earthquakes, which in turn are more common than Tornados. This is also, at least in part, bad news from a methodological and operational point of view, because it indicates that article types with short term, strictly temporally delimited precise dependent variables (moment, event, legislation, etc.), namely Earthquakes and Tornados, are relatively rare in both journals, even when compared to Meteorites. We can now turn to a somewhat more detailed look at each category of articles.

### 5. The Pervasiveness of Non-Causal Description

An astounding 29 percent of all articles published in *Turkish Studies*, corresponding to 63 articles, do not have a clearly identifiable independent variable and/or they do not have a causal claim at all (Table 1). In a curious coincidence, almost exactly the same proportion, 29.5 percent of all articles published in *Uluslararası İlişkiler* do not have a clearly identifiable

independent variable and/or do not make a causal claim. In other words, almost three out of ten articles published in *Turkish Studies* and *Uluslararası İlişkiler* either do not have, or do not attempt to make, a causal claim. This is in part understandable if one considers the multidisciplinary nature of *Turkish Studies*, since many scholars in the humanities and history often deliberately eschew causal claims. For example, a review of the Korean War in the Turkish press<sup>10</sup> or the reception of mainstream Turkish movies among the Belgian Turkish diaspora<sup>11</sup> are understandably in this category. However, there are also many articles in the fields of international relations and domestic politics without a clearly identifiable main cause or independent variable, which is not explicable in terms of disciplinary attitudes toward causality, since almost all subfields of political science, including international relations, comparative politics, and domestic politics, are shaped by theories with causal claims.

The prevalence of non-causal descriptive articles in *Uluslararası İlişkiler-International Relations* is somewhat more surprising since it is a journal of international relations, a field in which major schools of thought such as (Neo-)Realism and Liberalism, including their variations, are mostly committed to causal analysis. A closer look reveals certain patterns and potential reasons for the relative popularity of non-causal description in this journal as well. There are certainly subtypes within the non-causal descriptive articles published in *Uluslararası İlişkiler*. First, theoretical literature reviews and reassessments of key thinkers' works constitute a very common subtype of non-causal articles, such as reassessments of Clausewitz<sup>12</sup> or the role of the discourse of anarchy in international relations theory<sup>13</sup>. As mentioned earlier, such review articles of the theoretical literature typically do not have a causal argument, and hence contribute to the large percentage of articles that are classified as having non-causal description in the current study. A second subtype of non-causal articles are descriptive historical works, such as the "negotiations of the 1826 Akkerman Treaty" between Russia and the Ottoman Empire<sup>14</sup> or the process of establishing the first permanent Polish embassy in Turkey<sup>15</sup>. These works often do not have, and do not attempt to establish, a causal relationship as their main argument. A third subtype of non-causal articles are reviews of teaching in international relations in Turkey, or less frequently, methodological exegesis akin to the current article.

A considerable number of articles based on "post-positivist" approaches to international relations<sup>16</sup> are also published in *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, which may explain, at least in part, why there are many articles in this journal that can be characterized as "non-causal description." Even though some of the leading self-identified constructivists do not shy away from but rather embrace the goal of "explaining" as well as "understanding" in the study of international relations,<sup>17</sup> there are other scholars who explicitly identify two different kinds

<sup>10</sup> Sevinç Tekindor von zur Mühlen, "Korean War in the Turkish Press," *Turkish Studies* 13, no. 3 (2012): 523–35.

<sup>11</sup> Kevin Smets, "'Turkish Rambo' Going Transnational: The Polarized Reception of Mainstream Political Cinema among the Turkish Diaspora in Belgium," *Turkish Studies* 15, no. 1 (2014): 12–28.

<sup>12</sup> Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu, "Yirmibirinci yüzyılda savaşı tartışmak: Clausewitz yeniden," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 8, no. 29 (2011): 5–25.

<sup>13</sup> Faruk Yalvaç, "Uluslararası ilişkiler kuramında anarşi söylemi," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 8, no. 29 (2011): 71–99.

<sup>14</sup> Selim Aslantaş, "Osmanlı-Rus ilişkilerinden bir kesit: 1826 Akkerman Andlaşması'nın müzakereleri," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 9, no. 36 (2013): 149–69.

<sup>15</sup> Hacer Topaktaş, "Polonya'nın Türkiye'deki ilk daimi elçiliğinin kurulma süreci: tarihsel dinamikler," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 11, no. 43 (2014): 105–25.

<sup>16</sup> Alexander Wendt, "On Constitution and Causation in International Relations," *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 5 (1998): 101–18.

<sup>17</sup> Wendt, "On Constitution," 104: "The distinction between Explanation and Understanding is not one between explanation and description, but between explanations that answer different kinds of question, causal and constitutive."

of international relations scholarship, one interested in causal “explanations” and the other interested in non-causal “understanding.”<sup>18</sup> As such, various forms of inquiry that are identified as reflectivist, interpretivist and/or hermeneutic approaches, may and often do eschew causal relationships of the kind reviewed in this article. Therefore, at least for some self-conscious adherents of such non-positivist approaches in international relations scholarship, producing articles investigating causal relationships is not a desirable (or possible) goal, and hence articles based on non-causal descriptions may not be seen as a social scientific weakness from such a vantage point.

### 6. Unpacking the Popularity of Global Warming: Interest in the Longue Durée or Imprecise Operationalization of Causal Variables?

Many social and political processes and their resulting outcomes indeed unfold over very long time periods, ranging from many years and decades to even centuries or more. Thus, it is not surprising that many social scientific puzzles have long term causes and long term outcomes. However, in the case of Turkish studies, an unfortunate reason as to why many articles seem to suggest a global warming type of causality is ambiguous, imprecise, and poor operationalization of the independent and the dependent variables. In other words, since many scholars fail to temporally specify and delimit their cause(s) and outcome(s), their purported causal explanations appear to have an unspecified, thus long-term, variables on both ends (cause *and* effect/outcome). Thus, many articles appear to have a Global Warming type of causality almost by default, that is, because of no clear operationalization or temporal specification of causal variables. This is a major methodological weakness, which has to be addressed and corrected for the improvement of the social scientific quality of Turkish studies. It is indeed remarkable that the Global Warming type of articles constitute an absolute majority of all articles published in *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, and are by far the most popular of type of article among the four types of causal articles published in *Turkish Studies*.

Instead of criticizing other scholars’ works for being responsible for the overrepresentation of Global Warming type of articles, I would rather acknowledge (or confess!) that I have also published articles in both of these journals since 2012 and both of my articles were also based on a Global Warming type of causality with long-term causes leading to outcomes that also unfold over the long-term. In trying to explain NATO’s eastward expansion, admittedly a long-term process, I argued in *Uluslararası İlişkiler* that a peculiar concatenation of domestic political (partisan) interests that endured for many years (at least for about a decade, roughly corresponding to 1994-2004) to be the cause of this significant geopolitical outcome, which is otherwise inexplicable from a neorealist perspective.<sup>19</sup> Writing in *Turkish Studies* three years later, I argued that the curious and rather unprecedented rise of pro-Russian Eurasianism as the “fourth style of politics” in Turkey from the late 1990s until the mid-2000s, which is at least a medium-term if not long-term outcome, is the result of other long-term structural changes, namely, the diminution of the Russian threat coupled with the rising perception of a threat from the United States, which coincided with the increasing popularity of Islamic political movement, also a long-term variable that is in part structural and in part agentic.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

<sup>19</sup> Şener Aktürk, “NATO neden genişledi? Uluslararası ilişkiler kuramları ışığında NATO’nun genişlemesi ve ABD-Rusya iç siyaseti,” *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 9, no. 34 (2012): 73–97.

<sup>20</sup> Şener Aktürk, “The Fourth Style of Politics: Eurasianism as a Pro-Russian Rethinking of Turkey’s Geopolitical Identity,” *Turkish Studies* 16, no. 1 (2015): 54–79.

Thus, I also contributed to the general trend by publishing articles with a Global Warming type of causality in both *Uluslararası İlişkiler* and in *Turkish Studies*.

Just as in the case of subtypes of articles that are based on non-causal description, however, there are also subtypes of articles based on a Global Warming type of causality. At the most basic level, some articles, including mine, are self-consciously based on a long-term cause leading to a long-term outcome. This becomes apparent if and when the article states, as part of its main argument, the primary cause and the outcome of interest, and the temporal delimitation of each. To continue with my argument in one of the above mentioned articles for illustrative purposes, I try to explain NATO expansion, a temporally delimited outcome, with certain time-specific electoral and/or legislative cycles in American and Russian domestic politics in the 1990s.<sup>21</sup> Articles that are self-consciously based on long-term structural variables, such as economic development, seeking to explain other long-term developments, such as democratization, also fall under the Global Warming category,<sup>22</sup> unless they specifically focus on a narrowly time specific (such as a currency crisis or a trade embargo that occurred in a particular date) instance or aberration of otherwise structural variables. Another subtype of articles in this category, however, are classified as having a Global Warming type of causality because the purported cause(s) and/or outcome(s) in the article are not temporally delimited or specified, such that the reader (or the coder in the current study) cannot clearly understand or know *when* the cause begins and ends, and *when* the outcome begins and ends. This is a major methodological weakness that has to be addressed for the improvement of political science and international relations scholarship produced in and about Turkey. In short, scholars in the future, including the current author, should take care to specify the temporal delimitation of both their primary cause(s) and main outcome(s) of interest.

### **7. Meteorites: Precise Cause, or Attributing Too Much Explanatory Power to One Cause?**

Compared to non-causal descriptive and Global Warming types of articles, the total number of the other three types of articles combined constitute a minority. To reiterate, what distinguishes Tornados, Meteorites, and Earthquakes from Global Warming is the existence of at least one short-term variable, whether as the main cause or as the main outcome. This necessitates special attention to the temporal specification of at least one of the two main (independent or dependent) variables. Such a specification arguably makes it more likely for such articles to have a better operationalization. After all, the necessity to temporally specify and narrowly define either the main cause and/or the main outcome in a purportedly causal relationship may motivate scholars to more explicitly focus on operationalization of variables. Nonetheless, as noted earlier, there is also an observable hierarchy in terms of the distribution of the three types of causality with either a short term cause and/or a short term outcome: Among the articles reviewed in this study, Meteorites are more common than Earthquakes, which in turn are more common than Tornados.

There are somewhat surprising number of studies with a Meteorite type of causality, based on a short term cause and a long term outcome. These are often works that attribute

<sup>21</sup> Aktürk, "NATO neden genişledi?"

<sup>22</sup> One example among many others would be, Necip Yıldız, "The Relation between Socioeconomic Development and Democratization in Contemporary Turkey," *Turkish Studies* 12, no. 1 (2011): 129–48.

a major outcome, such as two decades of education policy under presidents Atatürk and İnönü, to particular person- and time-specific choices of one or a few members of the political elite.<sup>23</sup> Attributing major outcomes such as Turkey's Kurdish identity politics to short-term electoral incentives in one electoral cycle would be another example. In fact, the articles that explain AK Party's various policies with long-term consequences to very narrowly electoral or other self-interested motivations, or the personality of its leader(s), constitute the largest group of articles that can be categorized as having Meteorite type of causality in *Turkish Studies*. Finally, another subtype of Meteorite articles are those based on the explanatory power of a recent, surprising, and seemingly world-historical development. The most popular "event" that was the short-term cause of a large number of Meteorite type of articles in *Uluslararası İlişkiler* appears to be the Arab Spring. In fact, six of the twenty Meteorite type of articles, corresponding to 30 percent of all articles in this category in *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, had "Arab Spring" as their main causal variable.<sup>24</sup> Various kinds of revolutionary uprisings seem to have motivated articles with Meteorite type of causality, such as an article on the Young Turk revolution of 1908 and its impact on civil-military relations in the late Ottoman Empire.<sup>25</sup>

Upon closer inspection, it seems as if the Meteorite quality of the causality apparent in some of these articles is the result of attributing too much explanatory power to one cause, such as the impact of the crisis in Ukraine on Russia's decades-long dispute with Japan over the Kuril islands,<sup>26</sup> or Turkish president Erdoğan's "one minute" speech at Davos on the Turkish public's perceptions of foreign policy.<sup>27</sup> However, from a methodological point of view, potential long-term causes of the outcome of interest should also be entertained as alternative explanations. Such diversity in temporal horizon of causality is desirable if not even necessary, unless the authors have a specific justification for temporally (and otherwise) limiting the alternative causal explanations that they seek to examine. This is a potential weakness that bedevils many of the articles purporting to have a Meteorite type of causality. For example, in an attempt to directly address this potential weakness, I published an article with an explicitly Meteorite type of causality seeking to explain the long-term Islamist and ethnic separatist challenges to the state in Turkey, Pakistan, and Algeria, where I entertained both long-term structural and short-term agentic causes.<sup>28</sup> One methodological precaution in employing any causal argument is to entertain the possibility that not only different causes but also different causes of varying temporal horizon (short- and long-term) may be responsible for the outcome of interest.

<sup>23</sup> Başar Ari, "Religion and Nation-Building in the Turkish Republic: Comparison of High School History Textbooks of 1931–41 and of 1942–50," *Turkish Studies* 14, no. 2 (2013): 372–93. In explaining the personalistic causes of the rather sudden change in 1942, Ari suggests on page 374, "the changes occurred soon after the appointment of a committed Muslim, Şemsettin Günaltay, to the Presidency of Turkish Historical Society (TTK, Türk Tarih Kurumu)."

<sup>24</sup> For example, Raymond Hinnebusch, "The Arab Uprising and the MENA Regional States System," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 11, no. 42 (2014): 7–27.

<sup>25</sup> M. Şükrü Hanioglu, "Civil–Military Relations in the Second Constitutional Period, 1908–1918" *Turkish Studies* 12, no. 2 (2011): 177–89.

<sup>26</sup> Emine Akçadağ and Elnur İsmayilov, "Ukrayna krizinin Rusya ve Japonya arasındaki Kuril Adaları sorununa etkisi," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 12, no. 48 (2016): 95–115.

<sup>27</sup> Emre Erdoğan, "Dış politikada siyasallaşma: Türk kamuoyunun 'Davos Krizi' ve etkileri hakkındaki değerlendirmeleri," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 10, no. 37 (2013): 37–67.

<sup>28</sup> Sener Aktürk, "Religion and Nationalism: Contradictions of Islamic Origins and Secular Nation Building in Turkey, Algeria, and Pakistan," *Social Science Quarterly* 96, no. 3 (2015): 778–806.

## 8. Earthquakes: Precision of the Outcome Encouraging Causal Process Tracing?

Earthquake type of articles based on long-term causes leading to short-term outcomes are somewhat few in *Turkish Studies* (30 out of 217), but certainly far fewer in *Uluslararası İlişkiler* (4 out of 149). The precision of the outcome (DV) in earthquake type of causality may encourage long-term process tracing as well as coming to terms with at least some alternative hypotheses for the same outcome. The short-term and specific operationalization of the outcome may keep the focus on causality throughout the analysis. The biggest puzzle that I pursued in my academic career so far, on which I published at least two articles<sup>29</sup> and a book,<sup>30</sup> was an “earthquake.” My outcome (DV) of interest was an instance of a historic change in ethnic policies of Germany (citizenship law of 1999), Russia (removal of ethnicity from internal passports in 1997), and Turkey (beginning of public broadcasting in minority languages in 2004), which, I argued, was the result of political historical (“tectonic”, if I were to use another metaphor from geology) changes that unfolded over approximately fifty years. In other words, I could operationalize my dependent variables of interest as processes that unfolded over a couple of years (at most a decade), whereas their causes unfolded over many decades, which is what made them “earthquakes” in terms of the temporal dimension of the underlying causal processes. While the *change* in the ethnicity regime was a *transition* that I explained through a *causal* theory, the tripartite *typology* that I developed to characterize the specific constellation of ethnic policies in different countries (monoethnic, antiethnic, and multiethnic *regimes*) can be considered as an exercise in *constitutive* causation, at least as it is defined by Alexander Wendt.<sup>31</sup>

Short-term outcomes, such as a constitutional or legislative act of national, regional or world-historical significance, keep you focused on the puzzle, the outcome, and this arguably makes it easier or at least possible for other scholars to follow-up with better or at least similarly focused explanations. Very narrowly time-specific outcomes, such as a parliamentary vote authorizing (or denying) declaration of war, or the passage of historic legislation such as expansion of voting rights to women and/or ethno-racial minorities, or the abolition of slavery or segregation, could be among numerous outcomes of significance that can be (and/or have already been) employed as dependent variables in Earthquake type of causal explanations. Most recently, just as the current piece went into production, I published another article in *Turkish Studies* based on a causal explanation that I explicitly identified as an Earthquake.<sup>32</sup>

## 9. Tornados: The Result of a Philosophical Reflection or Methodological Overdetermination?

In a complete reversal of the pattern found in American political science, Tornado type studies are the least common type of causality found in *Turkish Studies*. Those few articles with a

<sup>29</sup> Şener Aktürk, “Regimes of ethnicity: comparative analysis of Germany, the Soviet Union/post-Soviet Russia, and Turkey,” *World Politics* 63, no. 1 (2011): 115–64; and, Şener Aktürk, “Passport Identification and Nation-Building in Post-Soviet Russia,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 26, no. 4 (2010): 314–41.

<sup>30</sup> Şener Aktürk, *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood in Germany, Russia, and Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>31</sup> Wendt, “On constitution and causation in IR.”

<sup>32</sup> Şener Aktürk, “One Nation under Allah? Islamic Multiculturalism, Muslim Nationalism and Turkey’s Reforms for Kurds, Alevi, and non-Muslims,” *Turkish Studies* 19, no. 4 (2018): 527: “The temporal dimension of causality in my argument resembles what Paul Pierson metaphorically describes as an ‘earthquake’, where the causes develop over the long-term (decades-long gestation of Islamic multiculturalism and Muslim nationalism), whereas the outcomes (Kurdish, Alevi, non-Muslim openings) unfold over a relatively shorter period of time (between 2004 and 2013 overall, but particularly intensifying in the 2009–2013 period).”

Tornado type of causality, however, appear to be the result of a larger methodological choice. In short, articles using quantitative methods including inferential statistics overwhelmingly privilege a Tornado type of causality based on short term causes leading to short term outcomes. Thus, although the number of articles in this category is much smaller than that found in American political science, both the causes (methodological choice) and Pierson's criticisms of a Tornado type of causality seem to apply to similar works in Turkish studies as well. Perhaps somewhat more surprisingly, not a single article with a Tornado type of causality has been published in *Uluslararası İlişkiler* during the six-year period reviewed in this study.

Studies based on public opinion surveys, exploring causal relationships between one attitude (such as fear of EU enlargement, or globalization)<sup>33</sup> and another (such as fear of further Turkish immigration, or perception of personal benefit from globalization)<sup>34</sup> constitute one subset of articles published based on a Tornado type of causality. The use of quantitative methods such as inferential statistics to demonstrate a causal relationship between variables drawn from public opinion surveys appears to be the primary reason these studies have a Tornado type of causality almost by default.

#### **10. Problems of Operationalization: What is To Be Done about Measurement in Time?**

At a very basic level, many of the problems related to the temporal dimension of causality found in all five types of articles (including non-causal description) in the field of Turkish studies are ultimately problems of operationalization and measurement. What could or should scholars do in order to overcome these problems?

At a minimum, one should start out with a clearly identifiable, temporally and spatially (geographically) delimited, preferably uncontested empirical outcome. Perhaps the worst case scenario for a piece of work that aspires to be social scientific is not to have a clearly identifiable, observable, at least to some degree measurable, and uncontested "outcome." Unfortunately, such a "worst case scenario" is all too common not only in the field of Turkish studies but also in many other works of political science and international relations around the world. It is not at all unusual to find works where even the existence of the outcome (dependent variable) or the motivating puzzle of the study is highly debatable.

One reason for the prevalence of non-causal description in Turkish studies is the existence of many normative works seeking to judge social or political phenomena from an ethical or philosophical point of view. In such works, there is often no systematic attempt to explain or evaluate the causes of the phenomenon or phenomena of interest. Second, another reason for the prevalence of non-causal description is that there are also many speculative studies concerned with the future, that is, with outcomes that have not occurred, which may be expected and acceptable in policy relevant outlets and the mass media, but not to be expected or acceptable as much in academic publications.

Unless one has a very clear operationalization and measurement, and at least some very clearly identifiable micro-level causal mechanisms that are demonstrable or observable through sufficiently delimited (geographically, temporally, and/or in other ways) case studies, it would be wise to avoid Global Warming type of causality, because having both the main

<sup>33</sup> Başak Yavcan, "Public Opinion Toward Immigration and the EU: How are Turkish Immigrants Different than Others?," *Turkish Studies* 14, no. 1 (2013): 158–78.

<sup>34</sup> Umut Aydın, "Who is Afraid of Globalization? Turkish Attitudes toward Trade and Globalization," *Turkish Studies* 15, no. 2 (2014): 322–40.

cause and the main outcome unfolding over very long periods of time risks introducing an unmanageable degree of fuzziness into the causal narrative.

Once the outcome and the cause(s) are clearly temporally delimited, whether our causal framework resembles a Tornado, Meteorite, Earthquake, or Global Warming will be implicitly apparent, but it is still better for the author to explicitly state whether the argument has, for example, a long-term cause that explains a short-term outcome, or vice versa, as I did in several of my works.<sup>35</sup> This would also demonstrate that the author is very well aware of the temporal dimensions of causal processes and is making a conscious decision in favoring one causal temporal type over others in explaining the outcome of interest.

## 11. Draw a Causal Graph

Following on the advice of David Waldner,<sup>36</sup> I currently require my students in our qualitative research methods course<sup>37</sup> to draw a causal graph of their argument, however rudimentary it (the argument or the drawing!) may be. Simply forcing oneself to draw a causal arrow linking the hypothesized cause(s), or independent variable(s), to the main outcome(s), or dependent variable(s), is an immensely fruitful intellectual and methodological exercise. At the very least, it forces the scholar to be clear about the hypothesized causal relationship and its two principal components, cause(s) and outcome(s) of interest. Drawing a causal relationship requires theoretical clarity, but it also forces the author and the audience (e.g., reviewers, readers, critics, etc.) to pay attention to conceptualization since the causal graph will necessitate labeling/naming each causal variable in a short form.

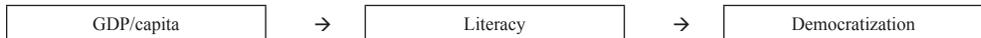


Figure 1: Causal Graph of an Hypothesis inspired by Modernization Theory

For purposes of illustration, I provide above a very crude version of an attempt at drawing a causal graph of a hypothetical relationship, inspired by Modernization Theory, whereby increasing income levels lead to increasing literacy, which in turn leads to democratization (Figure 1). In fact, this causal graph implies two different causal relationships in a causal chain, the first one positing higher income leading to higher literacy, and then another one positing higher literacy leading to democratization.

Drawing the causal relationship also forces the scholar to clarify whether the hypothesized relationship is based on a “chain” as in Figure 1 above, or the concatenation of two or three or more variables that are separately necessary but only together sufficient for the outcome,<sup>38</sup> or whether there is yet another type of causal configuration that leads from the causes to the outcomes.

<sup>35</sup> For example, Aktürk, *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood*, 24; Aktürk, “Religion and Nationalism,” 778 and 787; Aktürk, “One Nation under Allah?,” 5.

<sup>36</sup> David Waldner, “What Makes Process Tracing Good? Causal Mechanisms, Causal Inference, and the Completeness Standard in Comparative Politics,” chapter 5 in *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool*, eds. Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 128–29: “My proposal is that we use the instrument of a causal graph as the best measure of what constitutes continuity; that is, the nodes in a causal graph constitute ‘all the intervening steps’ of a hypothesis.”

<sup>37</sup> INTL 604, “Qualitative Research Methods” course at Koç University, which has been designed and offered by the current author every year since Spring 2013, including at present (Spring 2018).

<sup>38</sup> For arguments based on separately necessary and together sufficient causes, see Gary Goertz, *Multimethod Research, Causal Mechanisms, and Case Studies: An Integrated Approach* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017). This was the case with my work on ethnic regime change in Germany, Russia, and Turkey, where I posited that three variables are separately necessary and together sufficient for a change in the ethnic regime. See Aktürk, “Regimes of Ethnicity,” and Aktürk, *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood*.

## 12. Temporally Delimit The Hypothesized Cause(s) and The Outcome

In order to more fully address the temporal dimension of causality, another crucial step in proposing and conducting social scientific research is to temporally delimit the hypothesized cause(s) and the outcome(s) of interest as much as possible. Which year(s), month(s), or days(s) did the main *outcome (dependent variable)*, the central puzzle, of the research design unfold? This question is absolutely central to the entire research endeavor. Without knowing at least approximately, and if possible exactly, the time interval in which the outcome “happened” or transpired is essential. Ultimately, the temporal delimitation of the outcome is a decision that the scholar has to make, but it has to be justified in a way to be convincing to the scholarly audience as well. For example, in the case of a piece of legislation, the scholar may choose to delimit the outcome as the day it was passed, or between the day it was proposed and the day it was passed, or between the day it was proposed and the day it came into force, or in any other way in which it seems justifiable to temporally delimit the passage of that legislation. If the outcome is seemingly an “event” such as a piece of legislation, beginning of a war, genocide, revolution, and the like, it may be somewhat easier to temporally delimit it. If the outcome is seemingly a “process” such as a years-long attempt to abolish slavery (emancipation) or end racial segregation, then it may make more sense to specify it as much as possible.

Which year(s), month(s), or days(s) did the main hypothesized *causes*, or potential *independent variables*, of the research design unfold? This is also an important question, but arguably secondary to the temporal delimitation of the outcome, since the outcome should be driving the entire research design, whereas the hypothesized causes are only of significance due to their potential explanatory power vis-a-vis the outcome. If the hypothesized cause is a structural or a cumulative variable, specifying the relevant time interval of an otherwise uninterrupted variable would be necessary, such as “change in GDP per capita between 1995 and 2005” in a causal relationship where GDP per capita is one of the hypothesized causes.

## 13. Self-Critical Introspection: Possibility of Multi-Temporal Equifinality?

Even after following all the steps in conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement with special attention to the temporal delimitation of dependent and independent variables, and having formulated an argument that has demonstrable advantages over the preexisting alternative explanations, scholars should leave the door open for the possibility of what I describe as “multi-temporal equifinality.” Equifinality is the possibility of different causal paths leading to the same outcome, and it has been discussed at length in seminal works on qualitative methodology in particular.<sup>39</sup> “Multitemporal equifinality”, I suggest, is the possibility of the same outcome having different short-term and long-term causes. In other words, scholars should be explicitly open about the possibility of the same outcome (dependent variable) having different short-term and long-term causes.

I explored the possibility of multitemporal equifinality in my work on two major outcomes of significance for Turkish politics, namely, the PKK’s declaration to end the ceasefire against Turkey in July 11, 2015, and the Gülenists’ failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016. In both cases, I pointed out that there are very short-term causes that most likely “triggered” the PKK’s<sup>40</sup> and the Gülenists’ decision to attack, such as the PYD’s consolidation of territorial

<sup>39</sup> E.g., George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development*.

<sup>40</sup> Şener Aktürk, “Why Did the PKK Declare Revolutionary People’s War in July 2015?,” POMEPS Contemporary

control in northern Syria in June 2015 and the impending dismissals of Gülenist officers in the military (originally expected to take place in August 2016), respectively. However, there were also long-term causal processes, such as the gradual removal of segregationist measures against religious conservatives and ethnic minorities under AK Party governments, which made an ultimate all-out conflict between these illegal groups and the Turkish government very likely, although not inevitable.<sup>41</sup> In my article titled, “Why did the PKK declare Revolutionary People’s War in July 2015?”, I took special care to emphasize that I was mainly evaluating competing short-term causes, especially the most popular ones in the media. In a much longer article, I took special care to emphasize that I was focusing on more long-term, quasi-structural reasons behind the PKK’s all out offensive and the Gülenist coup attempt.<sup>42</sup> In short, one can uphold different short-term and long-term explanations for the same outcome, as long as one explicitly distinguishes between them and explicates the distinctive causal logic behind them. This, in short, is the peculiar kind of equifinality that I describe as multi-temporal equifinality.

#### 14. *From Here to Eternity*?<sup>43</sup> Concluding Remarks on Causal Mechanisms across Time

An important first step for increased methodological rigour and causal clarity might be scholars’ self-awareness about the temporal dimension of causal processes. One of the goals of the current article has been “raising awareness” about the temporal dimension of causal processes with a short empirical survey on studies of Turkish politics. In the spirit of promoting best practices, I also proposed that scholars explicitly discuss, however briefly, the temporal dimension of the causes that explain their outcome of interest in their articles, which would further methodological and theoretical transparency across the scholarly community.

Some of the causal processes we are interested in as scholars of Turkish studies have probably already ended, such as the causes of the Ottoman Empire’s alliance with Imperial Germany in the Great War, or the causes behind Turkey’s adoption of etatism as its economic policy in the 1930s. However, there are other causal processes that have been unfolding for decades, and the results of which we have been observing and will likely observe in the near future. Furthermore, there are probably other causal processes of significance that have been unfolding over centuries if not millenia, providing general patterns and structuring the “grand questions” of humankind, supposedly “from time immemorial to eternity.” What scholars could do is to be aware of, and if possible explicitly state, just what kind of temporal horizon their own causal explanation has. Ideally, the ultimate goal should be, as the thought-provoking title of the journal *All Azimuth*<sup>44</sup> suggests, to approach the same puzzle from multiple directions or all angles, not just in terms of using diverse methodological and theoretical tools, but also in terms of employing multiple temporal lenses.

Turkish Politics, November 29, 2016, accessed December 16, 2017, <https://pomeps.org/2016/11/29/why-did-the-pkk-declare-revolutionary-peoples-war-in-july-2015/>, 59–63.

<sup>41</sup> Şener Aktürk, “Turkey’s Civil Rights Movement and the Reactionary Coup: Segregation, Emancipation, and the Western Reaction,” *Insight Turkey* 18, no. 3 (2016): 141–67.

<sup>42</sup> Aktürk, “Turkey’s Civil Rights Movement.”

<sup>43</sup> The allusion is to the multiple Academy Awards winning motion picture, *From Here to Eternity* (1953), directed by Fred Zinnemann.

<sup>44</sup> *Azimuth* is an astronomical term of Arabic origins (*as-samt*), meaning “the direction of a celestial object from the observer, expressed as the angular distance from the north or south point of the horizon to the point at which a vertical circle passing through the object intersects the horizon.” Oxford Dictionaries, accessed March 18, 2018, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/azimuth>

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## Large-N Analysis in the Study of Conflict<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

*In this paper, I examine the generation and use of large-N datasets and issues related to operationalization and measurement in the quantitative study of inter-state and intra-state conflict. Specifically, I critically evaluate the work on transnational dimensions of internal conflict and talk about my own journey related to my research on interactions between states and nonstate armed groups. I address the gaps in existing research, the use of proxy measures in large-N data analysis, and talk in detail about observational data collection and coding. I argue that future research should bridge the gap between studies of conflict across the fields of Comparative Politics and International Relations. I make suggestions laying the standards of academic scholarship in collecting data and increasing transparency in research.*

**Keywords:** Positivism, civil war, inter-state war, foreign state support, NAGs Dataset

### 1. Introduction

August Comte, founder of the discipline of sociology, wrote about *positivism* back in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, claiming that there are laws governing human behavior and the social world similar to laws that govern natural phenomena. According to Comte, human behavior could have been explained and predicted through reason and observation. Nevertheless, it was not till after the end of WWII that discontent about the inability to predict the collapse of democracy in Germany during the inter-war period and the subsequent emergence of fascism resulted in research emphasizing the scientific pursuit of empirical facts and objective truth. It took positivism almost a century to influence the study of political phenomena. Its effect was mostly driven by the development of probability sampling techniques and the ability to conduct mass surveys, which facilitated the study of electoral choices. Positivism stresses collecting and recording data, which allows replication of social scientific research.

Positivism aspires to discover empirical regularities across human and societal behavior and builds on the assumption that social phenomena are like natural phenomena. Social scientists should focus on observable phenomena, which constitute the basis for quantifiable data. In the view of positivists, “facts exist independently of the observer and his or her values”.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of social scientists, then, is to accumulate an objective pool of knowledge, which can be used to explain and predict causality across a complex set of concepts and events.

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<sup>2</sup> Peter Burnham, K. G. Lutz, and W. Grant, *Research Methods in Political Science* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 31.

Both social and natural sciences are united in terms of deducing testable hypotheses from new ideas and pre-existing theories and comparing them to observed individual experiences for verification.<sup>3</sup> This approach to scientific discovery denies non-testable theories. Empirical scientists do not have any interest in such metaphysical explanations, which do not require observation of individual behavior for generalization and prediction.

This positivist approach has been driving the development of Political Science as a discipline across Europe and North America from the 1930s on. Due to its emphasis on the observation of individual human behavior to verify hypotheses and predict future behavior, it is referred to as behavioralism in Political Science. Initially being puzzled by the inability to predict the rise of fascism in Germany during the inter-war period, early research using the behavioral approach focused on explaining and predicting people's electoral choices.<sup>4</sup> Behavioralists criticized the early work related to political phenomena, which relied on qualitative and normative research to describe how individuals comply with formal rules and institutions. They, on the other hand, emphasized explaining how individuals behave and make decisions in various social settings.<sup>5</sup> Their reliance on quantifiable and empirical data made behavioralist scholars study human behavior as it is rather than as it ought to be. In this respect, the purpose of political scientific research was not about introducing values and ethical standards. The goal of political scientists was to produce value-free empirical and objective knowledge about social regularities. Therefore, sampling, interviewing, scoring and scaling, and statistical analysis were the main instruments of research in the 1960s and 1970s.

The impact of behavioralism was not limited to the study of electoral choices. Its arrival into the field of war and conflict happened in the same period.<sup>6</sup> The behavioral study of war acknowledged it as undesirable from early on.<sup>7</sup> Yet, to be entirely abolished from the human agenda, war must be understood fully. Much of this early research agenda, which encompassed both a normative view of war as undesirable and a desire to achieve an extensive definition of war, was referred to as peace research. War was being quantified and studied to achieve peace in the world.<sup>8</sup> Two major quantitative studies of war were developed in this context: the Correlates of War (COW)<sup>9</sup> and the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP).<sup>10</sup>

Since the end of WWII, over 20 million people (around 3.5 million as battle-related deaths and the remaining 16.5 million as civilians) have died in internal conflicts or civil wars within the borders of states, while around 2 million people have lost their lives during wars between or among states.<sup>11</sup> Among many factors that have contributed to the unprecedented amount of fatalities during internal conflicts, the most striking ones are the change in the nature

<sup>3</sup> Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London & New York: Routledge 2002[1959]).

<sup>4</sup> Charles E. Merriam and H. F. Gosnell, *Non-Voting, Causes and Methods of Control* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1924).

<sup>5</sup> David Easton, *The Political System. An Inquiry into the State of Political Science* (New York: Knopf, 1953).

<sup>6</sup> See Jeffrey S. Dixon and M. R. Sarkees, *A Guide to Intra-state Wars: An Examination of Civil, Regional, and Intercommunal Wars, 1816–2014* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2016), 1–24 for a detailed review of the emergence of behavioral study of war and COW program.

<sup>7</sup> Quincy Wright, *Study of War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

<sup>8</sup> Lewis Fry Richardson, *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels* (Boxwood Press, 1960); Gaston Bouthoul, *War* (New York: Walker, 1963); Q. Wright, *Study of War* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1964); G. Bouthoul, R. Carrère and G. Köhler, "A List of the 366 Major Armed Conflicts of the Period 1740–1974," *Peace Research* 10, no. 3 (1978): 83–108.

<sup>9</sup> Correlates of War (COW), accessed March 2, 2018, <http://www.correlatesofwar.org/>.

<sup>10</sup> Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), accessed March 2, 2018, <http://ucdp.uu.se/>.

<sup>11</sup> Meredith Reid Sarkees and F. Wayman, *Resort to War: 1816–2007* (Washington DC, CQ Press, 2010); Dixon and Sarkees, *A Guide to Intra-state Wars, 1816–2014*.

of insurgencies—they tend to have increasingly deadly technology,<sup>12</sup> and the endurance of armed groups that instigate violent campaigns against their governments.<sup>13</sup> According to the Dangerous Companions Project, among 454 nonstate armed groups that fought against governments in the post-1945 period, almost 60% received some form of military, material, and logistics support from outside states.<sup>14</sup> This means that foreign state support is a significant factor contributing to the endurance of nonstate armed groups as well as increasing duration of internal conflicts.

It has been almost seventy years since President Truman gave his seminal speech later characterized as the “Truman Doctrine.” The distinction between civil war and international war was meaningless, according to Truman, even if there was a slim chance that civil war would lead to communist insurgent victory and the establishment of communist regimes. In Truman’s view, the U.S. had to fight against “changes in the status quo... by such methods as coercion, or by such subterfuges as political infiltration”.<sup>15</sup> The subsequent years witnessed active U.S. involvement all over the world, to avoid regime change through communist insurgencies by providing military and financial aid to governments fighting against insurgents.

Clearly, external state intervention in internal conflicts was neither under the monopoly of the U.S., nor was it directed against insurgents in every instance. In contrast, frequently, states found themselves providing some form of support to dissidents, rather than governments fighting against domestic dissidents. Nevertheless, most theories and empirical studies of civil war, rebellion, and insurgency focused on domestic political, social and economic conditions in explaining conflict onset. Scholars of international conflict, on the other hand, have ignored nonstate armed actors, privileging states as the major actors shaping world politics.

In the past couple of decades, two major developments have signaled that scholarly thinking about domestic and international conflict should be reinvigorated: 1. there is a reduction of direct inter-state war over time, probably more so in the post-WWII period, and 2. civil wars or ethnic conflicts turn out to be the prevalent form of violence in the post-Cold War period. Furthermore, civil wars tend to last longer and spread across the borders of neighboring states, thus easily transforming into transnational conflicts. These developments require us to think about conflict in a broader sense regardless of its domain to unwrap the causal mechanisms through which interstate relations influence internal conflict dynamics. Only a unified theoretical framework looking at internal conflict through the lenses of interstate conflict and cooperation patterns can provide novel insights for broad questions about why nonstate groups prefer violence over nonviolence and why certain states prefer nonstate armed groups as partners rather than states.

With these in mind, I continue with a sketch of major scholarly works on civil war and explain how I positioned my own research along the lines of foreign state support of nonstate armed groups to bridge the gap in the study of conflict across both domestic and

<sup>12</sup> James A. Piazza, “Is Islamist Terrorism More Dangerous?: An Empirical Study of Group Ideology, Organization, and Goal Structure,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21, no. 1 (2009): 62–88; Stathis N. Kalyvas and L. Balcells, “International System and Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict,” *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 3 (2010): 415–29.

<sup>13</sup> James D. Fearon, “Civil War and the Current International System,” *Daedalus* 146, no. 4 (2017): 18–32.

<sup>14</sup> Belgin San-Akca, *States in Disguise: Causes of State Support for Rebel Groups* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2016). Manuscript submitted for publication.

<sup>15</sup> The Avalon Project, “President Harry S. Truman’s Address before a Joint Session of Congress, March 12, 1947,” Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/trudoc.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp).

international domains. The following section talks about the *Dangerous Companions Project* and data collection and coding processes related to this project. The final section makes some recommendations about the development of some theoretical frameworks linking the apparently distinct realms of domestic and international conflict.

## 2. Time-Series Cross-Sectional Data and the Study of Conflict

The dominant approach to the study of conflict and cooperation in inter-state relations in the post-Cold War period has, till recently, focused on democratic states' potential to engage in peaceful international relations. Most research about democratic peace produced findings using two major datasets: the Polity Dataset<sup>16</sup> and the Correlates of War Project War Dataset (COW).<sup>17</sup> From the analysis of these datasets, there emerged a scholarly consensus on the negative impact of democracy on inter-state war, although such consensus is missing when it comes to the factors that drive the onset of internal or domestic conflict, such as ethnic rebellion and civil war. The intuitive anticipation related to the role of democracy or democratic institutions in internal conflict is that democratic institutions help mediating conflict among distinct segments of a society. Therefore, democracies should be less likely to experience civil war or internal conflict. Yet, existing research produced mixed results with respect to the effect of regime type on the likelihood of civil war onset.<sup>18</sup> This body of research relied mostly on the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset<sup>19</sup> and the COW civil war data.<sup>20</sup>

Even though a large-N analytical approach was adopted by a significant number of scholars studying conflict across both domains of domestic and international politics, for a long while there has been an intellectual division within conflict studies. This intellectual divide can partly be attributed to the high risk contained in studying conflict under a unified theoretical framework. It is more convenient to study signs of conflict, such as war, terrorism, revolution, and ethnic strife to avoid criticism associated with a holistic approach. The ongoing conflict in Syria, and the intervention by multiple outside states and nonstate actors demonstrate, once again, that internal conflicts are rarely confined to the domestic setting in which they occur. Therefore, we are in need of urgent scholarship that can yield a clear understanding of the intricate dynamics of interactions not only among states, but also between states and non-state armed groups.

Figure 1 displays all actors that were involved in the Syrian conflict in 2015. The green lines indicate the alliance or support ties between outside states and nonstate armed groups as well as among groups and among states. The red lines show the enmity ties similarly. The black circles show the nonstate armed groups' centrality, i.e. the number of alliance and enmity ties they have with external states and other nonstate armed groups. The green

<sup>16</sup> Monty G. Marshall and K. Jaggers, "Polity IV Project: Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800–2007" (Center for Systemic Peace, Vienna, VA, 2009).

<sup>17</sup> Meredith Reid Sarkees and F. Wayman, *Resort to War: 1816–2007* (Washington DC, CQ Press, 2010).

<sup>18</sup> Paul Collier and A. Hoeffler, *Greed and Grievance in Civil War* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2000); James D. Fearon and D. D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75–90; Paul Collier and A. Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56 (2004): 563–95. While Fearon and Laitin did not find a significant effect of democracy on conflict onset, Collier and Hoeffler found a significant negative effect of democracy on civil war onset.

<sup>19</sup> Nils Petter Gleditsch, P. Wallensteen, M. Eriksson, M. Sollenberg, and H. Strand, "Armed Conflict 1946–2001: A New Dataset," *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no. 5 (2002): 625–37.

<sup>20</sup> James D. Singer and M. H. Small, "Correlates of War Project: International and Civil War Data, 1816–1992." ICPSR Study # 9905 (Ann Arbor, MI: ICPSR, 1994). Note that COW civil war data is updated now: Meredith Reid Sarkees and F. Wayman, *Resort to War: 1816–2007* (Washington DC: CQ Press, 2010).

triangles refer to the countries, and their size indicates the number of alliance and enmity ties they share with groups.

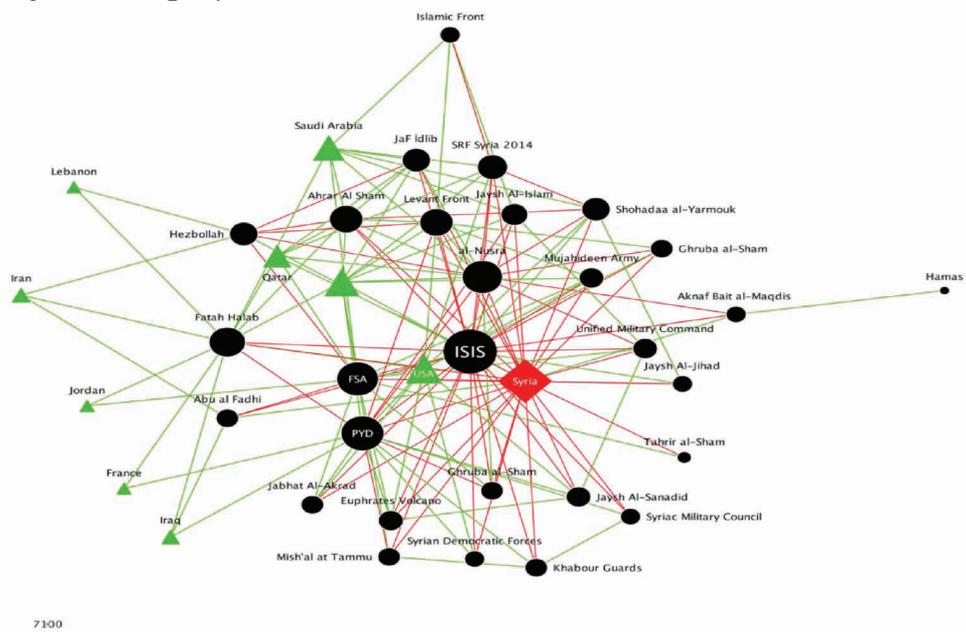


Figure 1: Syria, 2015

The Syrian conflict is neither the first nor the only one with so many actors involved. During the Cold War period, external intervention in internal conflicts or support of one of the disputants was shaped primarily by the strategic interests of nation-states—mostly regional or major powers. This has not changed. Indeed, supporting domestic dissidents has evolved into a normal foreign policy practice given that states have increasingly become more reluctant to confront each other by waging direct wars. Whether to achieve domestic regime change, liberate the minorities living under repressive regimes, put an end to atrocities seen in civil wars, or gain leverage over an enemy, states have been motivated to intervene in each other's internal conflicts either through supporting the government or the opposition side. The type of intervention varies from overt to covert as well as from military to economic and diplomatic support to either side in a conflict, i.e. the government and/or nonstate armed groups.

Foreign state intervention in internal conflict has been serving as a major means through which internal conflicts are internationalized. A considerable amount of work has emphasized the role of outside state support on the onset, evolution and termination of internal conflicts although the role of outside state support on conflict onset is still understudied. We know that outside intervention prolongs civil wars; states are more likely to interfere in internal conflict of others if there is transnational ethnic kin; and states support armed groups due to both strategic and ideational motives.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> David R. Davis and W. H. Moore, "Ethnicity Matters: Transnational Ethnic Alliances and Foreign Policy Behavior," *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (1997): 171–84; Kristian S. Gleditsch, "Transnational Dimensions of Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research* 44, no. 3 (2007): 293–309; David Carment, P. James, and Z. Taydas, "The Internationalization of Ethnic Conflict: State, Society, and Synthesis," *International Studies Review* 11, no. 1 (2009): 63–86; Lars-Erik Cederman, L. Girardin, and K. S.

While the end of the Cold War signaled an end to super power rivalry, as mentioned earlier, the international realm has been plagued with violence emanating from the actions of various types of non-state armed groups; i.e. ethnic and/or religious insurgents, terrorists, and militants. The more intriguing phenomenon has been the ability of these groups to adapt quickly to this new environment, which no longer had the super power patrons conveniently providing resources to them. *How do armed groups attract support within the borders of other states? Why do states support rebel groups despite the fact that it might attract retaliation? Why and how did supporting armed groups transform into a foreign policy strategy frequently adopted by states? What are the implications of this transformation for interstate conflict and cooperation?*

To answer these questions, I developed the Dangerous Companions Project ([nonstatearmedgroups.ku.edu.tr](http://nonstatearmedgroups.ku.edu.tr)). The project's output is twofold. On the one hand, it presents a unique cross-sectional time-variant dataset on ideational characteristics, objectives and foreign state supporters of armed groups that have been active in the post-WWII period. It also has information on several types of outside state support, i.e. safe havens, training camps, open offices, funds, and weapons. On the other hand, it includes bibliographic information about the sources used for coding each group included in the dataset. The project's website, therefore, serves as a reference for the main sources to be utilized for quick information on each rebel group.

I conceptualized the interactions between states and armed groups into two types: 1. governments intentionally provide support to certain groups, and 2. armed groups select certain states to obtain resources from. This second type of interaction is essential for capturing long-term shifts in armed groups' ability to learn how to acquire resources abroad. This was necessary to cover the cases in which armed groups were not intentionally supported by a given government, but were still able to operate within the borders of a country under that government's jurisprudence. This approach makes it possible to test some hypotheses that were put forward related to the effect of the end of the Cold War on intervention in civil war. Though the super power rivalry's termination meant that armed groups would not find the resources they needed readily available, they managed to adapt to the changing interstate environment over time. Therefore, it is essential to trace the causes of foreign state support for rebel groups to the inter-state relations.

### 2.1. Why collect large-N data?

An analysis of long-term patterns in the interactions of states and armed groups requires going beyond simple case study analysis limited to exploring the mechanisms with a small number of cases. Although case study analysis is significant for uncovering the causal mechanisms at play, it does not allow us to capture broader linkages between inter-state relations and increasing state-rebel group alliances. Initially, I examined three cases: (1) Iran during the Shah period when it enjoyed the support of a very strong ally, the USA, against a

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Gleditsch, "Ethnonationalist Triads: Assessing the Influence of Kin Groups on Civil Wars," *World Politics* 61, no. 3 (2009): 403–37; David E. Cunningham, K. S. Gleditsch, and I. Salehyan, "It Takes Two: A Dyadic Analysis of Civil War Duration and Outcome," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 4 (2009): 570–97; Kristin M. Bakke, "Copying and learning from outsiders? Assessing diffusion from transnational insurgents in the Chechen wars," in *Transnational Dynamics of Civil War*, ed. J. Y. Checkel (New York: Cambridge University Press 2013): 31–62; Lars-Erik Cederman, K. S. Gleditsch, I. Salehyan, and J. Wucherpfennig, "Transborder Ethnic Kin and Civil War," *International Organization* 67, no. 2 (2013): 389–410; Katherine Sawyer, K. G. Cunningham, and R. Reed, "The Role of External Support in Civil War Termination," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 6 (2015): 1174–1202; San-Akca, *States in Disguise*.

very strong Soviet threat; (2) Lebanon during the 1960s wherein there was not much threat facing Lebanon in the first half of the decade, but then the 1967-68 war changed the Lebanese external security environment; and (3) Syria during the 1990s, when it was abandoned by the Arab world in international politics and domestic leadership had a lot of pressures from bureaucrats and public in general to move forward with liberal economic reforms.

The objective of the case study analysis was to develop a grounded theory about the possible mechanisms through which some states choose to support armed groups against some other states. I chose the countries on the basis of three criteria: countries that are engaged in protracted conflicts make it easy to identify perceived adversaries, which are asymmetrically powerful and to control for the degree of threat across cases. Second, I examined countries that vary in their ability of internal mobilization – ability to extract for arms buildup. The third criterion for case selection was to identify countries with various sets of response strategies. My purpose was to determine the variation in ability to achieve internal mobilization and specify a list of potential responses against external threats. These cases were studied for a paper, which was written as part of the requirements of a graduate seminar on qualitative methods.

The table below describes the characteristics of the cases. Every case was part of an enduring rivalry during the relevant period. Therefore, we can argue that there was a high external threat environment during the period. All of the four cases faced an asymmetrically powerful adversary with the exception of Iran between 1970 and 1974. Iran's catching parity with Iraq was not impossible during that period, yet Iraq had signed an alliance agreement with the Soviet Union in 1972, which led to extensive Soviet export of weapons to the Ba'ath regime in Iraq.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, in the first half of the 1970s, it is possible to argue that Iran was facing an asymmetrically powerful rival that was backed by the Soviets. In addition, the Soviet threat was always present for the Shah regime. Furthermore, the Shah regime in Iran faced domestic opposition throughout the 1970s, which resulted in increasing expenditures on arms importation from the United States. There was not an alliance agreement signed between the Shah regime and the United States, but Iran was aligned with the US during the 1970s and the Shah himself was placed in power as a result of a US-backed coup d'état.

Table 1- Characteristics of Cases

Countries	Years	Adversary (Rival)	Ally	External Alignment	Domestic Opposition
Iran	1970-1974	Iraq, Soviet Union	-	US	Yes
Iran	1975-1977	Soviet Union, Iraq	-	US	No
Syria	1990-2000	Israel, Iraq	-	US	No
Lebanon	1960-1970	Israel	-		Yes

I distinguished between an alliance and alignment. Alignment does not mean a formal agreement among partners that entails helping each other in case of an external attack. Alignment points to sharing similar ideological, strategic, and foreign policy objectives to some extent. In this sense, although Iraq and Syria had close relations during the 1960s and 1970s, it does not mean that the two regimes were allies. After a detailed review of

<sup>22</sup> Mark J. Gasiorowski, "Regime Legitimacy and National Security: The Case of Pahlavi Iran," in *National Security in the Third World: The Management of Internal and External Threats*, ed. E. E. Azar and C.-in Moon (Cambridge: University of Maryland, 1988), 227–50.

these cases, I developed a coding protocol for defining cooperation between states and armed groups as well as starting to build up a grounded theory to guide the data collection effort.

The first phase of data included around 125 armed groups, which were active between 1946 and 2001. It was funded by a Dissertation Improvement Grant by the Institute of Governmental Affairs, University of California in 2008. Later, after the completion of my doctoral studies, the broader project including around 450 armed groups was funded by a Marie Curie Reintegration Grant for a four-year period between 2011 and 2015. Throughout the period, during which data collection was completed, several undergraduate and graduate students were trained and employed as coders.<sup>23</sup> The output of the overall project was published in a book by Oxford University Press in 2016.<sup>24</sup>

### 3. Examining Internal Conflict through the Lens of Interstate Relations

In the post-WWII period, a total of 104 states had to fight against armed groups challenging them for some territorial and/or governmental concessions. Seventy-eight of these states had to fight armed groups, which were supported by foreign states. This corresponds to 75% of all conflict-ridden states. Out of 454 armed groups, that were active in the same period, 234 were supported by foreign states. This means that almost 52% of armed rebel groups were supported by outside states seeking to somehow influence the course of a given internal conflict. A total of 62% of all internal conflicts involved outside interveners in the same period.<sup>25</sup>

The study of internal conflict or domestic contestation has been spread across multiple fields. Since Gurr wrote the famous “Why Men Rebel”, scholarly research has identified individual grievances as the major source of domestic conflict, such as rebellions, ethnic strife and civil war.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, most empirical research assumes individual grievances are automatically aggregated at the group level to give birth to internal conflict. Once violence is experienced, ethnic strife or civil war is the outcome of the frustration leading to the collective expression of the individual grievances. However, the theory of relative deprivation and explanations at the frustration-aggression nexus inadequately clarified how violence was born out of anger. Neither did they explain the conditions under which violence was perceived as a logical instrument to pursue grievances.

To fill this gap, utility-based or rational-actor approaches were adopted. In their prominent work on whether greed, as an indication of utility-driven violence, or grievances leads to civil war, Collier and Hoeffler challenged the conventional wisdom.<sup>27</sup> In line with these approaches, two strands of research have been dominating the study of internal conflict. Frequently applied to the study of ethnic strife, the major source of mobilization for ethnic groups is attributed to the discrimination policies pursued by the majority ethnic group in the domestic realm. On the other hand, those who favor the rational actor approach, argue that individuals occasionally behave to maximize their benefits rather than address their grievances, though it is not difficult to see how the two, utility maximization and addressing grievances, could complement each other or overlap.

<sup>23</sup> See, Non-State Armed Groups, <https://nonstatearmedgroups.ku.edu.tr>.

<sup>24</sup> San-Akca, *States in Disguise*.

<sup>25</sup> Belgin San-Akca, “Dangerous Companions: Cooperation between States and Nonstate Armed Groups,” NAGs Dataset – v.04/2015, <https://nonstatearmedgroups.ku.edu.tr/>; San-Akca, *States in Disguise*. These figures were calculated by using the NAGs Dataset.

<sup>26</sup> Ted R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968).

<sup>27</sup> Collier and Hoeffler, “Greed and Grievance”.

What is missing in this overall picture is the role international norms, regulations, and external actors play in convincing a dissatisfied group of individuals that it is conceivable and logical to organize and press for specific claims from political authorities to address the collectively felt grievances. Furthermore, external actors might signal to dissidents whether the use of a specific type of instrument for the expression of grievances is acceptable or not. In other words, the international community can play an effective role at this mobilization stage, when individual grievances are translated into collective action by:

- a. tipping the balance against the dissidents or governments, thus aggravating or alleviating grievances, and
- b. shaping the perception of domestic dissidents and governments about the utility of a certain course of action, i.e. violence vs. nonviolence, or accommodation vs. repression.

Figure 2 provides a visual description of the theoretical framework disaggregated by the actors. My future goal is to develop interdisciplinary and systematic explanations of domestic conflict dynamics as a function of the macro-historical changes in the international system to test hypotheses about the following propositions:

- a. system-level changes in the international environment, including the spreading of liberal norms and institutions, shifting balance of power, and change in power distribution, influence domestic conflict and contestation by providing signals to dissidents about the course of action they should take to pursue their demands from the corresponding governments. For armed groups, these actions might involve violent or nonviolent means and for governments the response could vary between accommodative and repressive measures, and
- b. the dynamics of resistance campaign in one state and the strategies of the opposition groups and the government influence decisions of external (state and non-state) actors about whether to support one of the disputants, which side to support, and the type of support to provide to one's protégé.

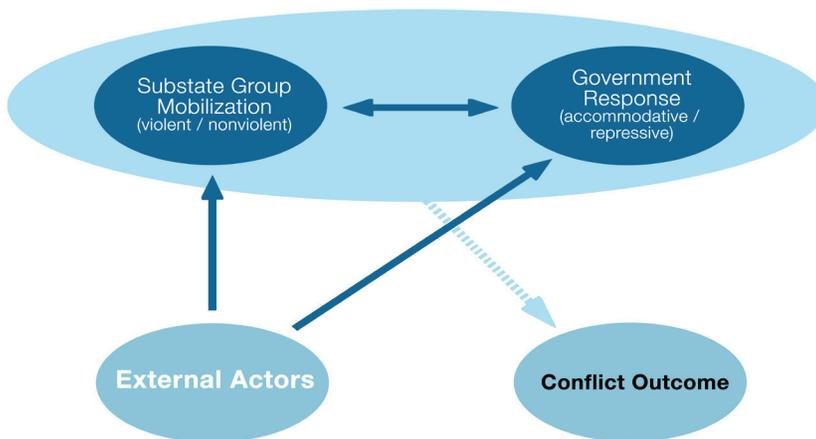


Figure 2: Visualizing the Linkages between Domestic Conflict Dynamics and External Actors

Why do we need such an overarching framework? As mentioned previously, though we

have invaluable research on transnational dimensions of civil war, we still lack a consistent and systematic joint scholarly effort to explain the role outside states play in conflict onset and the responses of target governments to rebel groups when there are outside states involved. Nor do we have such scholarship on how foreign state support influences the strategy and objectives of armed rebel groups. In other words, we need to more effectively bring interstate relations into the study of civil war. To do that, we need nuanced data disaggregating the nature of interactions between states and rebel groups.

The causes of civil war or internal conflict seem to be investigated in the limited domain of domestic politics. Key works identify political grievances, economic inequality, and greed-related motives as the major source of internal conflict though there is no consensus on what drives deprived groups to rebel and resort to violence. When they try to bring in foreign state support as an explanation, usually it is treated as a control variable rather than a key explanatory variable. Therefore, most empirical research, till recently, used proxy measurements or variables to capture the effect of this significant control variable.<sup>28</sup> Table 2 presents the empirical framework of four key published works on internal conflict onset and identifies the gaps in knowledge and empirical designs.

The most significant puzzle that inspires the civil war literature is the lack of relationship between ethnic-religious diversity of a country and its predisposition to civil conflict. Scholars intrigued by this puzzle developed systematic explanations for the conditions under which such countries experience conflict. Fearon and Laitin<sup>29</sup> argue that the key determinants of civil war are poverty, political instability, rough terrain and population size. Building on the opportunity explanation of Collier and Hoeffler,<sup>30</sup> they argue that access to resources motivates rebellion only if political institutions fail to translate grievances into policy. While Collier and Hoeffler argue that rebellion is a function of the perceived opportunity to loot resources by rebels, Fearon and Laitin argue that resources motivate rebellion if there is economic inequality to begin with and the state has a weak capacity to govern. Further, they argue that resource-rich states are more likely to end up with weak state institutions since they use such resources to buy the support of domestic public rather than spend them to strengthen their military capacity.

The financially, bureaucratically, and militarily weak states, due to poverty, present rebels with more opportunities to recruit militants and loot resources. According to Fearon and Laitin<sup>31</sup>, the evidence shows that poverty increases the likelihood of civil war outbreak. When poverty-related measures (GDP per capita) are controlled for, ethnic and religious diversity or fractionalization are not significant factors to determine whether civil war will be experienced or not. Furthermore, political instability increases rebels' chances to organize and seek rebellion, thus increasing the likelihood of civil war onset.

When it comes to foreign state support, Fearon and Laitin talk a great deal about foreign support and how it can encourage rebellion and insurgency. Yet they do not test this proposition empirically. The additional empirical tests, not published in the article, include the number of ongoing civil wars in one's neighborhood, yet they do not yield any significant results.<sup>32</sup> This

<sup>28</sup> Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War"; Collier and Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance"; Kalyvas and Balcells, "International System and Technologies of Rebellion".

<sup>29</sup> Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War".

<sup>30</sup> Collier and Hoeffler, *Greed and Grievance*; Collier and Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance".

<sup>31</sup> Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War".

<sup>32</sup> Additional tables, available at <https://web.stanford.edu/group/fearon-research/cgi-bin/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/addtbs.pdf>, indicate that number of ongoing civil wars in one's neighborhood in the present or previous year does

is surprising given that among the 110 civil war onset cases identified by Fearon and Laitin in the period between 1945 and 1999, 70 were identified to have a foreign state supporter.<sup>33</sup> The challenge remains, though. We do not know if there was any role played by foreign states in instigating violent rebellion before conflict initiates.

Table 2- Some Key Works on Civil War Onset and Contagion

Author	Collier & Hoeffler (2000, 2004)	Fearon & Laitin (2003)	Kalyvas & Balcells (2010)	Fearon (2017)
<b>Dependent Variable</b>	Civil War Onset (conflict risk)	Civil War Onset (dummy variable coded as “1” for all country-years in which a civil war started and “0” for all others)	Technology of Rebellion (categorical variable taking the value of 1 for conventional wars, 2 for irregular wars, and 3 for Symmetric Nonconventional wars.	Partial decline in the spread of civil wars after the 1990s except for the worsening situation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).
<b>Key Independent Variables</b>	Primary Commodity Exports (as percentage of GDP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poverty (measured by GDP per capita)</li> <li>Political Instability (dummy variable coded as “1” for all country-years if the country experienced an at least three-point change in its Polity IV score)</li> <li>Rough Terrain (measured by the percentage of the country that is mountainous)</li> <li>Population Size</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cold War (dummy variable coded as “1” for post-1990)</li> <li>Ex-Communist Regime (dummy variable coded as “1” for regimes emerging from a communist regime)</li> <li>Marxist Ideology (dummy variables coded as “1” for rebel groups that are guided by Marxism)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy responses by major powers working through the United Nations sanctioned peacebuilding efforts have led to the decline in civil wars.</li> <li>Impossibility to apply UN-type of treatment model in MENA due to higher costs, nationalism, the transnational jihadi movement, and the intensity of conflict among the region’s biggest powers.</li> </ol>
<b>Foreign Support</b>	A potential source of rebel finance is from hostile governments. Their proxy for the willingness of foreign governments to finance military opposition to the incumbent government is the Cold War. Since superpower rivalry is over, less foreign support is assumed to be available to armed rebel groups.	Since foreign support is difficult to observe prior to the civil war onset, they measure the availability of foreign support by a proxy measure, “the number of ongoing civil wars in neighboring countries” in the year prior to conflict onset.	They argue massive material support—combined with the spread of revolutionary beliefs and the military doctrine of revolutionary war during the Cold War—increased the capacity of both states and rebels and transformed irregular war into robust insurgency. However, the end of the Cold War, and termination of super power support, led to a decisive decline in the provision of material support to rebel forces across the world. As a result, the new form of insurgency relies on symmetric nonconventional (SNC) warfare.	No variable added related to foreign support.
<b>Tested with Real Data or Proxy</b>	The foreign support argument is tested with a proxy (the Cold War)	Foreign support argument is tested with a proxy (number of civil wars in the neighboring countries)	Post-Cold War dummy as a proxy measure of foreign support	No variable added related to foreign support

Kalyvas and Balcells pointed to the changing technology of rebellion across the Cold War and post-Cold War periods. They demonstrate that, with the end of the Cold War, a significant

not have a significant effect on the likelihood of civil war onset (Table 13, p.24).

<sup>33</sup> San-Akca, *Dangerous Companions*; San-Akca, *States in Disguise*.

change occurred in the international system which affected both states' and rebels' capacity: the decrease of support from the two superpowers. The change in their capacity affected the way rebels fight. They list three technologies or styles of rebellion. First is conventional civil war, which emerges when the military technologies of states and rebels match. Irregular civil war emerges when the military technologies of the rebels lag behind those of states. And, symmetric nonconventional (SNC) warfare emerges when the military capacity of the state and rebels match at a low level. This latter form is mostly the case when a state lacks capacity.

Their theory about the changing nature of insurgent technology relies on the assumption that material support was in decline in the post-Cold War period in comparison to the Cold War period due to the decline in super power support. Yet the NAGs Dataset shows that while around 62% of the total years in which there was some type of support to rebel groups, belongs to the Cold War years, the remaining occurred in the post-Cold War era. A comparison of the number of groups that received foreign state support across the two periods reveals that while 49% of all armed groups active during the Cold War period received such support, 53% of groups received such support in the post-Cold War era.<sup>34</sup> If there was a change in the technology of rebellion, it was not due to the decline of foreign state support. One needs to examine the change in the ideology, objectives and nature of such groups to explain the change in the technology of rebellion.

#### 4. The Collection of Data on Relations between States and Nonstate Armed Groups

Scholarly explanation about how the causal mechanism works from foreign support to civil war, has included investigations on the effect of transnational ethnic kin, safe havens across borders, and interstate rivalry.<sup>35</sup> When it comes to the effect of outside intervention on conflict duration and termination, the main explanations focus on whether there are multiple third parties intervening, the interaction among them, on whose side they intervene, and their motivation for intervention. Regan takes the lead in pointing out that it matters if the intervention is biased toward either side of an internal conflict or remains neutral, while Aydin and Regan refine this argument by examining the nature of relations between states intervening in the same conflict.<sup>36</sup> Their finding is similar to that of Balch-Lindsay and Enterline, who conclude that balanced interventions prolong civil wars.<sup>37</sup> Aydin and Regan find that in the case of multiple interveners, intervention on the same side by these interveners can shorten civil wars if they also share similar interests. Thus, this finding goes beyond simply stating that intervention on one side shortens civil wars.

By the same token, Cunningham argues that it is not about whether an intervention is on one side of an internal conflict, but about the intentions of the interveners.<sup>38</sup> Those who have

<sup>34</sup> These figures are calculated from San-Akca, NAGs Dataset.

<sup>35</sup> Stephen M. Saideman, "Explaining the International Relations of Secessionist Conflicts: Vulnerability vs. Ethnic Ties," *International Organization* 51, no. 4 (1997): 721–53; Stephen M. Saideman, *The Ties That Divide: Ethnic Politics, Foreign Policy, and International Conflict* (New York, Colombia University Press, 2001); Stephen M. Saideman, "Discrimination in International Relations: Analyzing External Support for Ethnic Groups," *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no. 1 (2002): 27–50, Cederman, Girardin and Gleditsch, "Ethnonationalist Triads"; Cederman, Gleditsch, Salehyan and Wucherpfennig, "Transborder Ethnic Kin and Civil War".

<sup>36</sup> Patrick M. Regan, "Third-Party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46, no. 1 (2002): 55–73; Aysegul Aydin and P. M. Regan, "Networks of Third-party Interveners and Civil War Duration," *European Journal of International Relations* 18, no. 3 (2011): 573–97.

<sup>37</sup> Dylan Balch-Lindsay and A. J. Enterline, "Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820–1992," *International Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (2000): 615–42.

<sup>38</sup> David E. Cunningham, "Veto Players and Civil War Duration," *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 4 (2006): 875–92; David Cunningham, "Blocking Resolution: How External States can Prolong Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research* 47, no.

their own agenda prolong civil wars rather than shorten them. Some recent work renews the debate about whether outside interveners influence civil war duration through provision of funds, weapons, and safe havens. Wood examines the effect of foreign support on civilian targeting during civil war while Sawyer, et al. find that states fight rebels longer if rebels receive fungible external resources.<sup>39</sup>

Other bodies of research one can draw on are placed in the study of proxy warfare and promotion of regime change by outside actors.<sup>40</sup> Most of this research focuses on a specific type of intervention, namely overt military intervention, and does not disaggregate the actors involved. This last issue is also present in the extensive literature on external intervention, though less so in the research specifically focusing on external state support of nonstate armed groups.

Especially when there is more than one armed group fighting against a state, it is essential to examine each group and its ties with outside actors to build nuanced explanations about why states prefer supporting one group over the other. While the US and Turkey are both allies of NATO, the US provides arms and funds to the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and People's Defense Units (YPG) in Syria, which are both considered to be terrorist organizations by Turkey. By the same token, while Russia and the US agree on the fight against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), they disagree on whether to take sides with the Syrian government and Assad regime. Indeed, the US wants regime change, while Russia wants to maintain the rule of the current Syrian regime. These complex interactions can only be captured if we disaggregate internal conflicts to multiple stages and actors involved.

#### 4.1. Conceptualization of foreign state support

Foreign state support takes several forms, such as arms, funds, safe havens, and military equipment. Since such support to armed groups goes usually secret, it is not always easy to find this information. Furthermore, governments might or might not allow rebel groups to operate freely in their borders. The overwhelming belief in the post-Cold War period was that armed groups exploit the weak states, which are unable to control their borders. Yet we know that it is the *modus operandi* for states to support such groups to achieve foreign policy objectives. Among the 454 groups for which foreign state support was coded in the NAGs Dataset, 203 groups were able to move freely within the borders of many states and raise resources. One hundred fourteen states turned out to be either safe havens for group militants seeking refuge in foreign territories, financial hubs for raising money, or weapons smuggling and transportation points.

I treat states and armed groups as equivalent actors in world politics. When armed groups are offered some support from states, they decide whether or not to accept such support. When armed groups make such decisions, they are mostly concerned with the autonomy of their operations. Since a foreign government aiding or abetting an armed group does not want

2 (2010): 115–27.

<sup>39</sup> Reed M. Wood, "From Loss to Looting? Battlefield Costs and Rebel Incentives for Violence," *International Organization* 68, no. 4 (2014): 979–99; Sawyer, Cunningham and Reed, "The Role of External Support".

<sup>40</sup> Karl W. Deutsch, *External Involvement in Internal War. Internal War: Problems and Approaches*, ed. H. Eckstein (New York, Free Press, 1964): 100–10; Richard J. Barnett, *Intervention and Revolution: America's Confrontation with Insurgent Movements Around the World* (Ontario: New American Library, 1968); Jason Lyall and L. C. I. Wilson, "Rage Against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars," *International Organization* 63, no. 1 (2009): 67–106, John Malloy I. Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510–2010* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

to lose control over its protégé, groups would carefully choose their state allies to maximize their autonomy of conduct.

To fully capture the complex web of interactions between states and armed groups, I developed a selection model of states and groups. I argue that armed groups, as well as states, choose their allies carefully. *State selection* occurs when the government of a given state creates channels to support an armed group intentionally. *Rebel selection* occurs when a rebel group seeks support within the borders of a state without the government or politicians of that state intentionally creating such channels. Rebel selection cases are usually specific to democratic states, which have institutions embedded with liberal norms. The democratic freedoms and liberties built into democratic systems are exploited by armed groups, which are in constant search for resources.<sup>41</sup>

The following example is related to the M-19 Group of Colombia and helps further explain the coding process and the kind of information we looked for when coding foreign state support for armed groups.

*State Selection Case of Support:* Below is an example of an excerpt that is used from published news resources and media to collect and code information about the M-19 group of Colombia:

In related developments, a former M-19 member claimed the group receives ‘suitcases of dollars’ from Cuba and training from Nicaragua.

In an interview with the Cali newspaper Occidente Flor Marina said, ‘The M-19 has Cuban, Libyan, Nicaraguan and Peruvian trainers in the mountains.’

‘Suitcases of dollars arrive from the outside, especially from Cuba, and are changed in Bogota,’ she said. ‘Arms arrive continually from Cuba, Nicaragua, Libya and El Salvador.’

The woman said she escaped from the rebel group after five months. She said she was tricked into joining the group when a friend invited her on a trip to visit his parents.<sup>42</sup>

One of the four Libyan cargo planes detained in Brazil enroute to Nicaragua was carrying weapons for Colombia’s largest guerrilla group, Colombian Defence Minister Fernando Landazabal said yesterday.

He told reporters the country’s security services learned that a U.S.-built Hercules C-130 was carrying arms for the M-19 group, but the plan was foiled when a technical fault forced it to land in Manaus, Brazil. ‘We were ready to repel the operation,’ General Landazabal said. He added the army had knowledge that the M-19 guerrillas were due to receive weapons either from Libya or Europe.

...The reports said that the arms shipment was planned to coincide with the 13th anniversary of the creation of the M-19, best known for the two-month seizure of the Dominican Embassy in Bogota three years ago.

The M-19 broke an undeclared truce, military sources said, by launching a dawn attack on Puerto Asis two days ago in which five guerrillas were killed. There were no casualties among security forces, the sources said.

The newspaper El Tiempo reported on Thursday that M-19’s leader, Jaime Bateman, was recently in Libya, where he met Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi. Mr. Bateman told reporters three days ago that he will resume a kidnap campaign to finance the M-19’s activities and has ordered his

<sup>41</sup> Belgin San-Akca, ‘Democracy and Vulnerability: An Exploitation Theory of Democracies by Terrorists,’ *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 7 (2014): 1285–310.

<sup>42</sup> R. Barnett, ‘Guerillas Convene ‘Peace Conference’,’ United Press International, Bogota, Colombia, 1985.

guerrillas back into hiding.

...Gen. Landazabal told Radio Caracol that each of the four planes was carrying 42 guerrillas.

“We are carrying out private investigations to establish if any M-19 guerrillas were included among them,” he said.<sup>43</sup>

These news reports provide credible information about possible channels through which M-19 raises resources. When confirming a specific piece of information, the coding protocol required coders to verify the information from at least three different sources.

*De Facto Rebel Selection Case of Support:* The following is an example of a news report used for coding *de facto* support, which occurs without the consent of the government of a state within which a group is able to recruit, establish safe havens, and raise funds. The news include information about Free Aceh Movement (GAM)’s use of Thai and Malaysian territories for weapons smuggling and safe haven. Since Thai and Malaysian governments cooperate to catch the smuggled weapons and GAM militants, Thailand and Malaysia are coded as *de facto* supporters of GAM.

...Thai police are on the lookout for a Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka or GAM) arms-smuggling syndicate mastermind who operates on both sides of the Thai-Malaysia border. They also seek the co-operation of Malaysian police to find and detain the suspect, an Indonesian citizen. This follows the discovery that recent seizures of high-powered arms in this coastal district situated north of the border from Perlis, was headed for Aceh, north Sumatra. This year alone, Thai police here have seized four M-79 grenade launchers, 17 grenades and 36 automatic assault rifles consisting of M-16s and AK-47s, all headed for the war-torn Indonesian province. Satun police chief Major-General Prajak Musikasukont said the mastermind sourced the weapons from Cambodia and was using Satun as a transit point. “The syndicate has been operating for four years and the mastermind is always commuting to and fro between southern Thailand and several areas in Malaysia, including Langkawi, in an effort to evade capture,” he said at the Satun district police headquarters today...<sup>44</sup>

Since a state might turn out to be both an intentional and *de facto* supporter, it is possible to code the same state for both and specific types of support. Below is a distribution of types of support coded. The first column gives figures in terms of the number of NAGs receiving each form of support. The second column introduces the figures related to each category with respect to the proportion of number of NAGs receiving a specific form of support to the total number of NAGs coded (454). The last column provides the percentage of each type of support to the entire years of support. Since the unit of analysis is triadic, it makes sense to think about it in terms of total number of binary support years.

<sup>43</sup> Gerald M. Boyd, “Reagan Accuses Soviet of Aiding Latin Terrorists,” *The New York Times*, January 3, 1986, 1, column 5, foreign desk.

<sup>44</sup> Sheridan Mahavera, “Border Alert for Arms Mastermind,” *New Straits Times*, August, 30, 2003. For further details of data coding process and protocol, see San-Akca, *States in Disguise*, appendix 2, 159–80.

Table 3- Distribution of Support Types\*

Type of Support	Number of Rebel Groups	Percentage in Total Number of Rebel Groups (%)	Percentage in Total Support Years (%)
Training Camps	61	13	33
Safe Haven to Members	100	22	59
Safe Haven to Leaders and Operate Offices	105	23	55
Financial Aid	61	13	40
Weapons and Logistics	124	27	44
Training	69	15	30
Transport of Weapons and Logistics	42	9	25

\* Total Number of NAGs: 454; Total Years of Binary Support: 4394

**4.2. Unit of analysis: a triadic analysis of support onset**

The theoretical framework I developed proposes an analysis of support onset through the lens of interstate relations. Therefore, I constructed a triadic time-series cross-sectional dataset to capture the effect over time as well as across different cases. A case emerges as soon as a NAG starts to challenge a state for the following objectives: 1- toppling an existing leadership, 2- change of regime type (transition from autocracy to democracy or the reverse regime change), 3- demands for autonomy, 4- secession/territorial demand, and 5- demands for policy change. The state, which is the subject of the NAG’s attack is called the “target”. Ideally, all other states in the world are *potential supporters*. When coding state support, I treated each state as such. Yet when conducting the empirical analysis in some of my publications, I narrowed down the list of potential supporters for every NAG. This was necessary to handle an unnecessary inflation of zero observations. Figure 3 presents a visualization of the anticipated interactions among a NAG, its target and a state, which I call a “potential supporter”. Support onset is explained through the developments in the interstate environment of targets and potential supporters as well as the interactions between target and potential supporter.

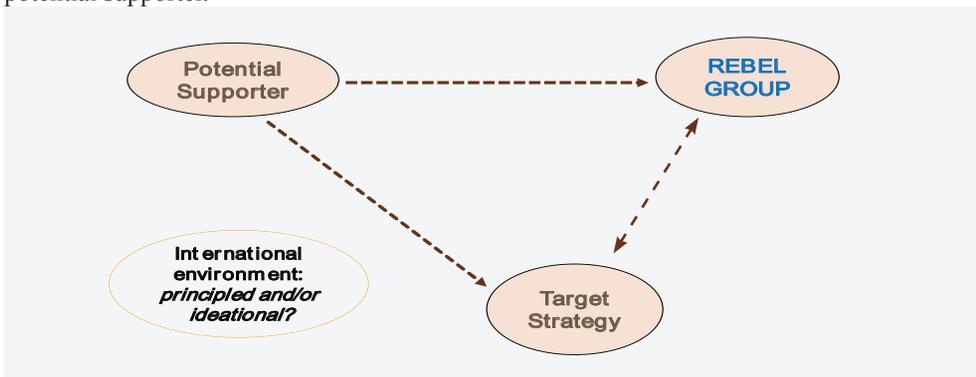


Figure 3: Potential Supporter-NAG-Target State Triad

*Potential Supporter*: A state is called a potential supporter of a NAG, if it is in the Politically Relevant Group (PRG) of a target state. Most dyadic states of interstate war also adopt a similar strategy. It would not be theoretically intuitive to anticipate a militarized dispute between Somalia and Sweden since they are located so distant from each other. The

PRG of a state includes geographically contiguous states, regional powers and major powers. Regional and major powers are included among potential supporters of each NAG since they have some aspirations that stretch over a broader geographical area.<sup>45</sup>

A NAG-target state dyad is then paired with each state in the PRG of a target state for empirical analysis. Using the NAGs dataset, it is possible to identify which of the states in a PRG transformed from potential supporter to actual supporter. Each triad is listed for the entire period during which a NAG survived.

### 4.3. Data sources, credibility and transparency

The Dangerous Companions Project has a website, on which sources used to code information about foreign state support are publicly shared under the profile of each NAG. This is especially significant to increase transparency in academic research and make information available to public.

Furthermore, to give users a sense of credibility and precision of the information found, a precision variable is coded for each foreign state supporter and each type of support. In order to specify how confident the coder is about the evidence of active support, the variable receives the following scores. Lower scores correspond to higher level of precision, thus higher level of credibility:

1. The supporter outright stated its intention and/or type of support, and/or the support was officially documented by that state or another.
2. A reliable journalist, scholar, or media outlet recorded the support and provides convincing evidence and there are other sources that confirm this information.
3. Support is highly suspected by a reliable source (such as journalist, scholar, or media outlet), but cannot be confirmed by other sources.
4. One state accuses another state of supporting a group, but it cannot provide official documentation beyond allegations.

The information is mostly found using the following sources: Lexis-Nexis academic web program, Keesing's Archives, and published secondary sources, including political science journals, journals focusing on particular regions of the world, books and book chapters. Each coder received training and was given a sample NAG to code to. Afterwards, inter-coder reliability was confirmed. Each coder was given a questionnaire with directions and guidance about how to conduct research on online databases and sources to find and collect the required data. The following keywords were searched in the Lexis-Nexis categories "Major U.S. and World Publications," "News Wire Services," and "TV and Radio Broadcast Transcripts" with each group's name: support, assistance, sponsor, safe haven, sanctuary, training camps, camps arms, weapons, funds, and troops.<sup>46</sup>

The NAGs dataset is unique in terms of the temporal and spatial domain covered as

<sup>45</sup> Zeev Maoz and B. D. Mor, "Enduring Rivalries: The Early Years," *International Political Science Review* 17, no. 2 (1996): 141–60; Douglas Lemke and W. Reed, "The Relevance of Politically Relevant Dyads," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, no. 1 (2001): 126–44; Zeev Maoz and B. Russett, "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946–1986," *American Political Science Review* 87, no. 3 (1993): 624–38. Maoz (1996) and Maoz & Russett (1993) talk extensively about the criteria to identify politically relevant dyads. In addition, Maoz (1996) identifies the pairs of indirectly contiguous states that share a colonial or imperial past. See pp. 122–23 in Maoz (1996) for a detailed explanation of political relevancy. See Lemke and Reed (2001) for a comparison of the statistical results for conflict analysis by using all the dyads in the world and politically relevant dyads. They conclude that there are not significant differences across findings, and using politically relevant dyads makes statistical research with a large population of cases manageable.

<sup>46</sup> Detailed coding rules are published in San-Akca, *States in Disguise*, 174–75. There might be some overlaps between the corresponding sections of the book and the coding procedures outlined here.

well as the *de facto support* coding. Several other existing datasets coded third-party interventions in internal conflicts. Cunningham, Gleditsch and Salehyan's Non-State Actor (NSA)<sup>47</sup>, is a dyadic dataset that includes information for each NSA's military strength and capacity, leadership characteristic, popular support and political linkages as well as external sponsorship. Nevertheless, external state support is not disaggregated. For any kind of support, it is coded as "1". It also lacks the temporal dimension.

By the same token, UCDP External Support Data codes external supporters that give support to an armed group in a given year for the period between 1975 and 2010. It also codes for different types of support and the type of the external supporter.<sup>48</sup> These data, however, do not go beyond 1975 and are not time-variant. The total number of observations in the external support dataset is around 7,900, whereas the total number of observations in the NAGs Dataset is around 16,000. Furthermore, the NAGs dataset has time-variant information on both objectives and ideational characteristics of groups. If a group shifts its ideology from socialism to liberalism, this is a significant piece of information. Such nuanced data can provide an opportunity to observe how armed groups adopt new globally dominant ideologies from time to time to improve their ability to find foreign supporters. Finally, the literature on outside intervention in internal conflict yielded some data on foreign support of armed groups.<sup>49</sup> Yet they did not disaggregate the actors involved in the same intrastate conflict. It is important to know if country A supports group X, but does not do so for group Y, which are involved in the same conflict fighting against the same state.

## 5. Data Analysis

The empirical method that I used in the analysis related to the factors determining support onset for rebel groups relied on binary logit analysis with control over temporal dependence. The conventional method of controlling for temporal dependence is the method developed by Beck, Katz, and Tucker.<sup>50</sup> This method generates a variable that counts consecutive years or duration of non-cases. In this particular context, it would mean the consecutive years of no support observations. The idea is to account for time dependence. Given that a state provides support to a NAG in year X, it is more likely to continue its support in year X+1. There is a new method to control for temporal dependence developed by Carter and Signorino.<sup>51</sup> The main difference is that the previous method had cubic splines to capture the main spikes in temporal domain, whose their interpretation was difficult. Regardless, temporal domain has to be controlled for in the analysis of a dataset that contains time-variant information. Empirical analysis in some of my work was also conducted using this new method, yet there was not a significant difference between them and the method, which relies on cubic splines.

## 6. Conclusion and Future Research

The NAGs dataset is prepared to facilitate further research on the effect of outside states

<sup>47</sup> David E. Cunningham, K. S. Gleditsch, and I. Salehyan, *Non-State Actor Data – Version 3.3.*, 2009.

<sup>48</sup> Stina Höglbladh, T. Pettersson, and L. Themnér, "External Support in Armed Conflict 1975–2009" (paper presented at the 52nd Annual International Studies Association Convention. Montreal, Canada, 2011).

<sup>49</sup> Patrick M. Regan, "Conditions of Successful Third-Party Intervention in Intrastate Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40, no. 2 (1996): 336–59; Aydin and Regan, "Networks of Third-party Interveners".

<sup>50</sup> Nathaniel Beck, J. N. Katz, and R. Tucker, "Taking Time Seriously," *American Journal of Political Science* 42, no. 4 (1998): 1260–88.

<sup>51</sup> David B. Carter and C. S. Signorino, "Back to the Future: Modeling Time Dependence in Binary Data," *Political Analysis* 18, no. 3 (2010): 271–92.

on instigating rebellion and violent conflict within the borders of states. Given that we did not yet collect data to see if outside states somehow foster violent internal conflict, future scholarship might think about theoretical and empirical ways of addressing this question. We have extensive research about the transnational dynamics of internal conflict. Why do states intervene in the conflicts of others? How do they choose their side: government vs. armed group? Figure 4 demonstrates potential gaps in the existing research. We are yet to conduct research about the role of external state support on the choice of strategy by conflicting sides as well as the governance capacity of armed groups.

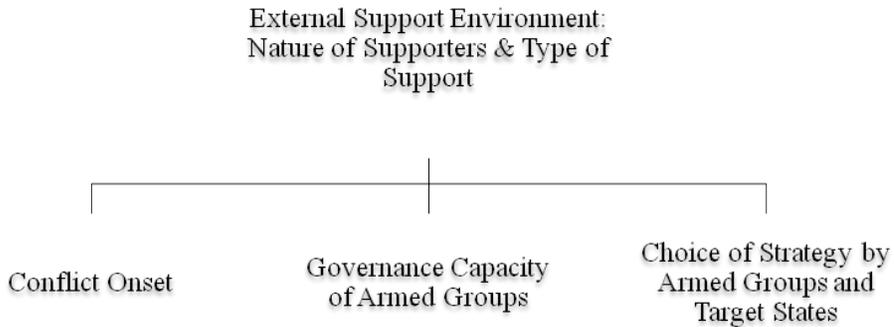


Figure 4: Future Research Venues

The challenge stems from the difficulty of identifying groups with potential grievances across every state. Most datasets on armed conflict, and the NAGs dataset is not an exception, are biased towards violence. This means that scholarship cannot empirically offer much when it comes to explaining how external states might fuel grievances within a state. Furthermore, the NAGs dataset relies on observational data rather than witness accounts. It uses interviews conducted by reliable news agencies to get primary information about state supporters of armed groups and case study analysis by scholars, yet it still falls short in incorporating a multiplicity of resources. It relies on Western media sources to a great extent, which is problematic at times.

This paper presented a personal history about a scholarly journey spreading across almost a decade. The dataset, which was the outcome of the mentioned project is now extensively used by scholars in Europe and North America. The empirical findings have yielded three articles and a book,<sup>52</sup> and are evidence of the power of using empirical data in a systematic manner. IR scholars in Turkey should adopt the highest standards when it comes to conducting academic research. Mere story-telling or future-guessing do not qualify as scholarly prediction, which must build on expertise in a specific area and empirical data.

<sup>52</sup> Belgin San Akca, "Supporting Non-State Armed Groups: A Resort to Illegality," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 4 (2009): 589–613; Zeev Maoz and B. San-Akca, "Rivalry and State Support for Non-state Armed Groups (NAGs)," *International Studies Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (2012): 720–34; San-Akca, "Democracy and Vulnerability; San-Akca, *States in Disguise*.

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## Computational International Relations What Can Programming, Coding and Internet Research Do for the Discipline?

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### Abstract

*Computational Social Science emerged as a highly technical and popular discipline in the last few years, owing to the substantial advances in communication technology and daily production of vast quantities of personal data. As per capita data production significantly increased in the last decade, both in terms of its size (bytes) as well as its detail (heartrate monitors, internet-connected appliances, smartphones), social scientists' ability to extract meaningful social, political and demographic information from digital data also increased. A vast methodological gap exists in 'computational international relations', which refers to the use of one or a combination of tools such as data mining, natural language processing, automated text analysis, web scraping, geospatial analysis and machine learning to provide larger and better organized data to test more advanced theories of IR. After providing an overview of the potentials of computational IR and how an IR scholar can establish technical proficiency in computer science (such as starting with Python, R, QGis, ArcGis or Github), this paper will focus on some of the author's works in providing an idea for IR students on how to think about computational IR. The paper argues that computational methods transcend the methodological schism between qualitative and quantitative approaches and form a solid foundation in building truly multi-method research design.*

**Keywords:** Methodology, computer science, digital research, Internet

### 1. Introduction - What is Computational IR (ComInt)?

Computational International Relations (ComInt<sup>1</sup>), introduced as a specific inquiry of research in this paper, derives from the Computational Social Science (ComSoc<sup>2</sup>) revolution of the last decade. International relations (IR) literature has long trailed behind political science (PolSci) since the seminal *Designing Social Inquiry*<sup>3</sup> (DSI) by King, Keohane and Verba. Setting the quantitative bounds of the discipline despite its evolution over the years, DSI has established the methodological orthodoxy of both IR and PolSci, becoming the key text in

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<sup>1</sup> I will be abbreviating Computational IR as ComInt, as CIR is an over-crowded abbreviation in international relations, used in reference to Coordinator for International Relations, Central Intelligence Report, Critical Information Requirements, CIR Capital Investments Review, among many others.

<sup>2</sup> I am strongly in favour of abbreviating Computational Social Science as ComSoc, because CSS is already over-crowded with several computer science-related terminologies (including 'computer science'), including Cascading Style Sheets, Content Scrambling System, Central/Computing Support Services, Core System Software, Client Security Software and so on...

<sup>3</sup> Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1994).

almost all methods classes. The showdown of critical and supportive camps over DSI has continued well into today, setting the parameters of methodological polarization. The strong empiricism of regression and statistical modelling was challenged by the qualitative camp for a variety of reasons, including distortion of analytical focus<sup>4</sup>, manipulation of data<sup>5</sup>, and overall skepticism over how much mathematical validity can imply causality<sup>6</sup>. This long and seemingly unending core debate on methodology in IR and PolSci has become eclipsed by the advent of computational social science as a meta-bridge between extreme ends of hard sciences and social sciences.

There is no one single gateway to computational social science. It is rather a meeting point between diverse disciplines that seek to strengthen their analytical approach through the use of a wide array of computer and data science tools. Although the term used to define computer (or other hard) scientists using big data processing methods to explain social phenomena<sup>7</sup>, this frame is currently expanding. Increasingly more social scientists are getting trained in the ways of data science and Internet research, harvesting new forms of data to expand some of the fundamental assertions of their literature. Training a dedicated ‘computational social scientist’ is a complicated and broad task, with many definitional and operational questions. For example, how can a student with no programming or computer background start learning computational tools? Which exact programming languages should a student master? Is it enough to learn coding? How much? Once coding yields promising data, should you map it, or run a cluster network analysis? Should you learn Python or R? Is it better to specialize in geospatial research, sentiment analysis, neural networks or data mining? The difficulty of answering these questions, beyond the fact that such answers are highly subjective, lies within the rapidly transforming technical environment of computer science.

### 1.1. Brief history of computational social science (ComSoc)

It is hard to build an accurate trajectory of ComSoc. Different social sciences disciplines have adopted, dropped, marginalized and re-adopted computer-based tools at different points since 1980s. Earliest forms of Dynamic Systems Theory<sup>8</sup> and Artificial Intelligence<sup>9</sup> debates

<sup>4</sup> Christopher H. Achen, “Let’s Put Garbage-Can Regressions and Garbage-Can Probits Where They Belong,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 22, no. 4 (September 1, 2005): 327–39, doi:10.1080/07388940500339167; David Collier and Henry E. Brady, *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004); Philip A. Schrodt, “Beyond the Linear Frequentist Orthodoxy,” *Political Analysis* 14, no. 3 (July 2006): 335–39, doi:10.1093/pan/mpj013. no. 4 (September 1, 2005)

<sup>5</sup> Frank P. Harvey, “Practicing Coercion: Revisiting Successes and Failures Using Boolean Logic and Comparative Methods,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43, no. 6 (1999): 840–71; Peter A. Hall, “Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Research,” in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 373–404.

<sup>6</sup> John Gerring, *Social Science Methodology: A Criterial Framework* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Judea Pearl, *Causality: Models, Reasoning and Inference*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> Steven Bankes, Robert Lempert, and Steven Popper, “Making Computational Social Science Effective: Epistemology, Methodology, and Technology,” *Social Science Computer Review* 20, no. 4 (November 1, 2002): 377–88, doi:10.1177/089443902237317; Cristiano Castelfranchi, “The Theory of Social Functions: Challenges for Computational Social Science and Multi-Agent Learning,” *Cognitive Systems Research* 2, no. 1 (April 1, 2001): 5–38, doi:10.1016/S1389-0417(01)00013-4; Flaminio Squazzoni, “A (Computational) Social Science Perspective on Societal Transitions,” *Computational and Mathematical Organization Theory* 14, no. 4 (December 1, 2008): 266–82, doi:10.1007/s10588-008-9038-y.

<sup>8</sup> Walter C. Hurty, “Dynamic Analysis of Structural Systems Using Component Modes,” *AIAA Journal* 3, no. 4 (1965): 678–85, doi:10.2514/3.2947; Erich Jantsch, “From Forecasting and Planning to Policy Sciences,” *Policy Sciences* 1, no. 1 (March 1, 1970): 31–47, doi:10.1007/BF00145191; J Brian McLoughlin and Judith N Webster, “Cybernetic and General-System Approaches to Urban and Regional Research: A Review of the Literature,” *Environment and Planning A* 2, no. 4 (December 1, 1970): 369–408, doi:10.1068/a020369.

<sup>9</sup> M. Minsky, “Steps toward Artificial Intelligence,” *Proceedings of the IRE* 49, no. 1 (January 1961): 8–30, doi:10.1109/JRPROC.1961.287775; J. R. Carbonell, “AI in CAI: An Artificial-Intelligence Approach to Computer-Assisted Instruction,” *IEEE*

of the 1950-60s have led to the emergence of Complexity Science<sup>10</sup> and the popularization of Agent-Based Modelling<sup>11</sup> in sociology and behavioral economics. As computers became more powerful and widely available in the 1980s, first forms of Data Mining<sup>12</sup>, Genetic Algorithms<sup>13</sup> and System Dynamics Models<sup>14</sup> emerged in social research. Through the 1990s, earlier adoptions of Internet data on social research began to emerge, creating multi-layered connections into complexity research, network science and urban systems modelling. At certain times, these attempts merged into the existing quantitative strand in social sciences, where in others, computational progress embarked on its own journey, steering clear of mainstream statistical and mathematical methods. By 2000s, computer models of large sets of quantified data were already being used in cognition, decision-making, behavioral approaches, groups and organization, social interactions and systemic analysis of world events. Conte et al.<sup>15</sup> identify three main schools of development in ComSoc: deductive (macro theory-building through mathematical modelling and computer processing), generative (micro theory-building through behavioral modelling and computer simulations) and complexity science (use of non-static large and live datasets to explain and forecast behavior and choice-based uncertainty) variants.

With the emergence of digital platforms and social media, and global proliferation of smartphones, ComSoc departed from its previous focus and began harvesting this new, abundant and highly granular type of digital data. Current definitions of ComSoc therefore distinguish between computer-based social science<sup>16</sup>, which is using computer programs to process quantitative social data and ComSoc, which processes enormous chunks of - often real-time - Internet data<sup>17</sup>. Although the quantity and granularity of digital data produced every day is impressive, a key question remains how to process such data in a meaningful way and how to build social theory using it. As of July 2016, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook

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*Transactions on Man-Machine Systems* 11, no. 4 (December 1970): 190–202, doi:10.1109/TMMS.1970.299942; Bonnie Lynn Webber and Nils J. Nilsson, *Readings in Artificial Intelligence* (Los Altos, CA: Morgan Kaufmann, 2014).

<sup>10</sup> Kenneth E. Boulding, "General Systems Theory—The Skeleton of Science," *Management Science* 2, no. 3 (April 1, 1956): 197–208, doi:10.1287/mnsc.2.3.197; A. K. Zvonkin and L. A. Levin, "The Complexity of Finite Objects and the Development of the Concepts of Information and Randomness by Means of the Theory of Algorithms," *Russian Mathematical Surveys* 25, no. 6 (1970): 83, doi:10.1070/RM1970v025n06ABEH001269; Peter Caws, "Science, Computers, and the Complexity of Nature," *Philosophy of Science* 30, no. 2 (April 1, 1963): 158–64, doi:10.1086/287926.

<sup>11</sup> David L. Banks and Nicholas Hengartner, "Social Networks," in *Encyclopedia of Quantitative Risk Analysis and Assessment* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2008), doi:10.1002/9780470061596.risk0667; Thomas J. Fararo, "Mathematical Sociology," in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2007), doi:10.1002/9781405165518.wbeosm052.pub2; Roger D. Evered, "A Typology of Explanative Models," *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 9, no. 3 (January 1, 1976): 259–77, doi:10.1016/0040-1625(76)90011-1.

<sup>12</sup> John V. Seidel and Jack A. Clark, "The Ethnograph: A Computer Program for the Analysis of Qualitative Data," *Qualitative Sociology* 7, no. 1–2 (March 1, 1984): 110–25, doi:10.1007/BF00987111; David Myers, "'Anonymity Is Part of the Magic': Individual Manipulation of Computer-Mediated Communication Contexts," *Qualitative Sociology* 10, no. 3 (September 1, 1987): 251–66, doi:10.1007/BF00988989; Ronald L Breiger, Scott A Boorman, and Phipps Arabie, "An Algorithm for Clustering Relational Data with Applications to Social Network Analysis and Comparison with Multidimensional Scaling," *Journal of Mathematical Psychology* 12, no. 3 (August 1, 1975): 328–83, doi:10.1016/0022-2496(75)90028-0.

<sup>13</sup> David A. Snow and R. Machalek, "The Sociology of Conversion," *Annual Review of Sociology* 10, no. 1 (1984): 167–90, doi:10.1146/annurev.so.10.080184.001123; H. M. Collins, "The Seven Sexes: A Study in the Sociology of a Phenomenon, or the Replication of Experiments in Physics," *Sociology* 9, no. 2 (May 1, 1975): 205–24, doi:10.1177/003803857500900202.

<sup>14</sup> Tom R. Burns, "The Sociology of Complex Systems: An Overview of Actor-System-Dynamics Theory," *World Futures* 62, no. 6 (September 1, 2006): 411–40, doi:10.1080/02604020600798619; Reinier de Man, "The Use of Forecasts in Energy Policy: An Application of Rule Systems Theory to the Comparative Analysis of Public Policy Processes," *Systems Practice* 2, no. 2 (June 1, 1989): 213–38, doi:10.1007/BF01059500.

<sup>15</sup> R. Conte et al., "Manifesto of Computational Social Science," *The European Physical Journal Special Topics* 214, no. 1 (November 1, 2012): 325–46, doi:10.1140/epjst/e2012-01697-8.

<sup>16</sup> Norman P. Hummon and Patrick Doreian, "Computational Methods for Social Network Analysis," *Social Networks* 12, no. 4 (December 1, 1990): 273–88, doi:10.1016/0378-8733(90)90011-W.

<sup>17</sup> Joop J. Hox, "Computational Social Science Methodology, Anyone?," *Methodology* 13, no. Supplement 1 (June 1, 2017): 3–12, doi:10.1027/1614-2241/a000127.

and other social media platforms combined, produced around 650 million publicly available posts per day<sup>18</sup>, making up ‘*the largest increase in the expressive capacity of humanity in the history of the world*’<sup>19</sup>. With the emergence of increasingly more powerful computers, along with most creative data processing software, all scientific disciplines gained access to historically unprecedented and unfathomably detailed information on micro and macro-level human interactions.

Computational IR (hereafter, *ComInt*) derives largely from the founding and advent of ComSoc. in the last few years. Related to, but separate from ComSoc, ComInt deals exclusively with core IR topics of power, conflict/peace, state behavior, international norms/institutions and the world system/order. As ComInt starts dealing with non-state actors (NGOs, MNCs, media, religious groups, Diasporas, militants etc.) it steers further into the domain of sociology and shares common ground with digital, or tech sociologists. This domain requires even further novel methods, as tracing the transient shifts and trends of non-state actors require a way to bring ethnography close to the field of computational methods that both include, but also expand upon the existing approaches of digital and/or Internet ethnography.

Both the data scientists and natural sciences scholars with whom I had the luck to work at the Oxford Internet Institute, the Oxford Computer Science Department and the Alan Turing Institute, had a distinct interest in the realist strand of IR. They had an automatic tendency to accept states as singular and primary units of analysis in their approaches and without exception, all of them wanted to address questions related to survival, conflict and security - all from a state-centric point of view. Defense, balance of power, armed conflict and resource-infrastructure (capability) oriented research agendas have attracted significantly more computational research attention than other promising approaches in IR such as constructivism, post-structuralism, critical or post-modern theories. This is a shame, as I will demonstrate later on, data mining, entity recognition or geo-statistical mapping methods can successfully challenge a number of these approaches.

Defined in simple terms ComInt, relies on the mining and processing of vast quantities of digital social footprint to study, model and explain world events. In doing that, it transcends the traditional schism between qualitative and quantitative methodology and presents a ‘third way’ methodology that frees the researcher from the restrictions of both methodological schools. ComInt predominantly (but not exclusively) uses large chunks of digital footprint and focuses on social online activities that generate enormous quantities of social data. This is one of the reasons why ComInt or ComSoc didn’t exist a decade ago, and also a reason why merely using numerical analysis software like R, Python and MatLab to model existing quantitative data, isn’t really ComSoc or ComInt. The origin, size and type of data that is collected make the main difference, as well as the main focus of study; the Internet and digital interdependencies.

## 1.2. Charting the waters: main questions of ComInt

ComInt is an emerging field with yet unclear analytical borders. How to study, research and teach it remains a developing endeavour. The purpose of this section is to set five main signal

<sup>18</sup> Derek Ruths and Jürgen Pfeffer, “Social Media for Large Studies of Behavior,” *Science* 346, no. 6213 (November 28, 2014): 1063–64, doi:10.1126/science.346.6213.1063.

<sup>19</sup> R. Michael Alvarez, *Computational Social Science* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), viii.

posts across a vast scientific territory, helping newcomers to identify and scale out the field. These five signal posts constitute five different approaches to digital data processing, along with their theoretical and research design point of view: a) language/text, b) mapping, c) modelling, d) communication and e) networks.

### 1.2.1. Language and text

Although linguistics has so far predominantly been used by the qualitative part of social sciences and IR, computational tools introduced new approaches to the quantitative study of large amounts of text. Quantitative linguistics<sup>20</sup> existed as a vibrant sub-discipline as far back in the 1960s, but the advent of computational linguistics<sup>21</sup> as relevant to IR is a relatively new phenomenon, since it renders historically unprecedented volumes qualitative information usable by text processing programs. Traditionally, IR's relationship with linguistics has largely been driven through critical discourse analysis, where qualitative data was interpreted as 'unmeasurable'<sup>22</sup>, containing qualities like emotion, sentiment and judgement that couldn't conceivably be analyzed through numeration. Digitization of text and the advent of speech recognition technologies have enabled large chunks of text to be searchable. Then came the process by which vast quantities of parliamentary archives, historical documents and official statements became digitized, bringing text analysis into the domain of computation. Today, thanks to the Internet and social media, more than 7 million web pages<sup>23</sup> of text are being added to our collective repository of text, searchable, quantifiable and measurable.

Text mining tools such as WordStat, RapidMiner, KHCoder aim to dig into vast quantities of written resources and even real-time transcribed speech through specialized computer software. They differ fundamentally from online text searching tools such as Google or Bing by allowing the analyst to establish connections, detect patterns and build networks between very large text datasets, rather than merely searching within them. Although these tools and methods are being advanced and updated at great pace, some analytical elements remain recurrent across most studies.

- *Information Retrieval* is perhaps the oldest of text mining tools and one that is the easiest to replicate by simple programming. Information retrieval identifies the documents in a text dataset to match a specific search term. Google, Yahoo or Bing search engines are the best-known information retrieval systems, and almost all libraries use a version of these systems.
- *Natural Language Processing* on the other hand bring text mining into the domain of artificial intelligence: how can computers understand a diverse set of human language in a way that humans communicate with each other? In other words, how can a computer automatically identify verbs, nouns, emotions, threats and sarcasm in a new language it is introduced to? How should an algorithm recognize 'Donald Trump is a great President' when the statement is used as sarcasm, as part of a critical tweet, for example? Natural Language Processing is crucial to 'teach' a computer how to code

<sup>20</sup> Gustav Herdan, "Quantitative Linguistics or Generative Grammar?," *Linguistics* 2, no. 4 (2009): 56–65, doi:10.1515/ling.1964.2.4.56.

<sup>21</sup> Kenneth W. Church and Robert L. Mercer, "Introduction to the Special Issue on Computational Linguistics Using Large Corpora," *Computational Linguistics* 19, no. 1 (March 1993): 1–24.

<sup>22</sup> Richard E. Palmer, "Postmodernity and Hermeneutics," *Boundary 2* 5, no. 2 (1977): 363–94, doi:10.2307/302200; Paul Hernadi, "Dual Perspective: Free Indirect Discourse and Related Techniques," *Comparative Literature* 24, no. 1 (1972): 32–43, doi:10.2307/1769380.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.internetlivestats.com/>.

and interpret different, hidden meanings in language, as well as culturally-contingent, unique expressions. This process is usually the first step in building a corpus (body of textual digital knowledge) to build information extraction and data mining systems.

- *Information Extraction* is the process by which unstructured textual data is reorganized into a structured form based on the corpus obtained by Natural Language Processing. It is further split into three main approaches
  - Term Analysis, which extracts different versions and references to the same term in a range documents, especially when these documents include a mixture of official, unofficial, translated and native-language versions.
  - Named-Entity Recognition, which extracts people, organizations or groups, in addition to different expressions of numbers (percentages, time and location)
  - Fact Extraction, which identifies and extracts relationships, networks and subtle connections in a document, such as between entities, events, dates and geographic designations.

The resultant processes enable the researcher to discover previously unidentified and unestablished knowledge from text and especially by studying large bodies of text in relation to each other. For example, by deep diving into American, British, Russian and French official documents about the 1945 Yalta Conference might give us comparative information over how all four sides understood and interpreted the terms of the conference, allowing us to generate new knowledge in diplomatic history over how these countries structured their foreign policies through early Cold War.

Some of the most promising employments of computational language and text analysis on international relations involve sentiment analysis, detection of certain types of behavior (such as radicalization) through text, opinion mining and violent event detection/prediction. In one of the most relevant cases for IR, Bermingham et al.<sup>24</sup> demonstrate how harvesting word and sentiment combinations in Youtube's comment section of jihadi videos can offer a predictive model of radicalization. Delving beyond the scope of the Internet, Hsinchun Chen<sup>25</sup> for example, has discovered an automated sentiment mining model the Dark Web text data, presenting a methodological avenue for the detection of potential radicalization online. Dubvey et al. took out automated sentiment mining methods beyond radicalization/terrorism research and harvested digital media posts of Indian diplomats. In doing so the researchers presented a promising model on how foreign service members interact with politics in online space. Finally, a personal favorite of mine, Hannes Mueller and Christopher Rauh have recently published an excellent paper<sup>26</sup>, which successfully predicts political violence by harvesting automated newspaper text. The authors argue that it is possible to predict armed conflict and political violence in a specific country by analyzing within-country variation of topics in national newspapers. Finally, one of the earliest forms of IR-relevant text mining studies in Turkey has been conducted by Hatipoğlu et al.<sup>27</sup> on how digital information and

<sup>24</sup> Adam Bermingham et al., "Combining Social Network Analysis and Sentiment Analysis to Explore the Potential for Online Radicalisation," in *Proceedings of the 2009 International Conference on Advances in Social Network Analysis and Mining*, ASONAM '09 (Washington, DC, USA: IEEE Computer Society, 2009), 231–36, doi: 10.1109/ASONAM.2009.31.

<sup>25</sup> H. Chen, "Sentiment and Affect Analysis of Dark Web Forums: Measuring Radicalization on the Internet," in *2008 IEEE International Conference on Intelligence and Security Informatics*, 2008, 104–9, doi: 10.1109/ISI.2008.4565038.

<sup>26</sup> Hannes Mueller and Christopher Rauh, "Reading between the Lines: Prediction of Political Violence Using Newspaper Text," *American Political Science Review*, December 2017, 1–18, doi:10.1017/S0003055417000570.

<sup>27</sup> Emre Hatipoğlu et al., "Sosyal Medya ve Türk Dış Politikası: Kobani Tweetleri Üzerinden Türk Dış Politikası Algısı," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 13, no. 52 (2016): 175–89.

content diffusion on 2015 ‘Kobani riots’ in Turkey influenced foreign policy perceptions at the national scale.

Text mining is useful when it is used alongside another method, such as discourse analysis, process tracing or statistics. Furthermore, text mining research groups perform better when they contain a subject expert (historian, sociologist or ethnographer) and a linguist (theorist) alongside programmer(s) and engineer(s), in contrast to research clusters that contain only the latter two. Usually the hardest and unfortunately the most overlooked aspect of text mining is building a corpus that is culturally, contextually and case-wise aware of the nuances and subtleties of the language(s) that is/are being studied. Furthermore, both the corpus and search terms need to be grounded in theory, in order to avoid concept stretching or build a corpus with redundant or irrelevant terms.

### 1.2.2. Mapping

Mapping and geospatial analysis contribute to some of the most central components of IR, including geopolitics/geography, borders and space. It is also one of the most popular approaches to generating event data, which allows researchers to display spatial dynamics of war, conflict and inequality. The terms GIS (Geographic Information Systems) and ‘geospatial’ are usually used interchangeably, with often unclear differences that separate the two. Both approaches refer to visual systems where geographic information is stored in layers, that are then viewed, manipulated and measured through a dedicated mapping software. The essence of mapping research is geographical coordinates and other geographical data (altitude, topography, elevation, depth, etc.) that are often coupled and analyzed in relation to tabular data that contains various sets of statistical information such as landmarks, infrastructure or econometric data.

Mapping has become exceptionally relevant and important to the study of IR and other social sciences, mainly because of the introduction of geolocation information integrated into smart devices and social media. Through the generation of large sets of social data containing geographical information, researchers are now able to study social and political phenomena with much higher level of granularity, sometimes in real-time. Instead of using geographical data to study natural resources, transportation infrastructure or household income, we are increasingly able to derive behavioral information through micro expressions of digital activity. (Foursquare check-ins, Facebook status updates, tweets containing geo-location information) This yields vast quantities of new information related to human behavior and relations for the use of emergency response teams (emergency behavior of large groups of people), local governments (transportation and traffic behavior of individuals), companies (purchasing power analysis, response to advertisements, marketing analysis), among others.

Geospatial research is conducted both on dedicated GIS application packages (such as ArcGis, QGis), or mainstream data processing-programming platforms that have GIS plug-ins (like Python and R). Even Excel is experimenting with mapping plug-ins that can be used with existing .xls or .csv files. Geospatial data on the other hand, is divided into two categories: vector and raster data. Vector data refers to points and polygons that designate or enclose a specific coordinate on a base map, such as coordinates of schools in a geographical area, or allocated farmland in a rural province. Raster data on the other hand refer to aerial imagery and digital elevation models that render a map three dimensional. While raster data is not really necessary to analyze school districts, it is crucial for the study of river flows or

transportation systems. These datasets are usually stored in dedicated geodatabases that can be downloaded for study, or users can generate their own datasets through manual entries, or web scraping techniques. Increasingly, LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles), GPS (geographic positioning systems) and satellites have begun to be used more frequently to generate open-access geospatial analysis data.

Some of the best examples of geospatial IR excel not only in finesse in visualizing location data, but successfully tell a story that builds and tests a theory. Hein E. Goemans and Kenneth A. Schultz for example, demonstrated how states in Africa make claims to some border areas and not others through aggregating a digital geospatial dataset of border disputes in a cross-continent study.<sup>28</sup> The ingenuity of the piece is that it discovers territorial contestation taking root not from natural boundaries such as watersheds or rivers, but mostly from historical-colonial contestation points. Mark Graham et al. on the other hand, have demonstrated how digital labor affects global worker micro-economies, specifically in terms of how type of online labor influences worker bargaining power, economic inclusion and worker livelihoods.<sup>29</sup> By using a dataset showing geographic engagement with digital labor, the researchers come up with both micro-level behavior and macro-level structures of what could be termed as ‘digital Marxist research’. In one of the most famous examples of geospatial IR dataset construction, Alberto Alesina et al. delve into the origins of ethnic inequality using satellite-generated nighttime luminosity data.<sup>30</sup> By exploring time-frequency distribution of electricity, the researchers come up with important tests of intra-state ethnic inequality theories, including more macro-scale developmental and economic disparities within and across countries. One of the most interesting newer studies on geospatial proximity networks has been conducted by Jesse Hammond<sup>31</sup>, who demonstrated that network of roads and connections between population centers are the primary determinants of conflict onset and diffusion in civil wars. This study challenges previous findings on geography and conflict by discovering a significant reporting bias in the building of past conflict datasets.

### 1.2.3. Modelling

Mathematical and physical modelling of social phenomena aren’t new. Since the 1960s, applying natural sciences principles and functions on social events have been amply used by researchers.<sup>32</sup> The advent of computational methods allowed computer science to bridge this interdisciplinary gap between natural and social sciences. In the last decade, three types of main modelling approaches have grown in popularity: mathematical, physics-based and bio-organistic models. These approaches allow us to better study mass social events like voting, riots, war and political engagement at an unprecedented granularity. The advent of computational methods significantly increased the impact and relevance of all three modelling

<sup>28</sup> Hein E. Goemans and Kenneth A. Schultz, “The Politics of Territorial Claims: A Geospatial Approach Applied to Africa,” *International Organization* 71, no. 1 (January 2017): 31–64, doi: 10.1017/S0020818316000254.

<sup>29</sup> Mark Graham, Isis Hjorth, and Vili Lehdonvirta, “Digital Labour and Development: Impacts of Global Digital Labour Platforms and the Gig Economy on Worker Livelihoods,” *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research* 23, no. 2 (May 1, 2017): 135–62, doi:10.1177/1024258916687250.

<sup>30</sup> Alberto Alesina, Stelios Michalopoulos, and Elias Papaioannou, “Ethnic Inequality,” *Journal of Political Economy* 124, no. 2 (March 4, 2016): 428–88, doi: 10.1086/685300.

<sup>31</sup> Jesse Hammond, “Maps of Mayhem: Strategic Location and Deadly Violence in Civil War,” *Journal of Peace Research*, September 26, 2017, 22343317702956, doi: 10.1177/0022343317702956.

<sup>32</sup> A. G. Wilson, “Modelling and Systems Analysis in Urban Planning,” *Nature* 220, no. 5171 (December 1968): 963, doi:10.1038/220963a0; Hugh Donald Forbes and Edward R. Tufte, “A Note of Caution in Causal Modelling,” *American Political Science Review* 62, no. 4 (December 1968): 1258–64, doi: 10.2307/1953917.

approaches for social sciences and IR.

Mathematical modelling of social phenomena is structured upon a somewhat problematic assumption that human behavior can be observed within and based on arbitrarily set constants and can be measured in numerical terms. Although elements such as uncertainty, chance and bias are added into models, the foundational assumption that human behavior can be quantified is still there.<sup>33</sup> While this assumption is subject to a separate set of epistemological debates, mathematical models of human and social behavior are nonetheless both popular and useful in testing concepts such as equilibrium/non-equilibrium, stability/instability or order/chaos that can assume subjective meanings without proper measurement. Mathematical models in social sciences are structured upon a number of sub-approaches such as voting/preference (Arrow's impossibility theorem<sup>34</sup>, Shapley-Shubrik index<sup>35</sup>), dynamic models (Richardson arms race model<sup>36</sup>, Lanchester combat models<sup>37</sup>, predator/prey model<sup>38</sup>) and ecology (phase space<sup>39</sup>, boxicity<sup>40</sup>) and stochastic models (Markov chains<sup>41</sup>, learning theory<sup>42</sup>, social power approach<sup>43</sup>).

Physics models are more complex and less intuitive for social sciences, mainly because of a lack of bridging literature between physics and social sciences. Although the number of approaches are growing by the emergence of a new breed of interdisciplinary researcher doing this bridging work, there are roughly two main types of physics modelling that can meaningfully be adapted into social sciences. The first of those, cellular automata<sup>44</sup>, deals with the interaction of particle systems in parallel and sequential dimensions. Take for example the spread of war and conflict between neighboring countries. Each country  $i$  becomes 'infected' with war ( $S_i = I$ ), if at least one of its nearest neighbors is already witnessing conflict. Computational tools handle this diffusion mechanism well, predicting and modeling the likelihood of, for example, infection ( $i$ ) to be spread across 24 different neighboring countries in time  $t$ , coming up with a predictive model of how far and how fast the conflict can spread into adjacent territories. The second type of physics modelling derives from temperature models (Boltzmann probability<sup>45</sup>). They give us how energy and pressure are diffused across

<sup>33</sup> Steven Polgar, "Health and Human Behavior: Areas of Interest Common to the Social and Medical Sciences," *Current Anthropology* 3, no. 2 (April 1, 1962): 159–205, doi: 10.1086/200266.

<sup>34</sup> Duncan Black, "On Arrow's Impossibility Theorem," *The Journal of Law and Economics* 12, no. 2 (October 1, 1969): 227–48, doi: 10.1086/466667.

<sup>35</sup> L. S. Shapley and Martin Shubik, "A Method for Evaluating the Distribution of Power in a Committee System," *American Political Science Review* 48, no. 3 (September 1954): 787–92, doi: 10.2307/1951053.

<sup>36</sup> David L. Wagner, Ronald T. Perkins, and Rein Taagepera, "Complete Solution to Richardson's Arms Race Equations," *Journal of Peace Science* 1, no. 2 (February 1, 1975): 159–72, doi: 10.1177/073889427500100206.

<sup>37</sup> N. J. MacKay, "Lanchester Combat Models," *arXiv:math/0606300*, June 13, 2006, <http://arxiv.org/abs/math/0606300>.

<sup>38</sup> Michael E. Gilpin, "Spiral Chaos in a Predator-Prey Model," *The American Naturalist* 113, no. 2 (February 1, 1979): 306–8, doi: 10.1086/283389.

<sup>39</sup> Brian Walker et al., "Resilience Management in Social-Ecological Systems: A Working Hypothesis for a Participatory Approach," *Conservation Ecology* 6, no. 1 (June 19, 2002), doi: 10.5751/ES-00356-060114.

<sup>40</sup> Margaret B. Cozzens and Fred S. Roberts, "Computing the Boxicity of a Graph by Covering Its Complement by Cointerval Graphs," *Discrete Applied Mathematics* 6, no. 3 (September 1, 1983): 217–28, doi: 10.1016/0166-218X(83)90077-X.

<sup>41</sup> Arthur Spirling, "'Turning Points' in the Iraq Conflict," *The American Statistician* 61, no. 4 (November 1, 2007): 315–20, doi: 10.1198/000313007X247076; Simon Jackman, "Bayesian Analysis for Political Research," *Annual Review of Political Science* 7, no. 1 (2004): 483–505, doi: 10.1146/annurev.polisci.7.012003.104706.

<sup>42</sup> Bruce A. Campbell, "Theory Building in Political Socialization: Explorations of Political Trust and Social Learning Theory," *American Politics Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (October 1, 1979): 453–69, doi: 10.1177/1532673X7900700404.

<sup>43</sup> Arnold S. Tannenbaum, "An Event-Structure Approach to Social Power and to the Problem of Power Comparability," *Behavioral Science* 7, no. 3 (July 1, 1962): 315–31, doi: 10.1002/bs.3830070304.

<sup>44</sup> Andrzej Nowak and Maciej Lewenstein, "Modeling Social Change with Cellular Automata," in *Modelling and Simulation in the Social Sciences from the Philosophy of Science Point of View*, Theory and Decision Library (Springer, Dordrecht, 1996), 249–85, doi: 10.1007/978-94-015-8686-3\_14.

<sup>45</sup> Bernd A. Berg and Thomas Neuhaus, "Multicanonical Algorithms for First Order Phase Transitions," *Physics Letters B* 267, no. 2 (September 12, 1991): 249–53, doi: 10.1016/0370-2693(91)91256-U.

different units and how systems enter into entropy or recalibration based on the latent or free energy travelling between the constituent elements of the system. To clarify for our purposes, Boltzmann probability would give us diplomatic pressure, international bandwagoning or buck-passing behavior within an alliance or regional system: if your allies sign a diplomatic treaty, they can also influence you into signing the same treaty, even though the said treaty may not be in your country's interests. Thus, let  $E$  be the number of closest allies signing the treaty, minus the number of allies that aren't signing the treaty. The probability for your country to switch then is given by the energy different and equal to  $\exp(-2E/T)$  (or 1 if  $E < 0$ ), generating the terms in which you can withstand the pressure from treaty-signing allies and refrain from signing the treaty that doesn't serve your national interests. Both cases can be adopted into ComInt through testing theories on voting in international institutions, alliance behavior, international financial markets and interactions between security cultures.

Bio-organistic types of modelling also substantially derive from mathematical and physics modelling. However, one particular type of biology model penetrated more than other types into the domain of social sciences: epidemiology<sup>46</sup>. Epidemiological modelling is a simplified version of describing transmission of diseases through a pre-determined network of agents. Epidemiological models allow social scientists to make sense of collective action and large-scale popular mobilization in the form of riots, protests, migration and emergency social behavior, such as disasters. Epidemiological models based on mathematical formulations of how infectious diseases spread, can offer to make sense of complex social behavior that would otherwise be very hard to monitor and measure. There have been different methodological approaches to the study of complex social behavior such as agent-based models, spatial data studies and simple mathematical formulations. What makes epidemiological models different from past methods is its conceptualization and modes of measurement on disorder, uncertainty and unpredictable complexity.

One of the most fascinating and novel studies on social epidemiology has been Laurent Bonnasse-Gahot et al.<sup>47</sup> seminal study on how 2005 French riots spread and were contained. Building a riot contagion model, the authors assess geographic proximity, social networks and riot outcome in explaining how neighborhood/district relations have been instrumental in the diffusion of these riots. Such riot and social movement modelling works are of direct interest for IR scholars as they will substantially strengthen some of the existing IR and PolSci theories on how conflicts start, diffuse and end. A second key study is Toby Davies et al.<sup>48</sup> account of how 2011 London riots and their policing have followed a direct spatial contagion model, building a high-granularity digital event dataset. The researchers test a number of IR-relevant topics such as force deterrence, local escalation models and crisis signaling, through measuring police-to-riot distance, with the added variables of police versus rioter numbers. Finally, both Guo et al.<sup>49</sup> and Kirby and Ward<sup>50</sup> make attempts to generate a macro explanation of war and peace through spatial modelling. Guo et al. formulate 'betweenness

<sup>46</sup> Stanley Wasserman, *Advances in Social Network Analysis: Research in the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (SAGE, 1994).

<sup>47</sup> Laurent Bonnasse-Gahot et al., "Epidemiological Modeling of the 2005 French Riots: A Spreading Wave and the Role of Contagion," *arXiv:1701.07479 [Physics]*, January 25, 2017, <http://arxiv.org/abs/1701.07479>.

<sup>48</sup> Toby P. Davies et al., "A Mathematical Model of the London Riots and Their Policing," *Scientific Reports* 3 (February 21, 2013): 1303, doi: 10.1038/srep01303.

<sup>49</sup> Weisi Guo et al., "The Spatial Ecology of War and Peace," *arXiv:1604.01693 [Physics]*, April 6, 2016, <http://arxiv.org/abs/1604.01693>.

<sup>50</sup> Andrew M. Kirby and Michael D. Ward, "The Spatial Analysis of Peace and War," *Comparative Political Studies* 20, no. 3 (October 1, 1987): 293–313, doi: 10.1177/0010414087020003002.

centrality' (a physics principle) in order to assert that cities that have the highest betweenness factor (population density, ethnic fractionalization versus the number of outside connections) are more likely to contain conflicts in geographies in-between. Kirby and Ward on the other hand reject nation states as the primary actors in peace and war, and using a digital dataset from Africa, they argue that it is the local and tribal relations that determine the course and extent of state-level violence.

#### 1.2.4. Communication

Digital technologies have brought forward another big leap in communication, comparable to the effect of the invention of writing, telegram and telephone. Thanks to digital technologies, we communicate more frequently, in verbal and non-verbal ways (such as emojis, or 'like's) allowing us to engage with a multitude of social, political and economic activities simultaneously. The rise of social media too, has allowed us to view and measure human communication in interactive and forum-like settings, leading to the testing of central IR communication topics like misinformation, uncertainty, signaling and cognitive bias.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, Internet and social media have fundamentally changed how we seek information, access the news and form our opinion on political and social matters.<sup>52</sup> An added factor is how social media algorithms are acting as intermediaries in our political searches, giving us non-random search results based on a number of parameters.<sup>53</sup> This means that how people access and consume facts and information online may be different than another, leading to sustenance or exacerbation of polarization in political views.<sup>54</sup> The issue of how political information is communicated online and represented in digital news media has become a key debate in political science and one that has significant implications for IR. How do key foreign policy actors and decision-makers use social media? How does the Internet facilitate or impede information-seeking behavior of citizens and politicians during an international crisis? How do different consumption patterns of digital news influence how citizens and politicians view and understand diplomacy and in turn, how do these patterns translate into actual foreign policy?

A newly emerging field of research in digital communication is the advent of bots (automated accounts) in digital space, fueling fake news and misleading information that exacerbate international crises and often lead to popular unrest. Fake news is conceptualized as misleading, incomplete or out of place information that is deliberately directed towards consuming and distraction online attention.<sup>55</sup> Although fake news can be driven by human accounts, recent scholarly attention has focused on how automated accounts (bots) help distribute such news during crucial time frames, such as pre-election periods or international crises.<sup>56</sup> Bot research has thus suddenly become a key topic in political science and concerns

<sup>51</sup> Bruce Bimber, "Information and Political Engagement in America: The Search for Effects of Information Technology at the Individual Level," *Political Research Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (March 1, 2001): 53–67, doi: 10.1177/106591290105400103.

<sup>52</sup> A great overview of the primary debates in this field can be found in: Andrew Chadwick and Philip N. Howard, *Routledge Handbook of Internet Politics* (Taylor & Francis, 2010).

<sup>53</sup> Pablo Barberá et al., "Tweeting From Left to Right: Is Online Political Communication More Than an Echo Chamber?," *Psychological Science* 26, no. 10 (October 1, 2015): 1531–42, doi: 10.1177/0956797615594620; Helen Nissenbaum Lucas D. Introna, "Shaping the Web: Why the Politics of Search Engines Matters," *The Information Society* 16, no. 3 (July 1, 2000): 169–85, doi: 10.1080/01972240050133634.

<sup>54</sup> Markus Prior, "Media and Political Polarization," *Annual Review of Political Science* 16, no. 1 (2013): 101–27, doi: 10.1146/annurev-polisci-100711-135242.

<sup>55</sup> Nic Newman et al., "Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2017," SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, June 1, 2017), <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=3026082>.

<sup>56</sup> Samuel C. Woolley, "Automating Power: Social Bot Interference in Global Politics," *First Monday* 21, no. 4 (March 10,

IR directly, although the subject of inquiry sits at the intersection of computer science and communication theory.

From a methodological standpoint, Derek Ruths and Jürgen Pfeffer have already demonstrated<sup>57</sup> how social media – although not always representative<sup>58</sup> – can offer better results compared to traditional polling. This is both due to significant biases associated with social media access and expression, but also the blurry picture provided by bots. Kollanyi et al. has demonstrated<sup>59</sup> how bots have influenced the results of the US Presidential elections; a study that was repeated in Forelle et al. work<sup>60</sup> on bots during Venezuelan elections. Although this seems like a political science question, external involvement and disruption in national elections is definitely a problem for international relations, explained in detail in Taylor Owen's book on how digital disruption is contextualized in IR.<sup>61</sup> An especially vibrant debate currently revolves around Russian capabilities as a 'bot superpower', able to disrupt and distract political processes in Western countries.<sup>62</sup> Further detailed accounts of Chinese governmental controls on social media and what it means for state-society relations have been beautifully modelled in King et al. 2013<sup>63</sup> and 2017<sup>64</sup>.

A secondary strand of IR-related literature in digital communication is the extent to which online campaigning affects political processes and social mobilization. Koc-Michalska et al.<sup>65</sup> has explained how online campaigning affects political elections in France, Germany, Poland and the UK, demonstrating that resources, rather than innovation determines success in digital campaigns. In a similarly pessimistic study, Margetts et al.<sup>66</sup> ran an experiment, testing how political information online affects decision-making of individuals, finding that online information is behavior-changing when it is shared by large groups of people. If the information – whether true or false – isn't shared by a critical mass (or 'social network capital<sup>67</sup>'), it has little influence over political behavior, the study finds. In an interesting twist, Yasseri and Bright explore digital information seeking behavior through Wikipedia traffic data, discovering that political parties whose Wikipedia pages witness a surge in visits

2016), doi: 10.5210/fm.v21i4.6161; Samuel C. Woolley and Philip N. Howard, "Automation, Algorithms, and Politics| Political Communication, Computational Propaganda, and Autonomous Agents — Introduction," *International Journal of Communication* 10, no. 0 (October 12, 2016): 9.

<sup>57</sup> Ruths and Pfeffer, "Social Media for Large Studies of Behavior."

<sup>58</sup> Jonathan Mellon and Christopher Prosser, "Twitter and Facebook Are Not Representative of the General Population: Political Attitudes and Demographics of British Social Media Users," *Research & Politics* 4, no. 3 (July 1, 2017): 1-9, doi: 10.1177/2053168017720008.

<sup>59</sup> Bence Kollanyi, Philip N. Howard, and Samuel C. Woolley, "Bots and Automation over Twitter during the First U.S. Presidential Debate," Data Memo (Oxford, UK: Oxford Internet Institute, October 2016), <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/3144967/Trump-Clinton-Bots-Data.pdf>.

<sup>60</sup> Michelle Forelle et al., "Political Bots and the Manipulation of Public Opinion in Venezuela," SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, July 25, 2015), <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2635800>.

<sup>61</sup> Taylor Owen, *Disruptive Power: The Crisis of the State in the Digital Age*, 1 edition (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

<sup>62</sup> John Kelly et al., "Mapping Russian Twitter," SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, March 23, 2012), <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2028158>.

<sup>63</sup> Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts, "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 2 (May 2013): 326–43, doi: 10.1017/S0003055413000014.

<sup>64</sup> Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts, "How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, Not Engaged Argument," *American Political Science Review* 111, no. 3 (August 2017): 484–501, doi: 10.1017/S0003055417000144.

<sup>65</sup> Karolina Koc-Michalska et al., "The Normalization of Online Campaigning in the web.2.0 Era," *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 3 (June 1, 2016): 331–50, doi: 10.1177/0267323116647236.

<sup>66</sup> Helen Margetts et al., "Social Information and Political Participation on the Internet: An Experiment," *European Political Science Review* 3, no. 3 (November 2011): 321–44, doi: 10.1017/S1755773911000129.

<sup>67</sup> Nicole B. Ellison, Charles Steinfield, and Cliff Lampe, "The Benefits of Facebook 'Friends': Social Capital and College Students' Use of Online Social Network Sites," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 12, no. 4 (July 1, 2007): 1143–68, doi: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00367.x.

close to elections, tend to do well in those elections, compared to other candidates or parties that haven't enjoyed Wikipedia attention.<sup>68</sup> This model can be replicated in to study UN voting patterns or elections within international organizations.

### 1.2.5. Networks

Digital network research is another field that is growing in popularity and allows researchers to study political and power relations in digital space. Often, creative computational researchers discover digital relations and influence maps that cannot be discovered through research in physical space - either due to the controversial nature of the topic, or the difficulty in finding data. Extremism and radicalization networks are the primary foci of computational network analysis. Through digital relations, researchers are able to find influencers, hierarchies and relations in digital space. This could be employed to discover diplomatic networks at the state and institutional level, as well as networks of radicalization at the non-state and sub-state actor level. Ideology research too, can benefit greatly through computational methods, by the use of entity extraction algorithms.

Classical network theory<sup>69</sup> focuses on social networks among individuals (friendships, advice-seeking...) and formal contractual relationships (alliances, trade, security community). What makes network theory important to social science, politics and IR is its ability to conceptualize and theorize relations at the micro, meso and macro-levels of analysis in political processes, offering a structure to seemingly complex interactions.<sup>70</sup> Accordingly, network theory stipulates that relations and internal-external pressures on those relations have the ability to affect beliefs and behaviors.<sup>71</sup> Instead of adopting IR's mainstream levels of analysis approach, network theory focuses on the interactions between these levels of analyses, aiming to conceptualize how these interactions lead to policy and behavior.<sup>72</sup> Computational network analysis on the other hand, takes classical network theory to vast levels of size and complexity, not only designating relations between them, but also use artificial intelligence, machine learning and neural networks approaches to automatically generate real-time changes in these relations.<sup>73</sup>

One of the most relevant recent complex network studies to IR is Jonathan Bright's work on identifying online extremist networks and the role of ideology in polarized digital structures.<sup>74</sup> This work is relevant to IR, because it covers around 90 different political parties across 23 countries, providing a much-needed cross-national empirical evidence on the role echo chambers play in concentrating and isolating extreme views in a political communicative setting. Another important work is Efe Sevin's working paper on how international actors and

<sup>68</sup> Taha Yasseri and Jonathan Bright, "Wikipedia Traffic Data and Electoral Prediction: Towards Theoretically Informed Models," *EPJ Data Science* 5, no. 1 (December 1, 2016): 22, doi: 10.1140/epjds/s13688-016-0083-3.

<sup>69</sup> J. L. Moreno and H. H. Jennings, "Statistics of Social Configurations," *Sociometry* 1, no. 3/4 (1938): 342-74, doi: 10.2307/2785588; John Arundel Barnes, *Social Networks* (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1972).

<sup>70</sup> Mark Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited," *Sociological Theory* 1 (1983): 201-33, doi: 10.2307/202051; Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture* (John Wiley & Sons, 2011).

<sup>71</sup> Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>72</sup> Stephen P. Borgatti et al., "Network Analysis in the Social Sciences," *Science* 323, no. 5916 (February 13, 2009): 892-95, doi: 10.1126/science.1165821.

<sup>73</sup> Ravindra K. Ahuja, Thomas L. Magnanti, and James B. Orlin, *Network Flows: Theory, Algorithms, and Applications*, 1 edition (Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Pearson, 1993); Aaron Clauset, M. E. J. Newman, and Christopher Moore, "Finding Community Structure in Very Large Networks," *Physical Review E* 70, no. 6 (December 6, 2004): 66111, doi: 10.1103/PhysRevE.70.066111.

<sup>74</sup> Jonathan Bright, "Explaining the Emergence of Echo Chambers on Social Media: The Role of Ideology and Extremism," *arXiv:1609.05003 [Physics]*, September 16, 2016, <http://arxiv.org/abs/1609.05003>.

foreign policy practitioners use digital media to expedite and re-negotiate existing diplomatic processes.<sup>75</sup> Building upon a Twitter-scraped dataset of embassy and consulate connections across the globe, Sevin makes the case that middle powers may have disproportionately more significant weight in international diplomacy by seizing upon the amplifying potential of social media. Finally, Caiani and Wagemann demonstrate how the Italian and German extreme far right connect in digital space, exploring aspects of communicative radicalization and network capital of extreme political ideologies.<sup>76</sup> The authors discover that extremist networks cluster and connect differently across political cultures, with separate layers of connectors, leaders and marginalized sub-groups.

## 2. My Personal History with ComInt

I come from a qualitative background. Given the University of Essex being a stronghold of discourse analysis, I developed a keen interest in Foucauldian approaches to power and politics. Through my dissertation however, the amount of data I collected on discursive construction of violence, terrorism and conflict became so large that I was unable to deal with them meaningfully through qualitative analysis alone. When I bounced the idea of quantifying discourse with my PhD supervisor, he momentarily panicked, as the practice wasn't as commonplace as it is nowadays. *'You will either get kicked out of the PhD program, or get an award'* was his reply. In the following months, I learned statistics from scratch, engaging in successive crash courses in regression analysis and mathematical modelling offered at the university. These didn't help, as such courses were still taught for extremely large classes with economy, management and political science students with different quantitative skills all pitted into the same class. I learned statistics and regression analysis mostly through self-study (Youtube didn't exist back then).

My resultant dissertation combined a ten-year content analysis of open floor debates in three parliaments, coded and sorted according to sentiment, syntax and lexicon, with another matrix of coding for politicians' ideologies and political interests. Eventually, I demonstrated that regardless of country and political system, conservative and liberal politicians used the same linguistic and sentiment characteristics to define intra-state conflicts. A conservative politician in the United States, Belgium and Turkey sounded significantly more alike, compared to liberal politicians in their own countries, and vice versa. And I could reliably demonstrate the relationship from a statistical point of view. This was good evidence that contributed to the trans-nationalization of conflict behavior and how crisis periods end up internationalizing certain ideologies. Thankfully, my advisor's second prediction ended up happening. I wasn't kicked out of the program and won the Middle East Studies Association's Malcolm H. Kerr dissertation award. Although the methodology isn't new anymore at this point, back when I submitted, quantifying and measuring discourse numerically was considered as a methodological heresy of sorts. This was effectively merging positivist and post-positivist traditions and like one of my examiners put: *'like writing a Muslim Bible'*.

The second turning point in my multi-method odyssey was in 2015. After writing my book, I was focusing on the study of armed non-state actor behavior in northern Syria

<sup>75</sup> Efe Sevin, "Traditional Meets Digital: Diplomatic Processes on Social Media" (paper presented at the ISA 2016 Conference, Atlanta, GA, March 16-19, 2016.).

<sup>76</sup> Manuela Caiani and Claudius Wagemann, "Online Networks of the Italian and German Extreme Right," *Information, Communication & Society* 12, no. 1 (February 1, 2009): 66–109, doi: 10.1080/13691180802158482.

and northern Iraq, both getting increasingly more complex and frustrating to monitor. As actors on the ground quickly exchanged territory, merged, broke-away and disappeared on the battlefield, generating new knowledge or testing theories on conflict were all getting increasingly more difficult. I began generating elementary maps for my own study purposes using Google Earth layers and basic image processing software like Paint. It was around this time that I began to realize that the sophistication of one's maps aren't as important as the story those maps are telling. One of my completely low-tech maps would later be solicited for publication by the New York Times along an op-ed on armed violence in northern Iraq. But getting battlefield information was proving extremely difficult, as the majority of conflict events were taking place across the inaccessible parts of Syria and Iraq. Lucky for me - and perhaps for all conflict scholars - that the advent of mass social media, smartphone and digital propaganda coincided with the war against ISIS. This allowed conflict researchers to extract and process enormous volumes of digital content shared by the locals, citizen journalists and the militants, who documented war deep inside the fog of war. A young militant for example, could share how their group struck a Syrian Army tank and post it online with a video and associated hashtag, intended as propaganda, but ending up becoming a data node for conflict researchers. I began scraping some of that content through Twitter, Instagram (before they changed their API) and Flickr. Perhaps the most interesting detail about these battlefield posts were the selfies that constituted a large portion geotagged conflict events, which practically exposed them on the battlefield. I continued to scrape more of such tweets, eventually coming up with a test run of around 17,352 geotagged tweets through a two-year period, mapping them through time-frequency diffusion. The resultant combination of those images and videos gave me one of the most detailed and high-granularity war map that was out there at the time, rivaling the level of detail of many state-produced war maps that existed at the time, which I published with the Financial Times and Journal of International Affairs.

I took my newfound methodological odyssey to Oxford, where I went as a visiting fellow at the Oxford Internet Institute (OII). OII was an interdisciplinary Oxford department, dedicated solely to the study of the Internet and digital data, along with its political, economic, social and psychological effects on human relations. It was made up of a very uncommon combination of scholars, from physics, biology, geography, computer science, mathematics and political science, all trying to approach different theoretical topics related to the Internet, through a multitude of methodologies. It was there that I learned how Gaussian particle physics principles could help explain how people chose their mates on Tinder and other online dating platforms, or how epidemiological models in biology could explain how riots and protests emerge and spread. It was there that I learned how to code (thanks to computer science doctoral training program for having me audit their Python classes), conduct network measurement, build algorithms for text mining, use more advanced mapping and network analysis software to dig deeper into the logic of large coding structures. I was then admitted to the Alan Turing Institute in London, where I had a chance to participate in data science research groups from Cambridge, Warwick, UCL and Edinburgh, that focused on urban analytics, extremism networks and measuring human digital behavior.

The luxury of months of incubation and daily access to some of the brightest and pioneering minds on computational studies forced me to think about the future of IR, its methodological debates and how computational tools can be incorporated into the study of world events. My first project was an expanded and improved version of the earlier

work on battlefield data. Focusing solely on selfies, I scraped battlefield digital data from geographically confined locations in Syria, using a corpus of keywords in English, Farsi, Kurdish and Arabic and generated an event dataset that only contained armed incidents. In my second project, I developed my earlier work on measuring how pre-digital and digital forms of mobilization influenced protest and resistance networks, by focusing on Turkey's failed coup on 15 July 2016. Then, I took part in multiple research clusters on how cultural and geographical proximity between cities helped us measure the likelihood of conflict, how dyadic and multi-level sentiment analysis of digital text allow us to predict radicalization and terrorism networks, and using machine learning algorithms to visually detect and predict the likelihood of armed conflict using Google OpenMap images.

The culmination of my dual visit to Oxford Internet Institute and the Alan Turing Institute was my 'Turing Lecture' in the latter one, where I made an introduction and exposition of the term 'Computational IR', detailing how data science and international relations can form a productive partnership, in a way that doesn't only benefit these two disciplines, but also form as the basis of collaboration with the full range of natural sciences scholars and social scientists. Since - to the best of my knowledge - there has been no previous use of the term, I'd like to coin 'Computational International Relations' as a way to establish a new methodological field that hopefully will transcend the traditional quantitative-qualitative schism in the field, as well as in social sciences.

### **2.1 Method training: or 'how to be a computational IR scholar'**

Up until very recently, ComSoc training existed largely within the confines of quantitative-leaning social scientists taking data science courses, with the exception of the Oxford Internet Institute, Harvard Institute for Quantitative Social Science and Stanford University's Computational Social Science Program, which are pioneering institutions of the field. Currently there are a wide range of choices for social scientists from summer courses to master's degrees dedicated to computational social science. To the best of my knowledge, there are no ComInt programs; rather, IR scholars currently can take ComSoc courses and create their own sub-specialization. Oxford's Center for Technology and Global Affairs, where I'm currently a research fellow, is also gearing up to fill in this vacuum in the near future.

There are two aspects of ComInt training. The first one is the easier part: what kind of a technical foundation should students develop? Different ComSoc programs provide different curricula for this purpose, but there are common denominators. Data visualization, model construction and estimation, along with honing statistical skills is generally the first step. Later, understanding different data types used in computing, and various processing principles - clustering, event-driven simulation, approximating functions, derivatives and basic Monte Carlo techniques - are required to build upon the initial foundation. At this time, introductory knowledge of Java, Shiny, Python, R and C++ should be introduced, along with mainstream programs such as ArcGis or QGIS (for geospatial analysis), NVivo, RapidMiner or QDA (for text analysis), Gephi, iGraph or NodeXL (for network analysis), and Repast, Swarm, EpiModel or MASON (for various modelling analyses). These technical skills must be reinforced through qualitative/historical theoretical courses on spatial analysis, complexity research, logic of algorithms and basic neuroscience (mostly for complexity research). Final touches can be made through large dataset maintenance skills through Entity-Relationship

Diagram (ERD), SQL (Structured Query Language), data definition language (DDL) and data manipulation language (DML).

The second aspect of ComInt/ComSoc training is the harder part: understanding how much technical skill you need to learn and sustain for your own research career. Like any language, computer science requires sustained daily use to remember and preserve knowledge. To that end, being a ComInt/ComSoc scholar means a) knowing you can't master all computer science tools, b) balancing between the main task of social scientists (theory-building) and methods-driven nature of computer science and c) understanding which computational tools you need to develop and which ones to outsource. My answer to all three questions – at least for graduate students – is: be promiscuous. Spend at least six months to dig deep into the computer science world and immerse yourself in methods-driven research. Build your R packages, learn how to scrape Twitter data and spend some time visualizing them on a multitude of spatial, network and text-based software. Although most senior social scientists will advise you to not forget the fact that you are a social scientist, my advice is: forget it – at least for a limited period of time. This period is critical to learn how to think like a computer scientist; not just to get a new perspective, but also to understand the basics of computer-driven research. This is crucial, as although computer science methods are constantly evolving, basic principles of computers (automation, the logic of repeating work, strings, data structures, loops, variables, functions etc.) don't change radically. You can quickly adapt to new programming languages and platforms, once you know what a programming language does. It is also only after spending several months on coding that students can get a sense of what computational tools can do for their own research agenda and the kind of questions they seek to ask.

The final part of ComInt/ComSoc training is the hardest part: forget everything. This phase is about deliberately stopping computer science work and return back to IR, PolSci or another social science discipline of origin. My advice would be to re-read the core theoretical readings of the field the student is coming from and to rethink the fundamentals of the field following several months of immersion in the world of programming. Another twist to this suggestion would be to return back to another social science discipline, instead of the student's own point of origin. To give an example, an IR student going through the computational curve should ideally go to sociology and history to establish an introductory foundation there, creating a triangular expertise. Although not easy, mastery of IR and good introductory knowledge of computer science, and sociology or history will expand the student's analytical prowess significantly.

### **3. Case Studies from My Research Trajectory: How Can Conflict Researchers Benefit from ComInt?**

ComInt is hard to explain by demonstrating its application on one single research question. One significant line of research in ComInt focuses on the relationship between social media and international or comparative political processes under conflict. Some of the most important works in this field are: Tucker et al. (2017) work on the relationship between social media and democracy,<sup>77</sup> Steinert-Threlkeld's study on the effects of Internet on

<sup>77</sup> Joshua A. Tucker et al., "From Liberation to Turmoil: Social Media And Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 28, no. 4 (October 7, 2017): 46–59, doi: 10.1353/jod.2017.0064.

social mobilization,<sup>78</sup> Rød and Weidmann's work on comparative authoritarianism and the Internet,<sup>79</sup> Anita Gohdes' study on how regimes hide their atrocities on the Internet,<sup>80</sup> (as well as her important overview of how the use of Internet data has changed the study of conflict<sup>81</sup>), Mitts' work on ISIS radicalization on Twitter,<sup>82</sup> Little's formal modelling work on how ICTs affect protest behavior,<sup>83</sup> Zeitzoff's review of how social media is changing conflict<sup>84</sup> (and his social experiment of the 2012 Gaza conflict<sup>85</sup>) and Gunitsky's work on how autocracies use social media as a form of regime stabilization tool.<sup>86</sup> The list is far from complete, however, as the discipline and its exciting methods are rapidly evolving and improving.

Here, I'll steer clear of engaging in yet another literature review and instead, try to explain how computational tools improved my own scholarship across different topics in IR by adopting hybrid methods. My first exposure to computational research has been through the nudge of a group of recently graduated Harvard computer science PhDs, who wanted to tackle issues related to security and conflict. IR students will receive similar calls from computer scientists. If not, they should initiate contact themselves, either through speaking to a computer scientist faculty, or peers in the computer/data science department. Such calls are usually the first step for any social scientist to collaborate with computer scientists. However, interdisciplinary research builds its momentum slowly, can be frustrating and this shouldn't discourage new researchers from being persistent and continuing to engage with research partners. Although my research partners decided to set up a startup and drifted away from our research eventually, I learned the basics of web scraping, setting up web crawlers and using API data from them. These tools would ultimately be instrumental in my research project on mapping militant selfies in Syria.

Conflict research in IR has developed a keen interest in event data in recent years. From statistical to geographic layers, event data enables us to track conflict patterns, targeting choices and border contestations across a single, or multiple conflict settings. But the majority of that event data (such as UCDP/PRIO or UMD) comes from 'official' sources, derived largely from state-level resources, of mainstream media companies that report on battlefield developments. But what about the inaccessible parts of a conflict? What if neither reporters, nor intelligence operatives of state actors can access no-go zones in a conflict and how do we get event data from there? Up until 2012-13, a clear answer was hard to provide. Thankfully for researchers, non-state actors' use of digital technologies, smartphones and social media have led to a strange setting where active combat and insider developments in no-go zones

<sup>78</sup> Zachary C. Steinert-Threlkeld, "Spontaneous Collective Action: Peripheral Mobilization During the Arab Spring," *American Political Science Review* 111, no. 2 (May 2017): 379–403, doi: 10.1017/S0003055416000769.

<sup>79</sup> Espen Geelmuyden Rød and Nils B. Weidmann, "Empowering Activists or Autocrats? The Internet in Authoritarian Regimes," *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 3 (May 1, 2015): 338–51, doi: 10.1177/0022343314555782.

<sup>80</sup> Anita R. Gohdes, "Pulling the Plug: Network Disruptions and Violence in Civil Conflict," *Journal of Peace Research* 52, no. 3 (May 1, 2015): 352–67, doi: 10.1177/0022343314551398.

<sup>81</sup> Anita R. Gohdes, "Studying the Internet and Violent Conflict," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 35, no. 1 (2017): 89–106, doi: 10.1177/0738894217733878.

<sup>82</sup> Tamar Mitts, "From Isolation to Radicalization: Anti-Muslim Hostility and Support for ISIS in the West," SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, March 31, 2017), <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2795660>.

<sup>83</sup> Andrew T. Little, "Communication Technology and Protest," *The Journal of Politics* 78, no. 1 (December 17, 2015): 152–66, doi: 10.1086/683187.

<sup>84</sup> Thomas Zeitzoff, "How Social Media Is Changing Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 9 (October 1, 2017): 1970–91, doi: 10.1177/0022002717721392.

<sup>85</sup> Thomas Zeitzoff, "Does Social Media Influence Conflict? Evidence from the 2012 Gaza Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62, no. 1 (January 1, 2018): 29–63, doi: 10.1177/0022002716650925.

<sup>86</sup> Seva Gunitsky, "Corrupting the Cyber-Commons: Social Media as a Tool of Autocratic Stability," *Perspectives on Politics* 13, no. 1 (March 2015): 42–54, doi: 10.1017/S1537592714003120.

are broadcast digitally on a minute-by-minute basis with geotags. Militants overwhelmingly began using social media to publicize important events such as armed clashes, declarations of loyalty, or reports of death. Most groups in Syria such as ISIS, YPG or FSA have learned to catalogue these events online with dedicated hashtags and visuals for propaganda, making sure that they are easily searchable. For the exact same reason, they make excellent computational conflict data. In the first phase of my research, I have scraped around 15,000 selfies from Syria, all belonging to Kurdish groups YPG, SDF and their offshoots, through January 2014 - June 2016. Building a word corpus consisting of words related to armed events (bombing, shooting, explosion, airstrike...) I've applied entity-recognition algorithm to scrape all tweets containing these keywords in pre-set coordinates isolating northern Syria, and containing photos that were taken with the front camera of a smartphone (back then, this was the best way of scraping selfie data). I mapped out the resultant dataset to infer where Kurdish groups were fighting, where they were defending and which battles were they avoiding.<sup>87</sup> This became the foundation of my article on Kurdish geopolitics later on.<sup>88</sup>

While I was planning to expand the militant selfie study to other groups in Syria and also bring in Ukrainian groups, a failed coup attempt took place in Turkey, in July 2016. I reorganized my work to focus on the digital engagement patterns during the coup attempt and started to scrape geotagged tweets that clustered around six most widely shared hashtags. These hashtags not only gave me which districts mobilized the most against the coup attempt, but also generated a valuable dataset to model later on through physics or epidemiological approaches. Several things stood out from the study: first, it was religious networks (tariqas), rather than political party networks of AKP that had initiated the first mobilization against the coup. Although AKP networks later mobilized to significantly increase the numbers in the streets, tariqa-dominant districts have been deployed faster and at greater volume during the earlier hours of the coup attempt.<sup>89</sup> This computational data is important because it gives us a good early measurement of digital sociology: in an increasingly interconnected world, what is the most foundational source of collective action? During emergencies and times of uncertainty, which fundamental social organizing forces manages to generate the momentum enough to mobilize masses into collective action? The case of Turkey's failed coup reveals to us that at least in Turkish socio-cultural case, religious networks fill in this emergency role. I'm currently at the point of expanding this study into how different religious movements adapt to digital technologies and generate collective action in the US, Hungary, Serbia, Ukraine and Israel.

Simultaneously, I've been drawn further into the concept of digital spoilers and distractors. Bot research is a growing and popular area of study, yet we still know so little about their role in international relations and how they influence global crises. My conversations with Phil Howard, the director of computational propaganda project, reinforced my view that much of the research on bots is dedicated to their impact in politics and sociology, but not enough on IR. To that end, I've begun collecting real-time data during particular international

<sup>87</sup> H. Akin Unver, "Mapping Militant Selfies: Application of Entity Recognition/Extraction Methods to Generate Battlefield Data in Northern Syria" (Computer Science Doctoral Training Program Seminar, Oxford University, May 31, 2017), <https://www.cs.ox.ac.uk/seminars/1855.html>.

<sup>88</sup> H. Akin Unver, "Schrödinger's Kurds: Transnational Kurdish Geopolitics In The Age Of Shifting Borders," *Journal of International Affairs* 69, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2016): 65–98.

<sup>89</sup> H. Akin Unver and Hassan Alassaad, "How Turks Mobilized Against the Coup," *Foreign Affairs*, September 14, 2016, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2016-09-14/how-turks-mobilized-against-coup>.

crises to measure anomalies in hashtags and fake news diffusion. My hypothesis, based on raw personal observation during digital crises was that bot-driven hashtags were more likely to disproportionately increase during very short periods (15-20 minutes) and end abruptly, without organic sustain. In contrast, organically-driven hashtags, usually increase more gradually and are sustained over the course of several hours, sometimes days. The first incident I could test this hypothesis was the Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE diplomatic crisis, which began in June 2017, as a response to statements attributed to the Qatari Sheikh. A time-frequency geospatial analysis of the most frequently shared hashtags show us that the majority of anti-Qatari messaging were driven by bots.<sup>90</sup> This finding was important because it was one of the first measurable evidence that countries use social media to escalate, signal and pressure other countries into desired behavior. By driving mass anti-Qatar hashtags on social media Saudi Arabia and UAE were using a new way of diplomatically pressuring Qatari leadership to toe the line. A second case where I could further test my hypothesis was the Al Aqsa riots in July 2017. Measuring diffusion patterns of seven widest-shared hashtags, I was able to infer bot-driven versus organically-driven messaging, giving me a good idea on external countries trying to influence foreign crises.<sup>91</sup> This gives us good data to test and challenge some of the central IR hypotheses such as signaling, bargaining, pressuring and diversionary conflict theories.

Currently, I'm a co-principal investigator in a Turing-funded study that aims to build an artificial-intelligence based conflict event detection database. The project combines some of the methodological perspectives I've discussed here – text mining, network analysis, geospatial data – to automatically harvest battlefield digital data in order to generate armed events and log them in real-time (with some redundancy-check lag, of course).

#### **4. Conclusion - How Can IR Benefit from Big Data and Machine Learning?**

Big data and computational approaches to social research has revolutionized social sciences and will inevitably impact how IR methods evolve in the coming decades. Two factors define the potential of computational research; sheer size of data that is extremely hard (often impossible) to process with conventional tools of quantitative or qualitative analysis and the advent of more powerful tools that allow us to zoom in and out of various levels of human behavior simultaneously. From this perspective alone, the big data revolution will force us to rethink a fundamental component of IR research: the levels of analysis problem. Big data gives us data granularity that enables micro-level approaches such as behavior, cognitive biases or worldview analysis, as well as the volume that can be scaled to meso-level (networks, collective action, ethno-nationalist movements) and macro-level (ideology, identity, systems research) simultaneously. When done properly, big data and computational tools allow us to model and understand human behavior much better than past approaches, while it is also easier to misuse and exaggerate their explanatory power.

One of the main problems with big data research is an over-reliance on the processing power of the tools, without an eye on cultural and local differences in data. One very common line of dreadful mistake I encounter is usually in social media extremism research that

<sup>90</sup> Akin Ünver, "Can Fake News Lead to War? What the Gulf Crisis Tells Us," War on the Rocks, June 13, 2017, <https://warontherocks.com/2017/06/can-fake-news-lead-to-war-what-the-gulf-crisis-tells-us/>.

<sup>91</sup> H. Akin Ünver, "What Twitter Can Tell Us about the Jerusalem Protests," *Washington Post*, August 2017, sec. Monkey Cage Blog, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/08/26/what-twitter-can-tell-us-about-the-jerusalem-protests/?utm\\_term=.6a8a0bd94c55](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/08/26/what-twitter-can-tell-us-about-the-jerusalem-protests/?utm_term=.6a8a0bd94c55).

concerns jihadi networks. When engineer or programmer-dominated research groups employ computational tools in extremism research without a social scientist, and/or a scholar with area and cultural expertise, they overwhelmingly produce faulty machine learning word corpus clusters. These clusters often confuse religious statements that express radical behavior with commonplace, regular cultural religious expressions. One computer science conference paper I've had the misfortune of reading (and won't cite) had built a corpus of jihadi radical word corpus, which included common religious terms that Muslims use everyday, such as 'Allāhu akbar' or 'InShaAllah', fundamentally skewing the results. Although this was an extreme case of tone deafness in computational research, there are very frequent, common and subtler ways of bias in research that is produced by research groups that aim to tackle culturally-sensitive social science research. Equally problematic are social science research clusters that aim to build machine learning algorithms by checking Youtube tutorials, without using a computer science specialist, or generate behavioral models without a dedicated modeller. Computational research reaches its true potential in truly multi-disciplinary research clusters and this is precisely why facilitator networks that bridge diverse sciences disciplines and establish a common language across them is the most urgent and important step universities must take in initiating computational research groups.

That is why machine learning, as a way of enabling computers to build new ways of approaching evolving tasks, without being explicitly programmed to solve them, is a field that should go beyond computer science and needs the attention of social scientists. Since we can (and in the near future, will) build machine learning algorithms to track the extent of nationalist sentiment in multiple countries, explore real-time public opinion during an international crisis, or how armed or non-armed non-state actors behave during a violent conflict, the topic doesn't fall far off of the radar of international relations. Not only should future IR doctoral students and early career academics will encounter issues related to big data, computational social science and machine learning, some of them will have to build a foundation in reading and understanding how algorithms work and how to communicate with computer scientists for collaborative research. This means that IR PhDs will have to learn Python or R as a foundational programming language, and add a second software (like ArcGis, Gephi, LingPipe, Ontotext) that fits their immediate research needs.

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## Automated Text Analysis and International Relations: The Introduction and Application of a Novel Technique for Twitter

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### Abstract

*Social media platforms, thanks to their inherent nature of quick and far-reaching dissemination of information, have gradually supplanted the conventional media and become the new loci of political communication. These platforms not only ease and expedite communication among crowds, but also provide researchers huge and easily accessible information. This huge information pool, if it is processed with a systematic analysis, can be a fruitful data source for researchers. Systematic analysis of data from social media, however, poses various challenges for political analysis. Significant advances in automated textual analysis have tried to address such challenges of social media data. This paper introduces one such novel technique to assist researchers doing textual analysis on Twitter: More specifically, we develop a clustering methodology based on Longest Common Subsequence Similarity Metric, which automatically groups tweets with similar content. To illustrate the usefulness of this technique, we present some of our findings from a project we conducted on Turkish sentiments on Twitter towards Syrian refugees.*

**Keywords:** Social media, foreign policy, refugee, public opinion, Turkey

### 1. Introduction

In many polities around the globe, quick and far-reaching dissemination of information on social media have been redefining politics. In regimes based on popular support, politicians and policy makers have increasingly become sensitive and responsive to online perceptions and attitudes of the public. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest etc. are becoming the new loci of political communication, debate, propaganda and mobilization, increasingly circumventing traditional channels for politics.

Accordingly, various interrelated research strands have emerged on social media and in international politics. Scholars have aptly illustrated how social media have transformed various basic concepts such as diplomacy,<sup>1</sup> warfare,<sup>2</sup> transnational activism,<sup>3</sup> and political

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<sup>1</sup> Philip Seib, *Real-Time Diplomacy: Politics and Power In the Social Media Era* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2012); Nicholas J. Cull, "The Long Road to Public Diplomacy 2.0: The Internet in US Public Diplomacy," *International Studies Review* 15, no. 1 (2013): 123–39; Jan Melissen and Emillie V. de Keulenaar, "Critical Digital Diplomacy as a Global Challenge: The South Korean Experience," *Global Policy* 8, no. 3 (2017): 294–302.

<sup>2</sup> Holger Pötzsch, "The Emergence of iWar: Changing Practices and Perceptions of Military Engagement in A Digital Era," *New Media & Society* 17, no. 1 (2015): 78–95.

<sup>3</sup> Wilma de Jong, Martin Shaw, and Neil Stammers, eds., *Global Activism, Global Media* (London, UK: Pluto Press, 2005).

development.<sup>4</sup> The literature on social media is burgeoning in Turkey as well. Recent studies have examined the relationship between social media and social movements,<sup>5</sup> who the opinion leaders are on Turkish Twitter,<sup>6</sup> and to what extent online opinion clusters on Twitter map onto conventional public opinion clusters in Turkish society.<sup>7</sup> A wealth of studies on social media and Turkey also exist in other areas of social sciences such as marketing<sup>8</sup> and public health.<sup>9</sup>

Systematic analysis of data from social media poses various challenges for political analysis. Most existing approaches, while offering excellent tools for conventional text-data sources such as news reports and international treaties, fail to address this dynamic nature of social media. Social media is virtually open to the globe; its crowd-sourced structure creates data in very large amounts. The language used is dependent on the context, does not necessarily follow a preset syntax and transforms very quickly. Similarly, topics of interest emerge and evolve at great speed, making spontaneous analysis almost a necessity.

Significant developments in automated textual analysis have tried to address such challenges of social media data. These techniques aim to do away with manual labor needed to sort and code data in extremely large quantities. This paper introduces one such novel technique to assist researchers doing textual analysis on Twitter. The technique develops a measure based on Longest Common Subsequence Similarity Metric (LCSSM), which automatically clusters tweets with similar content. More specifically, the technique decouples meaning from character in text, and develops a measure of character similarity across strings of text. This technique significantly reduces the workload of manual coding for content, this reduction in workload usually ranges from 75% to 90%. While LCSSM does not necessarily do away with the need for human coding, it presents an easy-to-use and scalable tool to conduct sentiment analysis on Twitter. To illustrate the usefulness of this technique, we present some of our findings from a project we conducted on Turkish sentiments towards Syrian refugees on Twitter.

This manuscript consists of five sections. The next section will give an overview of automated text analysis in international relations literature, and section two will introduce basic terminology and main techniques utilized in automated text analysis. Section three will describe why the LCS similarity metric was developed, and how this technique fares vis-à-vis existing techniques of automated text analysis. In doing so, it will also present a discussion on what types of fundamental differences data from Twitter exhibit compared to texts traditionally employed in international relations research. This section also includes an account of the research teams' personal experience with automated text analysis techniques,

<sup>4</sup> Shanthi Kalathil and Taylor C. Boas, *Open Networks, Closed Regimes: The Impact of the Internet on Authoritarian Rule* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> See for example Zeynep Tüfekçi, *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017); Şenay Yavuz Gökem, "The Weakest Link or the Magic Stick?: Turkish Activists' Perceptions on the Scope and Strength of Digital Activism," *Turkish Studies* 18, no. 1 (2017): 102–24; H. Akın Ünver and Hassan Alassaad, "How Turks Mobilized Against the Coup: The Power of the Mosque and the Hashtag," *Foreign Affairs*, September 14, 2016; Kamil Demirhan, "Social Media Effects on the Gezi Park Movement in Turkey: Politics under Hashtags," in *Social Media in Politics: Case Studies on the Political Power of Social Media*, ed. Bogdan Pătruț and Monica Pătruț (Basel: Springer International Publishing, 2014), 281–314.

<sup>6</sup> Osman Z. Gökçe, Emre Hatipoğlu, Gökhan Göktürk, Brooke Luetgert, and Yücel Saygın, "Twitter and Politics: Identifying Turkish Opinion Leaders in New Social Media," *Turkish Studies* 15, no. 4 (2014): 671–88.

<sup>7</sup> Emre Hatipoğlu, Osman Z. Gökçe, Berkay Dinçer, and Yücel Saygın, "Sosyal medyaya ve Türk dış politikası: Kobani tweetleri üzerinden Türk dış politikası algısı," *International Relations/Uluslararası İlişkiler* 13, no. 52 (2016): 175–97.

<sup>8</sup> See for example İrem Eren Erdoğan and Mesut Cicek, "The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Brand Loyalty," *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 58 (2012): 1353–60.

<sup>9</sup> See for example Christopher H. Purdy, "Using the Internet and Social Media to Promote Condom Use in Turkey," *Reproductive health matters* 19, no. 37 (2011): 157–65.

and the available training options for an IR scholar to be proficient in such techniques. Section four presents an application of the LCSSM technique conducted on Turkish foreign policy where the authors assess the relative salience of policy issues pertaining to Syrian refugees in the tweets of Turkish users. The final section concludes with a discussion on further applications of the LCSSM technique in IR and beyond.

## 2. Automated Text Analysis and International Relations

Automated text analysis opens many possibilities for international relations scholars. Automated text analysis is scalable; since storage and computing power is virtually free, the same program can work with small or very large datasets. As a source of data, text offers various types of content that are of use to academics, such as categories and sentiments. Among these by-products, “assigning texts to categories is the most common use of content analysis methods in political science,” in general, and international relations, in particular.<sup>10</sup> These categories are often pre-defined by the research question at hand, and the literature this research question builds on. Computers are, then, taught to allocate each unit of analysis under these pre-defined categories. Categorizations can take on a binary (e.g. yes/no: occurred/did not occur), thermometer (e.g. strongly against-against-neutral-in favor-strongly in favor), or nominal (e.g. Africa-America-Asia-Europe-Oceania) nature. The derivation of such mutually exclusive categories also allow the positioning of texts (or the individuals that produce them) in multidimensional platforms, hence allowing spatial analysis of political interaction.

Three main approaches exist for categorization of text using computers, namely nonstatistical dictionary based (DB), supervised machine learning (SML) and unsupervised machine learning (UML).<sup>11</sup> DB is arguably the simplest and the oldest of the three. In this technique, the categories are pre-defined with a pre-set dictionary including all the keywords associated with these categories. Creating these dictionaries constitute the most time and labor-intensive part of automated text analysis techniques. Given a dictionary, the computer takes a tally of key words in a text, compares the prevalence of these key words against this pre-set dictionary and assigns texts to categories. For instance, Adler and Wilkinson allocate each piece of Congress bill to a predetermined issue area such as education, environment or defense.<sup>12</sup> In doing so, they use a pre-built dictionary. Project Civil Strife<sup>13</sup> collects various reports on state, insurgent and civilian actions in Indochina and allocates each report to a conflict event using a pre-set dictionary.

The exponential increase in computing power have allowed the development statistical classification techniques in which computers derive categories from existing text. These statistical-based methods can be grouped under two categories: supervised machine learning (SML) and unsupervised machine learning (UML). Supervised machine learning does not identify a list of key words per se. Instead, researchers identify “reference” texts that approximate the ideal categories and feed these reference texts to the computer program. To illustrate, party manifestos of socialist parties or the speeches of the leaders of the parties can

<sup>10</sup> Justin Grimmer and Brandon M. Stewart, “Text as Data: The Promise And Pitfalls Of Automatic Content Analysis Methods For Political Texts,” *Political Analysis* 21, no. 3 (2013): 267–97, 272.

<sup>11</sup> Lori Young and Stuart Soroka, “Affective News: The Automated Coding of Sentiment in Political Texts,” *Political Communication* 29, no. 2 (2012): 205–31.

<sup>12</sup> E. Scott Adler and John D. Wilkerson, *Congress and the Politics of Problem Solving* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

<sup>13</sup> Stephen M. Shellman, “Coding Disaggregated Intrastate Conflict: Machine Processing the Behavior of Substate Actors over Time and Space,” *Political Analysis* 16, no. 4 (2008): 464–77.

“teach” a computer program what content can be classified as left-leaning.<sup>14</sup> *Wordscores*<sup>15</sup> is a readily available program that can derive multiple dimensions given a set of existing reference texts such as those found for political parties.

Of the many projects that use automated text analysis techniques used international relations (IR) studies, two require special mention, namely the Computer Events Data System (CEDS) and the Militarized Interstate Disputes (MID) dataset. Despite having originated from different strands of IR literature, both projects categorize various international events. Towards this end, both projects have used SML content analysis, and developed unique dictionaries and training sets to “teach” their respective programs how to filter and categorize content appropriately.

The CEDS (previously called the Kansas Event Data System) has been an ongoing project since the early 1990s and provides one of the most important datasets for positive foreign policy analysis. The CEDS evaluates news reports from established sources such as Reuters and Lexis/Nexis to see (i) whether a given report identifies an international event that occurred between two countries, and, if so, (ii) what specific event took place between these two countries.<sup>16</sup> The CEDS uses the World Event Interaction Survey (WEIS) classification.<sup>17</sup> WEIS identifies several dozen distinct diplomatic events, ranging from extending foreign aid to military engagement as adversaries. For such evaluations, the CEDS operates on a well-developed dictionary that supervises the machine’s learning on whether a report indicates an event or not. Later studies based on the CEDS have modified this dictionary towards research questions other than diplomatic events such as international mediation<sup>18</sup> or civil war.<sup>19</sup>

Another recent application of SML technique was the updating of the Militarized Interstate Disputes (MID) dataset. The MID dataset, which codes all instances of militarized interstate disputes for all country-pairs (dyads) from 1815 until 2010, is one of the most widely used datasets in quantitative studies of conflict.<sup>20</sup> The dataset identifies 22 separate militarized incidents that can take place between two countries, such as verbal threats to use force, mobilization, border fortification, seizure of property, joining an interstate and the use of nuclear weapons, among others.<sup>21</sup> These individual incidents are then clustered under a nominal scale of dispute intensity: no action, threat to use force, display of force, use of force and war. Traditionally, MID data were collected manually; humans searched for relevant news

<sup>14</sup> For an application of this idea to Danish politics, see Robert Klemmensen, Sara Binzer Hobolt, and Martin Ejnar Hansen, “Estimating Policy Positions Using Political Texts: An evaluation of the Wordscores approach,” *Electoral Studies* 26, no. 4 (2007): 746–55.

<sup>15</sup> Michael Laver and Kenneth Benoit, “Locating TDs in Policy Spaces: The Computational Text Analysis of Dáil Speeches,” *Irish Political Studies* 17, no. 1 (2002): 59–73.; Michael Laver, Kenneth Benoit, and John Garry, “Extracting Policy Positions from Political Texts Using Words as Data,” *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 2 (2003): 311–31.

<sup>16</sup> Philip A. Schrodt and Deborah J. Gerner, “Validity Assessment of A Machine-Coded Event Data Set for the Middle East, 1982–92,” *American Journal of Political Science* (1994): 825–54; Philip A. Schrodt, Shannon G. Davis, and Judith L. Weddle, “Political Science: KEDS-A Program For The Machine Coding of Event Data,” *Social Science Computer Review* 12, no. 4 (1994): 561–87.

<sup>17</sup> Charles A. McClelland, Rodney G. Tomlinson, Ronald G. Sherwin, Gary A. Hill, and Herbert L. Calhoun, *The Management and Analysis of International Event Data: A Computerized System for Monitoring and Projecting Event Flows* (University of Southern California Los Angeles School of International Relations, 1971); Joshua S. Goldstein, “A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for Weis Events Data,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36, no. 2 (1992): 369–85.

<sup>18</sup> Deborah J. Gerner, Philip A. Schrodt, Omür Yilmaz, and Rajaa Abu-Jabr, “Conflict and Mediation Event Observations (CAMEO): A New Event Data Framework for the Analysis of Foreign Policy Interactions” (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, New Orleans, March 2002).

<sup>19</sup> Doug Bond, Joe Bond, Churl Oh, J. Craig Jenkins, and Charles Lewis Taylor, “Integrated data for events analysis (IDEA): An event typology for automated events data development,” *Journal of Peace Research* 40, no. 6 (2003): 733–745.

<sup>20</sup> Glenn Palmer, Vito d’Orazio, Michael Kenwick, and Matthew Lane, “The MID4 Dataset, 2002-2010: Procedures, Coding Rules and Description,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 32, no. 2 (2015): 222–42.

<sup>21</sup> Michael R. Kenwick, Matthew Lane, Benjamin Ostick, and Glenn Palmer, “Codebook for the Militarized Interstate Incident Data, version 4.0” (unpublished manuscript, 2013).

from sources such as New York Times, Keesing's World News Almanac, Facts on File, and later, with the advent of online sources, Factiva/Reuters and Lexis/Nexis.<sup>22</sup> The news collected were, then, manually coded. Having humans conduct relevant searches of news sources had made updating the dataset in a timely manner a very costly and time-consuming endeavor. Instead, the MID team chose to employ support vector machine document classification algorithm to "identify news stories that contain codable militarized interstate actions," and hence, "replacing the most costly and labor-intensive part of the MID coding process."<sup>23</sup> Later advances have allowed these news sources to be coded automatically as well.<sup>24</sup> During this process, the computer algorithm was fed substantial amount of news reports, which the researchers knew contained a specific militarized incident between two countries. Projects that use similar techniques, but are unrelated to the MID group, include the Global Terrorism Database<sup>25</sup> and the GATE (government actions in terrorism environments) project.<sup>26</sup>

More recent techniques do away with human supervision altogether, and let the data determine what categories exist within.<sup>27</sup> Such techniques do not calculate the "similarity" of each unit of text against a set of pre-defined parameters. Rather, they identify the clusters these units form on a multi-dimensional space. For instance, Grimmer and King developed a UML program that has the capacity to cluster data in dimensions initially inaccessible to the human eye.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, Hopkins and King adopt a non-parametric data-driven approach to let the computer derive and calculate proportions of text data, which does not rest on any "parametric statistical modeling, individual document classification or random sampling."<sup>29</sup> The program they developed for R platform, README, is readily available online. Analyzing Twitter data in the aftermath of the US financial meltdown, Bollen, Mao, and Pepe's algorithm derives six distinct categories of sentiments (tension, depression, anger, vigor, fatigue, confusion) without any prior conditioning by researchers.<sup>30</sup> *Wordfish* is another accessible program for those who want to start exploring UML techniques in textual analysis.<sup>31</sup> Finally, this fully-data driven approach has started informing how we collect data at the outset as well. King, Lam and Roberts, for example, take issue with which search words we use to collect data start with, and instead let computers iterate search keywords to derive more relevant data.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Faten Ghosn, Glenn Palmer, and Stuart A. Bremer, "The MID3 Data Set, 1993-2001: Procedures, Coding Rules, and Description," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 21, no. 2 (2004): 133-54.

<sup>23</sup> Philip A. Schrodt, Glenn Palmer, and Mehmet Emre Hatipoğlu, "Automated Detection of Reports of Militarized Interstate Disputes Using the SVM Document Classification Algorithm" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, 2008).

<sup>24</sup> Palmer, et al., "The MID4 Dataset".

<sup>25</sup> Gary LaFree, Laura Dugan, and Erin Miller, *Putting Terrorism in Context: Lessons from the Global Terrorism Database* (London, UK: Routledge, 2014).

<sup>26</sup> Laura Dugan and Erica Chenoweth, "Government Actions in Terror Environments (GATE): A Methodology that Reveals How Governments Behave Toward Terrorists and Their Constituencies," in *Handbook of Computational Approaches to Counterterrorism*, ed. V. S. Subrahmanian (New York, NY: Springer, 2013), 465-86.

<sup>27</sup> Burt L. Monroe, Michael P. Colaresi, and Kevin M. Quinn, "Fightin'words: Lexical Feature Selection and Evaluation for Identifying The Content of Political Conflict," *Political Analysis* 16, no. 4 (2008): 372-403.

<sup>28</sup> Justin Grimmer and Gary King, "General Purpose Computer-Assisted Clustering and Conceptualization," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 108, no. 7 (2011): 2643-50.

<sup>29</sup> Daniel J. Hopkins and Gary King, "Improving anchoring vignettes: Designing surveys to correct interpersonal incomparability," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 74, no. 2 (2010): 201-222, 236.

<sup>30</sup> Johan Bollen, Huina Mao, and Alberto Pepe, "Modeling Public Mood and Emotion: Twitter sentiment and socio-economic phenomena," *ICWSM* 11 (2011): 450-453.

<sup>31</sup> Sven-Oliver Proksch and Jonathan B. Slapin, "WORDFISH: Scaling software for estimating political positions from texts," *Version* 1 (2008): 323-344. For a comparison of validity between Wordfish and Wordscores programs, see Frederik Hjorth, Robert Klemmensen, Sara Hobolt, Martin Ejnar Hansen, and Peter Kurrild-Klitgaard, "Computers, Coders, and Voters: Comparing automated methods for estimating party positions," *Research & Politics* 2, no. 2 (2015): 1-9.

<sup>32</sup> Gary King, Patrick Lam, and Margaret E. Roberts, "Computer-Assisted Keyword and Document Set Discovery from Unstructured Text," *American Journal of Political Science* 61, no. 4 (2017): 971-88.

### 3. A Novel Method: The Longest Common Subsequence Metric and Clustering Tweets

Our clustering algorithm based on the Longest Common Subsequence similarity metric was developed under the auspices of the *Identifying Political Opinion Shapers on Twitter in Turkey (I-POST)* project. The project has been funded by an internal research grant by Sabancı University, and is the result of three professors, the initial co-principal investigators, coming from three different angles to automated textual analysis.<sup>33</sup> Dr. Emre Hatipoğlu worked from 2007-2010 as a research assistant in the MID project that aimed to transfer data collection from hand coding to automated coding. In doing so, his research team systematically measured the accuracy of computer assignments of categories using support vector machines.<sup>34</sup> Dr. Yücel Saygın, a computer scientist, has been a leading figure on big data and data privacy. Further application of his work has led him to develop modules analysis of social media data for marketing research and product development. Dr. Luetgert's previous research utilized automatized data collection and analysis techniques to focus on how the European *acquis* was transposed to member state legislation.<sup>35</sup> Of the other two co-authors of this manuscript, Dr. Arın (2017) wrote his dissertation on "*Impact Assessment and Prediction of Tweets and Topics*,"<sup>36</sup> and Dr. Gökçe has been the head assistant of the I-POST project; his previous work looked at who the opinion leaders were on Turkish twitter.<sup>37</sup>

Both Dr. Hatipoğlu and Dr. Gökçe have worked with datasets throughout their academic lives. For his dissertation, Dr. Gökçe constructed a global dyadic dataset of interstate energy trade and interdependence which covers the years 1978-2012. The decision for these scholars to work with datasets is related to the inferential leverage that large-N studies provide for certain research questions, in particular, questions that focus on establishing trends and correlations in IR. The canonical debate on whether balance of power leads to peaceful relations in the international system illustrates this leverage. In *Diplomacy*, one of the most important IR works based on realism, Kissinger argues that the stable balance of power system established by the European pentarchy (Austria-Hungary, Britain, France, Prussia and Russia) led to peaceful relations as long as these countries were free to align themselves as they wished.<sup>38</sup> To prove his point, Kissinger renders a lengthy treatise of 19<sup>th</sup> century European diplomatic history. While his account of 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe happens to be quite in line with the assertion that balance of power leads to peace, Kissinger fails to look at cases of (i) balance of power and no peace, and (ii) imbalance of power and peace. The nature of our inferences changes when we look at the whole globe over since the Congress of Vienna in 1815. A wealth of analyses that use large datasets and look at all possible combinations of balance (imbalance) of power and peace (conflict) have consistently shown that balance of power increases the propensity for conflict between states whereas power preponderance leads to more cordial relations.<sup>39</sup>

Using comprehensive datasets, hence our focus on big data, is equally important for studies

<sup>33</sup> The third co-principal investigator, Dr. Brooke Luetgert is no longer at Sabancı University. She is not involved with the research outputs presented in this study.

<sup>34</sup> Schrodt, et al., "Automated detection".

<sup>35</sup> Thomas König, Brooke Luetgert, and Tanja Dannwolf, "Quantifying European Legislative Research: Using CELEX and PreLex in EU legislative studies," *European Union Politics* 7, no. 4 (2006): 553-74.

<sup>36</sup> İnanç Arın, *Impact Assessment & Prediction of Tweets and Topics* (Ph.D. thesis, Sabancı University, 2017).

<sup>37</sup> Gökçe, et al., "Twitter and Politics".

<sup>38</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1994).

<sup>39</sup> See for example A.F.K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (London, UK: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Melvin Small and Joel David Singer, *Resort to Arms: International and Civil Wars, 1816-1980* (London, UK: Sage Publications, Inc, 1982); Alex Braithwaite and Douglas Lemke, "Unpacking Escalation," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 28, no. 2 (2011): 111-23.

that focus on discourse. An often-witnessed inferential pitfall in studies that use small-N to derive correlations and trends in discourse, relates to selective use of evidence to support an argument without due regard to possible alternatives. In such practice, researchers build a theoretical construct, then select events/cases that support this construct while ignoring the possible cases where their theoretical assertions could be falsified. Let us illustrate this faulty practice within our topic of research. Some may argue that the tone in Turkish twitter, in general, is quite unforgiving and critical of Syrian refugees. Furthermore, these scholars could also argue that economic reasons undergird such an offensive tone. To support this argument, then, one can search Twitter history and come up with hundreds of anti-refugee tweets, many of them bordering on outright racism, which also happen to mention the economic burden these refugees bring. Such an inference, however, would be faulty. We would not know the ratio of these anti-refugee tweets to the pro- and neutral-refugee tweets. Likewise, absent a comprehensive and representative dataset, we would not be able to assess the relative salience of economics as a determinant of anti-refugee discourse. As a matter of fact, our results presented below indicate that tweets that are concerned with the refugees' own security and well-being occupy a larger share in Turkish online discussion space than tweets criticizing the economic and social burden the refugee inflow have imposed on Turkey. Further analyses also indicate that, even in such critical tweets, most of the blame is laid on the government, and not the refugees themselves.

### 3.1. The choice of methodology: an effective and efficient tradeoff

Our main methodological challenge, i.e. coding large amounts of unstructured text data led us to adopt a hybrid design, integrating automated clustering with manual coding of content. Our methodology strikes a balance between the reduction in workload that automated content and the accuracy of coding (content validity) manual coding provides. The nature of Twitter data has necessitated such a balance. Doing so came at a cost; not fully automating coding of content came at the expense of a sizeable number of person-hours. Likewise, clustering tweets inevitably led to a small compromise in measurement validity as each cluster header speaks for all tweets under its cluster. Some tweets are, inevitably, more similar to the cluster header than the others. Our validity checks, however, show that intra-cluster correlations are very high.

**Alternative 1- Manual Coding of Content:** Manual coding has been, so far, the most commonly preferred way of conventional media analyses.<sup>40</sup> Although recent computational advances have degraded its role as a mainly employed method, researchers still rely on this labor-intensive and unsophisticated way of content analysis as a complementary method of scrutiny, especially for smaller samples, to avoid problems arising from automated coding (e.g. misspelled words not classified in standard dictionaries or misallocation of identified words based on their contextual meaning).<sup>41</sup> For larger sample sizes, however, manual coding

<sup>40</sup> Stuart Soroka, Marc André Bodet, Lori Young, and Blake Andrew, "Campaign News and Vote Intentions," *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 19, no. 4 (2009): 359–76; Cynthia Chew and Gunther Eysenbach, "Pandemics in the Age of Twitter: Content Analysis of Tweets during the 2009 H1N1 outbreak," *PLoS one* 5, no. 11 (2010): e14118; Bronwyn Hemsley, Stephen Dann, Stuart Palmer, Meredith Allan, and Susan Balandin, "'We Definitely Need an Audience': Experiences of Twitter, Twitter networks and Tweet Content in Adults with Severe Communication Disabilities Who Use Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)," *Disability and Rehabilitation* 37, no. 17 (2015): 1531–42.

<sup>41</sup> Chew and Eysenbach, "Pandemics in the age of Twitter"; Jessica Einspänner, Mark Dang-Anh, and Caja Thimm, "Computer-Assisted Content Analysis of Twitter Data," in *Twitter and Society*, ed. K. Weller, A. Bruns, J. Burgess, M. Mahrt, and C. Puschmann (New York, NY: P. Lang, 2014), 97–108.

often falls short, either because of temporal and financial constraints or because of difficulties achieving intercoder reliability. Moreover, human coders may be prone to make subjective interpretations and misidentify certain types of latent (rather than apparent) content.<sup>42</sup> Thanks to computational tools and software, many innovative methods exist to ease incorporation of automated (quantitative) with manual (quantitative or qualitative) content analysis through identification of detectable patterns and structures of the data metrics, e.g. keyword-in-context lists (KWIC), Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS), Quantitative Data Analysis (QDA).<sup>43</sup>

**Alternative 2- Fully automated coding:** Automated content coding addresses many drawbacks of manual coding and has contributed to international relations research on many topics. Automated content coding allows the computer to read data and assign each unit to pre-defined categories or categories the computer itself automatically generates. Despite substantial improvements in coding and artificial intelligence, computers may still misassign (i.e. do not understand) an important portion of the text that are fed into them. However, the fact that computers make use of very large data at virtually no cost renders statistically efficient and unbiased results.<sup>44</sup>

The structure of textual content posted on Twitter makes conducting automated content analysis quite difficult. Traditionally, automated content coding utilizes text with standard structures. For instance, news reports (including those pulled from Lexis/Nexis or Factiva-Reuters databases) exhibit a standard structure: a header and a by-line, followed by the body-text. Following conventional reporting practices, these news reports contain most of the critical information (actors, action, time and location) in the first paragraph of the body-text. “Teaching” the computer to understand sentiments and code actions is more feasible when the text is organized along such a standardized structure. In addition, these news reports are virtually free of spelling and grammatical errors.

Text from Twitter, on the other hand, is unstructured. The posts that Twitter users produce are replete with spelling and grammar mistakes, broken (quasi) sentences often due to space limitations, typing errors or simply low spelling ability of the user. To make things more complicated, online communities develop their own language, often omitting or shortening adverbs and adjectives.<sup>45</sup> Most automated methods are “restricted to simple event categories and cannot extract more complicated types of information”,<sup>46</sup> and, therefore, do not perform well in analyzing such morphed language, “obscured by the context”.<sup>47</sup> In addition, a message relayed on Twitter does not necessarily rely solely on text. Emojis, pictures and gif animations may accompany text in a tweet. Automated content coding is unable to treat such “anomalies.” Omitting such non-alphanumeric content is one option; however, such omission can lead to miscoding the content of the tweet. An eye-rolling GIF accompanying a retweet, for example, indicates that the user is most likely in disagreement with the original tweet. Manual coding after automated clustering allows us to capture such subtleties in the data.

<sup>42</sup> Young and Soroka, “Affective News”.

<sup>43</sup> Einspänner, et al., “Computer-Assisted Content Analysis”.

<sup>44</sup> Viktor Mayer-Schönberger and Kenneth Cukier, *Big Data: A Revolution That Will Transform How We Live, Work, and Think* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013).

<sup>45</sup> Naomi S. Baron, *Always On: Language in an Online and Mobile World* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>46</sup> Philip A. Schrodt, “Event Data in Foreign Policy Analysis,” in *Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation*, ed. L. Neack, P. J. Haney, and J. A.K. Hey (New York, NY: Prentice Hall, 1995), 145–66.

<sup>47</sup> Grimmer and King, “General Purpose,” 5.

The lack of dictionaries and reference sets stand out as another hurdle towards using automated coding of tweets. The tweets collected for our project were in Turkish. Most automated content coding in the field of international relations (and political science) has been done for the language of English. Naturally, the “ontology” for English is much more developed than other languages, including Turkish.<sup>48</sup> While some studies have started developing such an ontology for Turkish,<sup>49</sup> these are in their infancy; building on such existing code would be too cumbersome for the purposes of this study.

Even if well-developed ontologies in Turkish existed, these could not necessarily be readily utilized. Dictionaries and reference-sets are context-dependent. They tend to -a priori- define what words a specific dimension or category include, and therefore, should be relevant to the research question at hand. Using an ontology not related to the research question at hand would be akin to having “cooking books... applied to speech in a legislature” leading to meaningless results.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, many of the reference sets either occur naturally (e.g. a war declaration for an events dataset), or otherwise rest on strong theoretical foundations (e.g. an existing party manifesto of a conservative party for coding new party positions). To develop an accurate ontology, in turn, requires a substantial amount of existing scholarly work. Many of the questions one can ask on Twitter, however, concern novel concepts expressed over unconventional media. To illustrate, one of the questions we present below asks whether security- or economics-related issues are most salient on Turkish twitter relating to Syrian refugees. The literature on public opinion of civil war refugees in host populations nascent in international relations literature; we do not have an ex-ante expectation of what categories and keywords will be of relevance for our study. This problem of coming up with relevant ontologies is further exacerbated if researchers want to associate different categories of content within a tweet. To continue with our example of Syrian refugees, a follow-up question that we ask is whether attention over a certain issue (e.g. domestic security) is associated with attitude towards refugees in a tweet. The reference set used for “issues”; however, will be quite different than the reference set used to identify whether a tweet carries a positive, negative or neutral attitude towards refugees.

### 3.2. The need for a hybrid approach: a brief technical presentation of the LCSSM and clustering

Given the unique properties of our research question, our hybrid approach stands out as one efficient way to process our data. To hand-code computer-clustered tweets for questions with immediate relevance, such as what the most prominent issues occupy the agenda on Turkish Twitter, may require substantially less time than to develop a well-working dictionary against which tweets can be individually grouped.

To calculate lexical similarity among tweets, we use a Longest Common Subsequence (LCS) similarity metric. LCS is the longest subsequence of characters from two sequences (tweets) that are common between these two sequences in the same order. This technique operates at the character level and does not infer “meaning” from text. As a result, it can operate on any alphabetic language. Figure 1 illustrates what a longest common subsequence

<sup>48</sup> Erik Cambria, Daniel Olsher, and Dheeraj Rajagopal, “SenticNet 3: A Common and Common-Sense Knowledge Base for Cognition-Driven Sentiment Analysis,” *Twenty-eighth AAAI Conference On Artificial Intelligence* (2014): 1515–21.

<sup>49</sup> Rahim Dehkharghani, Yucel Saygin, Berrin Yanikoglu, and Kemal Oflazer, “SentiTurkNet: A Turkish Polarity Lexicon for Sentiment Analysis,” *Language Resources and Evaluation* 50, no. 3 (2016): 667–85.

<sup>50</sup> Laver, et al., “Extracting Policy Position,” 314.

is. Assume you have two sequences of characters (e.g. two tweets). If the first sequence is "thisisatest" and the second sequence is "testing123testing," then the LCS between these two sequences will be "tsitest":

thi**s**is**ate**st  
test**i**ng123test**i**ng  
 LCS: **tsitest**

Figure 1: Illustration of Longest Common Subsequence Metric

To illustrate technically, let's assume  $X$  and  $Y$  are two sequences and  $X_i = x_1 x_2 \dots x_i$  is the prefix of  $X$  and  $Y_j = y_1 y_2 \dots y_j$  is the prefix of  $Y$ . Then the length of the LCS can be found as follows:

$$LCS(X_i, Y_j) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } i = 0 \text{ or } j = 0 \\ LCS(X_{i-1}, Y_{j-1}) + 1 & \text{if } x_i = y_j \\ \max(LCS(X_{i-1}, Y_j), LCS(X_i, Y_{j-1})) & \text{if } x_i \neq y_j \end{cases}$$

The LCS problem can be solved with a dynamic programming approach in  $O(m*n)$  time and space complexity where  $m$  and  $y$  are the length of two strings. Our adaptive clustering algorithm is based on Longest Common Subsequence (LCS) as defined above. This measure, however, needs to be normalized: since different tweets will have different lengths, longer tweets are more likely to have longer common subsequences regardless of content.<sup>51</sup> To render a normalized similarity score between two tweets, we use the following formula:

$$NormalizedScore(t_i, t_j) = \frac{2 * LCS(t_i, t_j)}{Length(t_i) + Length(t_j)}$$

A naive algorithm for an LCS based tweet clustering process is given in Figure 2. This algorithm calculates the level of similarity between a single tweet and a pre-defined cluster-header tweet. If our algorithm indicates that an individual tweet is sufficiently similar to a given cluster header, then this tweet is assigned to this cluster. In other words, for each unclustered tweet (referred as tweet  $i$ ), we pass over all other following unclustered tweets (referred as tweet  $j$ ). If the normalized score that we defined above, between tweet  $i$  and tweet  $j$  is higher than the threshold, then we include indices of these tweets (which are  $i$  and  $j$ ) in the same cluster  $c$ . However, not all clusters are included into the set of clusters  $C$ ; instead only the clusters whose sizes are greater than or equal to  $k$  are included into  $C$  where  $k$  is the minimum number of tweets a cluster must have. To keep the highest level of generalizability, we set  $k=2$ , i.e. the minimum number of tweets a cluster can have is two. The first tweet ( $t_i$ ) in  $c$  becomes the representative tweet of cluster  $c$ , which is called the *cluster header*. Once we

<sup>51</sup> To iterate, our algorithm calculates similarities at the level of characters, and not at the level of words. This technique saves us the trouble of "teaching" the computer how to understand Turkish (or any language for that matter) and allows us to significant save on computing. One important shortcoming, however, is that we are unable to separate sarcastic tweets from "honest" ones in our automated coding, since both types of tweets exhibit very high levels of similarity in character content. However, since we are using manual coding for content, sarcasm does not pose a risk of validity for the two projects we present below.

include the cluster  $c$  into the set  $C$ , then we remove the tweets included in cluster  $c$  from the dataset. This algorithm ensures that the cluster sizes are greater than or equal to  $k$ .

Our technique guarantees that every tweet, which belongs to a cluster, passes the similarity threshold with the cluster header. We should also note that there is no guarantee that the similarity between any two non-cluster header tweets in a cluster is above the threshold. However, experiments show that tweets belonging to even very large clusters are similar to each other in content as well as to the representative tweet.

For our study on the Syrian refugees, we set the threshold of similarity at 0.7, leading to 82% reduction in the number of cases to be content-coded by hand. To restate, higher thresholds make it more difficult for our algorithm to decide that two tweets are alike, and therefore, cluster these tweets together. Due to the novelty of our technique, we kept this threshold relatively high. Table 1 illustrates the reduction in coding burden when the threshold is incrementally relaxed to 0.5, which increases the reduction in coding burden to 90%. Other studies that operate on more structured, clean text may decrease this threshold, and substantially reduce the time required to hand-code content of the text.

---

```

C = {};
for  $i \leftarrow 1$  to  $n$  do
  |  $t_i.isClustered \leftarrow false$ ;  $\triangleright$  Initially, all tweets are marked as unclustered;
end
for  $i \leftarrow 1$  to  $n$  do
  | if  $t_i.isClustered = false$  then
    |  $c = \{i\}$ ;
    | for  $j \leftarrow (i + 1)$  to  $n$  do
      | if  $t_j.isClustered = false$  and  $NormalizedScore(t_i, t_j) \geq threshold$ 
        | then
          |  $c \leftarrow c \cup j$ ;  $\triangleright$  Find first unclustered similar tweet
        | end
      | end
    | end
    | if  $|c| \geq k$  then  $\triangleright$  If cluster size is big enough
      |  $C \leftarrow C \cup c$ ;  $\triangleright$  Add this cluster to set of clusters
      | foreach  $index \in c$  do
        |  $t_{index}.isClustered \leftarrow true$ ;  $\triangleright$  Mark these tweets as clustered
      | end
    | end
  | end
end

```

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Figure 2: LCS based tweet clustering algorithm

### 3.3. A few suggestions on training for aspiring IR scholars

Establishing a well-functioning relationship with computer scientists allows IR scholars a fecund way of producing interdisciplinary research. Working with computer scientists, however, does not relieve an IR scholar from the necessity of developing a basic command of coding. A computer program, like a statistics program, does not assess the quality of input; feeding garbage in will result in producing garbage out.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, expecting a computer scientist to command the substantive content of research on discourse would be unfair at best. Therefore, possessing basic programming skills is essential for IR scholars to ensure measurement validity and consistent inference in a study. For IR scholars aspiring to obtain text manipulation techniques, two main languages of coding stand out: PERL or Python. These coding languages are mostly self-taught. A wealth of free information, tutorials, examples and communities exists online. For those who prefer to start their training in a structured way, Lubanovic<sup>53</sup> and Shaw<sup>54</sup> for Python 3, and Schwartz and Phoenix<sup>55</sup> for Perl stand out as successful introductory manuscripts. Phil Schrodt's professional website (<http://eventdata.parusanalytics.com>) contains guides and links to automated content coding software (including TABARI) and a wealth of literature on this topic. Programs mentioned in previous sections, i.e. README, *Wordscore*, *Wordfish* and many others are readily available online.

A point that needs to be underlined here is that a combination of conventional learning (i.e. learning subject by subject) and task-based hands-on learning (i.e. learning by doing) delivers the most effective results. These learning tasks can also provide (partial) answers to existing research questions. Forward-looking scholars can turn such tasks into opportunities by incorporating the outputs obtained into research papers. Contemporary computers possess sufficient computing power to conduct most textual analyses.

### 3.4. Coding, learning benefits for students and IR curricula

The benefits of learning coding far exceed enabling the collection and analysis of large amounts of data for a researcher. Such an enterprise carries many learning benefits. The process of learning coding is quite akin to learning a new language; each computer language has its own syntax wherein various constructs are logically linked to each other. The main challenge in using coding in IR arises from the need to transpose substantive theoretical questions into well-defined tasks of coding. This very challenge also constitutes the main learning benefit of coding when used in an IR curriculum. For instance, when preparing a reference dictionary, which words should be regarded as cordial or hostile in a diplomatic document? What specific army actions constitute a fortification on a border? Can we call civilians who died in a NATO bombardment as war casualties? Addressing such questions also helps the student to critically analyze what basic constructs in IR such as power, war, threat, security, alliance etc. mean, and, in addition, how these constructs logically relate to each other.

<sup>52</sup> This also points to a considerable risk associated with using off-the-shelf commercial programs. The results one obtains from such programs are very difficult to validate.

<sup>53</sup> Bill Lubanovic, *Introducing Python: Modern Computing in Simple Packages* (Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly, 2014).

<sup>54</sup> Zed A. Shaw, *Learn Python 3 the Hard Way: A Very Simple Introduction to the Terrifyingly Beautiful World of Computers and Code* (Boston, MA: Addison-Wesley, 2017).

<sup>55</sup> Randal L. Schwartz and Tom Phoenix, *Learning Perl* (Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly, 2001).

Incorporating coding into the IR curriculum, however, is not a straightforward task. An institutionalized response, i.e. offering a separate course in coding, surely can introduce students to the world of coding. Such a push strategy can be extremely resource-consuming in very large classes. Pooling IR students with engineering students in a conventional coding course could also substantially reduce learning benefits for IR students.

The authors of this article suggest an alternative approach: the adoption of a pull strategy for students with potential interest in coding. IR programs can easily incorporate coding across various courses across the curriculum and encourage those interested to follow through. One way to do this would be to sprinkle “enablers,” i.e. small, manageable tasks that will warm an interested student to the world of coding. Small tasks with immediate and positive feedback are often quite effective in convincing a student to delve deeper into the world of coding. Awarding extra credits for papers prepared in LaTeX is one way to entice students to employ coding in their studies. Encouraging students to start writing small bits of code for their statistical analyses (such as loops) is another such enabler. Finally, several off-the-shelf programs with easy to use graphical user interfaces exists for simple analysis. Instructors of substantive courses can easily assign tasks that require the use of these programs.

### 3.5. Personal experience of the authors

While various institutions have started teaching courses on big-data in social sciences, neither of the social scientists authoring this study had formal education in coding. Rather, they learned methodology mostly by doing, as the projects they were responsible for required them to do so. Learning by doing tasks offers a unique opportunity; one is exposed to numerous disciplines that utilize similar methodology. Such exposure makes scholars cognizant of recent developments in these disciplines and apply these developments in international relations.

Learning by doing, however, has one important disadvantage. The programs do not necessarily work right away. In the famous Hollywood movie *Cast Away*, actor Tom Hanks plays Chuck, the protagonist who has been stranded on a remote island in the Pacific Ocean for several years. When Chuck finally decides to leave the island on a makeshift sail-raft, his first -and apparently the most formidable- challenge turns out to be crossing the large waves that break right at the coast into the open sea. Most of the obstacles in developing coding skills are akin to these breaking waves that initially prevented Chuck from leaving the island with his boat. Such obstacles occur at the very outset, especially in setting a system up and running the first simple lines of code. We came to observe that among our colleagues who give up learning code, most do so at this stage. Knowing that such problems will occur (and, alas, persist) at the outset (e.g. using a semi-colon instead of a comma in one line can prevent the running of hundreds of lines of code) can bestow mental resilience on a researcher to carry on, to cross the waves, and enjoy a smooth sail into the ocean.

## 4. Application to a Research Question: Syrian Migrants on Turkish Twitter: Which Issues Matter the Most?

### 4.1. Motivation

Migration, in general, and, refugee flows, in particular, have constituted a central topic of scholarly inquiry in IR over the last decade.<sup>56</sup> Turkey has been one of the countries that

<sup>56</sup> N. Katherine Hayles, “Print is Flat, Code is Deep: The importance of media-specific analysis,” *Poetics Today* 25, no. 1

received the most number of refugees, both per capita and in absolute figures, during this period. Most recent figures indicate that the number of Syrian refugees who escaped from the civil war between the Asad government and the rebels to Turkey has exceeded three million.<sup>57</sup> The social, economic and security implications of this plight inevitably placed Syrian refugees as one of the most salient issues in both in Turkish domestic politics and foreign policy.

Although public opinion has played an important role in shaping Turkey's policies towards Syrian refugees, our knowledge on what people think is scant. While a few surveys have assessed the general attitude of the Turkish public towards Syrian refugees,<sup>58</sup> we do not have systematic analysis on what specific issues the Turkish public is most concerned with. Our study aims to address this gap by utilizing Twitter data. Towards this end, we took a four-month snapshot of Turkish tweets on Syrian refugees, and assessed which issues relating to Syrian migrants turned out to be most salient on Turkish Twitter.

## 4.2. Methodology

Twitter is a popular social platform for people to share their ideas and reactions towards daily events. Analyzing tweets sent for a specific topic is important since these tweets give important insight to online public opinion.<sup>59</sup> However, analyzing large volume of tweets in an unbiased way is a challenging task. Conventional hand-coding is simply unfeasible for very large data. Automated sentiment analysis and machine coding of text is another option.<sup>60</sup> Language used on Twitter, however, is “dirty” (i.e., unstructured), hence very difficult to form a relevant “ontology” from which a computer can learn. Instead we use the CLS similarity metric technique detailed in the previous section.

In this study, our novel clustering technique allowed 52845 of the 60146 tweets to be grouped into 3553 clusters, while 7301 of these tweets turned out as stand-alone tweets. These 10874 (3553 cluster headers + 7321 remaining stand-alone tweets) individual entries were, then, coded for content by the authors. Further statistical analyses were conducted on these groups to gauge the relationship between various aspects of the content of the tweets. Clustering led to a decrease of the number of entries that needed to be hand-coded dataset by a factor of 5.5.

## 4.3. Data collection

We started to collect real time Turkish tweets by using Twitter Stream API, which contain the keyword of *mülteci* [refugee], including the spelling with English letters, i.e. *multeci* as well as the word *Suriye* and its inflections in Turkish (such as *Suriyeli*, *Suriyeliler* etc.). The collected tweets were, then, filtered for language; this filter eliminated tweets that were not

(2004): 67–90.

<sup>57</sup> “Suriyeli sığınmacılara yapılan yardımlar,” AFAD, <https://www.afad.gov.tr/tr/2373/Suriyeli-Siginmacılara-Yapılan-Yardımlar> (2017).

<sup>58</sup> See for example EDAM, “Reaction Mounting against Syrian Refugees in Turkey,” Public Opinion Surveys of Turkish Foreign Policy no:1 (2014); The German Marshall Fund of the United States, *Turkish Perceptions Survey* (2015); M. Murat Erdoğan, *Türkiye'deki Suriyeliler: Toplumsal kabul ve uyum* (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2015).

<sup>59</sup> Gökçe, et al., “Twitter and Politics”; Andranik Tumasjan, Timm Oliver Sprenger, Philipp G. Sandner, and Isabell M. Welp, “Predicting Elections with Twitter: What 140 characters reveal about political sentiment,” *JCWSM* 10, no. 1 (2010): 178–85; Presley Ifukor, “Elections” or “Selections”? Blogging and Twittering the Nigerian 2007 General Elections,” *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society* 30, no. 6 (2010): 398–414.

<sup>60</sup> Philip A. Schrodt, “Precedents, Progress, and Prospects In Political Event Data,” *International Interactions* 38, no. 4 (2012): 546–69.

in Turkish language. As a result, our analysis comprises of 63312 tweets, which were posted between 2 May 2016 and 25 August 2016. An important limitation at this step was Twitter's limited access for legal retrieval of related tweets via Twitter Stream API upon a word query. The true number of tweets that contained the word *mülteci and Suriye* are much higher than 63312. Nonetheless, we have no apriori reason to believe that Twitter censors results from query in a non-random way.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, our sample is sufficiently large for the inferences made below.

#### 4.4. Clustering and coding of tweets

Standard document clustering methods in data mining do not work well on Twitter data due to several challenges explicated in the previous section. To address these challenges, we utilized an algorithm based on the Least Common Subsequence similarity metric, which utilizes an adaptive clustering approach for Twitter which is based on lexical similarity.<sup>62</sup> Based on our algorithm, 52845 of the 63312 tweets clustered successfully under 3553 clusters, while 7301 unclustered individual tweets remained. We, then, hand coded these 10854 (3553+7301) entries for various content including the issues mentioned in the tweet, attitudes towards refugees, whether any political party is mentioned and attitudes towards this political party, mention of any terrorist organizations, among others. Four separate coders were utilized in this study. 500 randomly chosen tweets were jointly coded to measure intercoder reliability. The lowest pairwise correlation among any pair of coders was 0.88.

#### 4.5. Findings

Our survey of related literature, policy and news reports led us to establish ten issue topics which might identify a given cluster header: (1) security within the borders of Turkey (TR Security); (2) security outside of Turkey's borders (Security Abroad); (3) immigrants' safety; (4) economy; (5) social aid; (6) identity/ethnicity; (7) granting of Turkish citizenship (TR Citizenship); (8) demographical change; (9) general (for headers without specific topic); and, (10) other (for headers not having any connection with Syrian-refugee issues). These categories are not mutually exclusive; a tweet can refer to multiple issues.

Table 1- Salience of Issues Concerning Syrian Refugees on Turkish Twitter

	Frequency	Percentage	TOTAL
<b>TR Security</b>	22,102	34.91	63,312
<b>Security Abroad</b>	2,931	4.63	63,312
<b>Immigrants' Safety</b>	13,327	21.05	63,312
<b>Economy</b>	8,775	13.86	63,312
<b>Social Aid</b>	4,614	7.29	63,312
<b>Identity/Ethnicity</b>	5,116	8.08	63,312
<b>TR Citizenship</b>	10,104	15.96	63,312
<b>Demography</b>	758	1.2	63,312
<b>General</b>	9,703	15.33	63,312
Other	4,947	7.81	63,312

<sup>61</sup> Twitter does not publicly disclose the sampling mechanism; however, the company officially declares that "the Sample endpoint provides a statistically relevant sample of 1% of the full firehose." See <https://twittercommunity.com/t/is-the-sample-streaming-api-truly-random/14942/3>

<sup>62</sup> İnanç Arın, Mert Kemal Erpam and Yücel Saygın, "I-TWEC: Interactive Clustering Tool for Twitter," *Expert Systems with Applications* 96 (2018): 1-13.

Table 1 lists the frequencies and relative percentages of the issues mentioned in the 63,312 tweets analyzed for this study. Our findings indicate concern for domestic security in Turkey seems to trump over others on Twitter. Many of the tweets grouped under this category highlighted the government's inability to protect its citizens. Some also suggested a global conspiracy against Turkey and portrayed the inflow of Syrian refugees as a part of a bigger plan to "bring Turkey to its knees." Given that Turkey had been suffering several terrorist attacks during 2015 and 2016, many of which were linked to various groups involved in the Syrian civil war, this result is not surprising. Nonetheless, establishing that the Syrian refugees issue has been strongly linked to domestic security concerns constitutes a solid basis for further studies.

The safety of immigrants turns out to be the second most important topic in our sample of tweets; more than one in every five tweets mention the problems immigrants face, in Turkey or elsewhere. Further analyses of our data also indicate that almost all of the tweets that mention immigrants' safety take on a positive attitude towards the immigrants themselves. Hence, we can safely conclude that a significant part of Turkish online community care about the physical and psychological integrity of immigrants. Many of these tweets focused on the allegations of sexual abuse of refugee children, both in the cities and the camps. A significant number also drew attention to the government's prohibition of third party probe into these allegations. A much smaller, but still important, group drew attention to the plight of the refugees escaping from the violence of the Assad regime.

The granting of citizenship to Syrian refugees occupied the third most salient place on the agenda. Turkish twitter community was divided on this topic. One camp highlighted the adverse security implications of granting citizenship to Syrians and argued that Syrian refugees as Turkish citizens would constitute a fifth column for Turkish society. The other camp motivated the case for granting citizenship to Syrian refugees based on religious kinship. A general theme that repeated itself in this camp was Syrian refugees deserved citizenship as much as other groups to whom Turkey has given citizenship, such as refugees from the Balkan, Armenians, Jews and seculars. Interestingly, citizenship and pecuniary issues were not paired as frequently.

The impact Syrian refugees have on Turkish economy turned out to be the fourth most salient specific issue area. Tweets falling under this category were predominantly organized under three main arguments. The first argument highlighted the overall cost on Turkish economy. A second group of tweets directed their criticism towards the redistributive consequences of this impact and argued that those in favor of the inflow of refugees should be the ones shouldering the economic burden these refugees bring. The third line of argument directed criticism against the critics themselves. These users noted that other countries, such as Germany and Jordan, were also suffering as much economically, but did not complain as much from the inflow of Syrian refugees on economic grounds.

Among the tweets that identified at least one specific policy issue, the tweets underlying the ethnic- or identity related dimensions constitute the fifth biggest category. Many of these tweets grouped under this category are also associated with another policy issue. Still, the prevalence of ethnic-/identity-based evaluations of policy options warrant ethnicity/identity to be treated as a separate group. One significant subgroup of tweets under this category criticized the preferential treatment of Syrian over Iraqi Turkmen refugees. Another interesting strand of tweets saw the inflow of Syrian refugees as a grand plan of Armenia and

the United States to subjugate Turkey. The prevalence of such ethnic concerns also suggests that competing identities within Turkey may be shaping an individual's outlook towards the issue of Syrian refugees. Reflecting on some of the most agitating reports on popular media, we decided to code concerns regarding demographic change the settling of Syrian refugees may cause as an issue separate from identity/ethnicity. While not emerging as one of the most important topic, a notable 1.2% of the tweets expressed concern about potential ethnic tensions. Most of these tweets asserted that many Sunni Syrian refugees were knowingly being settled into villages that are predominantly Alevi.

A related topic to economy, social aid turned out to be the sixth most important issue area. A brief survey of conventional media highlight the strain Syrian refugees put on education, hospitals and other public services. Our findings showed that Turkish twitters give little attention to the relationship between Syrian refugees and public services in Turkey. As a matter of fact, what very little is talked about healthcare and education take on a positive tone. The most prominent debate on social aid, however, revolved around the government's promise to transfer the Authority for Public Housing (TOKI) apartment units to Syrian refugees free of charge. Most tweets on this topic were of critical tone, often noting the difficulties Turkish military veterans have in obtaining housing from the state.

## 5. Conclusion, Tips and Warnings

In her treatise on emerging forms of text as alternatives to print, Hayles states that “nature of the medium in which [texts] are instantiated matters.”<sup>63</sup> Indeed, the nature of these media also matters for the research design scholars adopt in analyzing the text. This study presents a novel technique developed by the I-POST team at Sabancı University. The technique is easy to use, scalable and applicable to all alphabetical languages. Our brief presentation of findings from two studies establish the validity of our technique.

We argue that CLS similarity metric clustering strikes a good balance between the high-levels of upfront cost in developing a strong infrastructure for fully automated coding and the burden and unreliability of manual coding. While it reduces the burden of manual coding (up to 90%), it also allows the coders to decide this technique is especially useful in taking public thermometers in fast-moving environments where the language itself also evolves very quickly, such as Twitter.

Twitter offers large swathes of opinion data on a wide array of topics. Computer-assisted data analysis allows researchers to unlock this vast data source. However, a number of caveats should be kept in mind regarding (i) using Twitter data and (ii) employing computer-assisted data analysis techniques. This paper does not talk about techniques relating to scraping data off the internet. Another caveat relates to the homogeneity of the clusters. Our clustering mechanism matches each tweet that passes the preset threshold with the cluster header tweet. While our code guarantees each cluster-header – regular tweet pair to exceed the preset threshold within a cluster, it does not guarantee such a level of similarity for each tweet-pair within a cluster. That said, the intra-correlation among individual tweets within each cluster turned out to be quite high in our project. Such an intra-correlation test should be conducted for each project. Note that, this study is also important to give a snapshot of relative prevalence of topics in the issue space on Syrian refugees in Turkey. As such the unit

<sup>63</sup> Hayles, “Print is Flat”.

of analysis is “tweet,” and not user. While some studies have shown that voting behavior can be estimated from Twitter data reasonably well,<sup>64</sup> estimating public opinion representative of the population (à la surveys) from Twitter data falls outside of the scope of our analysis.

The effect bots (i.e. tiny scripts that post content, imitating a real person) and trolls (real people posting with the explicit aim of detracting or reframing online debates using various techniques of rhetoric) may have on the conclusions of studies using Twitter data also merit further discussion. Bots and trolls tend to neutralize, reframe and/or spin the discourse the debate on existing issues; their presence would only augment the count for issues for which the government is under criticism. Recent studies indicate that bots comprise 9-15% of Twitter users who post in English.<sup>65</sup> Assuming a similar proportion (if not less) holds for Twitter bot accounts tweeting in Turkish, the presence of such accounts is unlikely to change our substantive findings on issue prevalence presented in this study; domestic security seems to trump over all other concerns on Turkish Twitter.

Trolls and bots may be of a more serious concern for studies that correlate various aspects of tweet content, such as support for granting citizenship to Syrian refugees and attitudes towards the incumbent party. If bots and trolls are more readily employed by those favoring the incumbent party, then our sample would overrepresent the proportion of tweets that (i) are in favor of government policies, (ii) express a positive attitude towards the refugees, and/or (iii) downplay the difficulties refugee inflows have brought about in Turkish society. Therefore, the number of “pro-government” tweets would increase for topics that normally would draw criticism to the government. Then, for those who hypothesize that certain issues are mentioned more by government critics, such biases are conservative biases, that is, the presence of trolls and bots make it more difficult to derive statistically significant correlations. Our further analyses, not presented in this paper, find that tweets criticizing the issues brought about by refugee inflows tend to be critical of the government. Future studies could look at in which political issues bots and trolls are more active or identify bot and troll accounts and re-conduct analyses by removing the posts by these accounts.

A final caveat that needs to be kept in mind relates to temporal shocks to the data collection. Our four-month time window for data collection witnessed two such shocks. The first shock was the blowing up of two Syrian refugees in a dwelling in Hatay province while they were preparing explosives. This occurred within a few days of a public announcement by President Erdogan, which suggested Turkey should grant Turkish citizenship for “qualified” Syrians. The second shock was the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016, which crowded most of the tweets on Syrian refugees out from the political agenda on Turkish twitter. We argue that such temporal shocks do not necessarily threaten the validity of our findings. One could initially expect the bomb-incident to be the last straw to pour out latent resentment against the economic implications of Syrian refugee inflows to Turkey. Surprisingly, though, as President Erdogan’s “qualified labor” statement was echoed in most of the tweets after the blow-up of the bomb, the citizenship dimension—and the effect granting citizenship would have on future domestic terrorism—was recalled significantly more than the economic/unemployment dimension.

<sup>64</sup> Pablo Barberá, “Less is More? How Demographic Sample Weights Can Improve Public Opinion Estimates Based On Twitter Data” (working paper, NYU, 2016); Tumasjan, et al., “Predicting Elections”.

<sup>65</sup> Onur Varol, Emilio Ferrara, Clayton A. Davis, Filippo Menczer, and Alessandro Flammini, “Online Human–Bot Interactions: Detection, Estimation, and Characterization,” arXiv:1703.03107 (2017).

We further argue that such unexpected events allow researchers to probe further into evolution of political sentiments on Twitter. An interesting question, for instance, is whether the failed coup attempt created a rally-around-the-flag effect and allowed the government some breathing room against criticisms for its Syrian refugee policy on the internet. Scholars can also plan for scheduled events such as elections, international summits and start collecting data sufficiently before such events to gather statistically meaningful data.

A final point to note about social media messages are rich media that offer content more than text. For example, further data can be obtained from images used and/or linked to in Twitter messages by employing simple crawling and query code. One possibility could be to gather immediate Google search results as text data for each image queried. CLS metric, then, can allow clustering of these images and allow for systematic analyses based on images. Revisiting image research studies of foreign policy analysis<sup>66</sup> from a large-N analysis could render interesting results.

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<sup>66</sup> See for example Martha L. Cottam, *Foreign Policy Decision Making: The Influence of Cognition* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986); Richard K. Herrmann and Michael P. Fischerkeller, "Beyond the Enemy Image and Spiral Model: Cognitive-Strategic Research after the Cold War," *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (1995): 415–50.

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## An Application of Expected Utility Modeling and Game Theory in IR: Assessment of International Bargaining on Iran's Nuclear Program

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### Abstract

*This article provides an introduction to the theoretical underpinnings of expected utility and game theory approaches in IR studies. It goes on to explore their application to a specific research subject, international bargaining on Iran's nuclear program. In this application, the article presents forecasts about Iran's nuclear program using a game theoretic, bounded rationality model called the expected utility model (Bueno de Mesquita 2002). Three analyses were made in December 2005, September 2006 and March 2007. All three forecasts appear to be in line with real-life developments regarding the issue. The results show that Iran has been losing international support since the analyses started, and the last forecast suggests a pro-US position supported by all major international actors. Also, all three analyses suggest that Russian and Chinese support is vital to curb the Iranian nuclear program.*

**Keywords:** Expected utility theory, game theory, dynamic median voter model with coercion, forecasting, Iran, nuclear program, the Middle East

### 1. Expected Utility Model

#### 1.1. Introduction to the model

The expected utility theory was developed to explain decision-making processes under uncertain conditions. Its most basic hypothesis suggests that the expected utility of an actor facing a decision under uncertain conditions is the utility in each state discounted by the actor's estimate of the probability of each state. Developed by Von Neumann and Morgenstern<sup>1</sup>, this theory has been extensively used by social scientists studying human behavior under uncertainty.<sup>2</sup>

In the international relations literature, game theoretic analysis begins with Thomas Schelling's *The Strategy of Conflict*<sup>3</sup>. Since then, studies using such approach have burgeoned and contributed to the international relations literature.<sup>4</sup> A small sample of the important works

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<sup>1</sup> John von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern, *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1944).

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed discussion of contributions of all rational choice theories to the IR literature please see: Özgür Özdamar, "Contributions of Game Theory to International Relations Literature," [in Turkish] *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 4, Issue 15 (2007): 33–66.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).

<sup>4</sup> Michael Nicholson, "Formal Methods in International Relations," in *Millennial Reflections on International Studies*, ed. Michael Brecher and Frank P. Harvey (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

from this literature includes Ellsberg<sup>5</sup>, Russett<sup>6</sup>, Bueno de Mesquita<sup>7</sup>, Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman<sup>8</sup>, Martin<sup>9</sup> and Brams<sup>10</sup>.

There are various benefits of using this approach. The strategic approach “coupled with its explicit logic, transparency in assumptions, and reasoning and propositions has led to substantial progress in knowledge.”<sup>11</sup> Most importantly, using game-theoretic approaches to international problems increased our understanding of substantive issues such as deterrence, alliance formation, international cooperation and economic sanctions, democratic peace and conflict initiation, escalation and termination.<sup>12</sup>

Likewise, a handful of international relations theories used a combination of game theory and expected utility theory. One of the pioneers of this literature is Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. In *The War Trap*<sup>13</sup>, he develops a marginal utility theory of initiating wars. His works in this particular field of study include *Forecasting Political Events: The Future of Hong Kong*<sup>14</sup>; *European Community Decision Making: Models, Applications, and Comparisons*<sup>15</sup>; and *Predicting Politics*<sup>16</sup>. Bueno de Mesquita uses the expected utility model (EUM) to forecast the future of various international issues, ranging from the Chinese control over Hong Kong to prospects for democratization of Russia and the bargaining on taxing emissions in the EU.

The EUM has become more accepted among international relations scholars in the last decades, as its predictive power is supported by empirical evidence. In a special edition of *International Interactions*, edited by Kugler and Feng<sup>17</sup>, the model was used by leading international relations scholars on issues such as Russian political succession<sup>18</sup>, Quebec’s economic and political future<sup>19</sup>, NAFTA’s approval and implementation<sup>20</sup>, economic reform in China<sup>21</sup>, the status of Jerusalem<sup>22</sup> and the settlement in Bosnia<sup>23</sup>. The model has also been used to predict the future of various recent international issues, such as the settlement in

<sup>5</sup> Daniel Ellsberg, “Risk, Ambiguity, and the Savage Axioms,” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 77, No. 2. (1963): 336–42.

<sup>6</sup> Bruce M. Russett, “The Calculus of Deterrence,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 7, no. 2 (1963): 97–109.

<sup>7</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *The War Trap* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981. [paperback edition 1983]); Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, David Newman and Alvin Rabushka, *Forecasting Political Events: The Future of Hong Kong*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985. [paperback edition, 1988]).

<sup>8</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, *War and Reason* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> Lisa Martin, *Coercive Cooperation: Explaining Multilateral Economic Sanctions* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

<sup>10</sup> Steven Brams, *Theory of Moves* (Cambridge [England]; New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

<sup>11</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *Predicting Politics* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2002), 382.

<sup>12</sup> Game theoretic models are also used in combination with ‘rival’ cognitive approaches in the literature as well. For such study synthesizing leaders’ belief systems with bounded rationality see Özdamar, Özgür and Sercan Canbolat, “Understanding New Middle Eastern Leadership: An Operational Code Approach,” *Political Research Quarterly* (2017), doi: 10.1177/1065912917721744.

<sup>13</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *War Trap*.

<sup>14</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, Neuman and Rabushka, *Forecasting Political Events*.

<sup>15</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Frans Stokman, *European Community Decision Making: Models, Applications, and Comparisons* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).

<sup>16</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *Predicting Politics*.

<sup>17</sup> Jacek Kugler and Yi Feng, “Foreword,” *International Interactions* 23, no. 3–4 (1997): 233–34.

<sup>18</sup> Mark Andrew Abdollahian and Jacek Kugler, “Unrevealing the Ties That Divide: Russian Political Succession,” *International Interactions* 23, no. 3–4 (1997): 267–81.

<sup>19</sup> Patrick James and Michael Lusztig, “Quebec’s Economic and Political Future with North America,” *International Interactions* 23, no. 3–4 (1997): 283–98.

<sup>20</sup> Doris Andrea Fuchs, Jacek Kugler, and Harry Pachon, “Nafta: From Congressional Passage to Implementation Woes,” *International Interactions* 23, no. 3–4 (1997): 299–314.

<sup>21</sup> Yi Feng, “Economic Reforms in China: Logic and Dynamism,” *International Interactions* 23, no. 3–4 (1997): 315–32.

<sup>22</sup> A.F.K. Organski, and Ellen Lust-Okar, “The Tug of War over the Status of Jerusalem: Leaders, Strategies and Outcomes,” *International Interactions* 23, no. 3–4 (1997): 333–50.

<sup>23</sup> Francine Friedman and Ismene Gizelis, “Fighting in Bosnia: An Expected Utility Evaluation of Possible Settlements,” *International Interactions* 23, no. 3–4 (1997): 351–65.

Northern Ireland<sup>24</sup>, the political future of Afghanistan<sup>25</sup>, regional responses to the Iraq war<sup>26</sup> and the future of Iraqi and Palestinian leadership<sup>27</sup>.

This approach (i.e. the conflict approach to IR) has also proved to be more successful in making accurate predictions than some other approaches (e.g. Frans Stokman's cooperation approach) in explaining the European Community's decision-making procedures.<sup>28</sup> There has been a growing interest in applying this model to the EU's legislative decision-making that was articulated in *European Union Politics* journal's special issue edited by Stokman and Thomson.<sup>29</sup> The conclusion of the volume suggests that the overall testing of the models has shown that bargaining models (i.e. Bueno de Mesquita's conflict and Stokman's cooperation models) do much better than procedural models in generating accurate predictions of EU policy outcomes.<sup>30</sup>

Due to its proven success in making predictions in the literature, to analyze the energy security policies of the EU and US, I take the perspective outlined by Bueno de Mesquita in *European Community Decision Making*<sup>31</sup> and *Predicting Politics*<sup>32</sup> that individual decision-makers consider domestic and international repercussions they can expect to follow from their actions. This approach to understanding future policy decisions implies "to identify tools that shed light on individual incentives and on strategic maneuvers designed to alter or operate within those incentives, taking institutional constraints into account as appropriate"<sup>33</sup>. The theory states that the international system is shaped by the actors who act strategically in their relations to each other. The advantage of using this approach is that it allows taking into account both the domestic factors (e.g. political or economic actors, firms, public opinion, business and interest groups) and systemic pressures (e.g. bipolarity and multipolarity, a balance of power or preponderance of power in the hands of few, liberal or authoritarian rules and norms) that decision makers face in everyday foreign policy-making.

This approach also offers other advantages in analyzing energy security policies of nations or supranational bodies, such as the EU. It allows the researcher to test counterfactual views of foreign policy making. Moreover, game theory is specifically designed to address the logic of strategic action. That is, it captures the essence of international relations in which the actors take into account how other parties will respond to their actions. Interdependencies between states, events, individual choices and strategic maneuvering are the characteristics of energy security issues, as well as many other foreign policy decisions. Therefore, this theory is particularly well-fit to the subject matter at hand. Lastly, the literature shows that game-theoretic analyses have enjoyed considerable success in the areas of explanation and

<sup>24</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Rose McDermott, and Emily Cope. "The Expected Prospects for Peace in Northern Ireland," *International Interactions* 27, no. 2 (2001): 129–67.

<sup>25</sup> Jacek Kugler, Birol Yeşilada, and Brian Effird, "The Political Future of Afghanistan and Its Implications for Us Policy," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 20, no. 1 (2003): 43–71.

<sup>26</sup> Lewis W. Snider and Jason E. Strakes, "Modeling Middle East Security: A Formal Assessment of Regional Responses to the Iraq War," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 23 (2007): 211–26.

<sup>27</sup> Mark Abdollahian, Michael Baranek, Brian Effird, and Jacek Kugler, "Senturion: Predictive Political Simulation Model," in *Defense and Technology Paper 32* (Washington D.C.: Center for Technology and National Security Policy, National Defense University, 2006).

<sup>28</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Frans Stokman, *European Community Decision Making: Models, Applications, and Comparisons* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).

<sup>29</sup> Frans Stokman and Robert Thomson, "Winners and Losers in the European Union," *European Union Politics* 5, no. 1 (2004): 5–23.

<sup>30</sup> Stokman and Thomson, "Winners and Losers in the European Union".

<sup>31</sup> Bueno de Mesquita and Stokman, *European Community Decision Making*.

<sup>32</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *Predicting Politics*.

<sup>33</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *Predicting Politics*, 8.

prediction.<sup>34</sup>

## 1.2. Theoretical foundations of the model

The model uses Black's<sup>35</sup> median voter theorem and Bank's<sup>36</sup> theorem of the monotonicity between certain expectations in asymmetric information games and the escalation of political disputes.<sup>37</sup> These theorems are the fundamentals of the quasi-dynamic political model that facilitate the analysis of the players' decisions, such as compromise, bargain, exercising power or compel in a certain bargaining situation. Some basic assumptions of the model are outlined below.

The model assumes that the policy makers try to maximize their expected utility with regards to both policy and personal satisfaction. That is, the policy maker chooses between an alternative policy and personal outcomes. Bueno de Mesquita<sup>38</sup> suggests that there is a trade-off between policy and personal outcomes for a leader. Changing a policy position to make a deal with an adversary, for instance, might bring satisfactory political outcomes, such as the gains from the positive public image as a deal maker; however, the same move can also bring lower personal gains, i.e. the leader's support from his constituency can decrease due to the concessions given to the rivals to reach the deal. The actors in the game try to maximize their utility with respect to policy and personal satisfaction.

Another assumption of the model is that the players' information consists of what the player knows about the preceding round of bargaining and expects to happen next. The negotiation rounds run until it is calculated that the cost of continuing negotiations exceeds the anticipated benefit. At this point, the simulation ends. The predicted policy outcome is the position of the median voter in the last round of the negotiations. However, if there are veto players in the game, the outcome is the position of the veto player in the last round. The model does not always predict an agreement: If the players do not converge on an issue, the outcome does not provide an agreement.

The model combines insights from the median voter and monotonicity theorems and allows estimating and simulating the perceptions and expectations of decision makers. The forecaster software creates a game in which actors make proposals to each other in order to influence the others' policy choices. The expected utility calculations of the players give the analyst insights about whether the negotiations will continue, and if so in what direction and at what point the negotiations will end with what kind of outcome.

More specifically, the EUM forecasts an expected outcome of a policy issue (usually a foreign policy issue) "as a function of competition, confrontation, cooperation and negotiation".<sup>39</sup> The model is able to delineate possible solutions that the actors are not aware of by providing the researcher with alternative paths of strategic action that can produce different resolutions of the issue at hand.<sup>40</sup> The model is also used in the academic fields of political science, economics and sociology because of its axiomatic foundations and rigorous

<sup>34</sup> J.L. Ray and Bruce Russett, "The Future as Arbiter of Theoretical Controversies: Predictions, Explanations, and the End of the Cold War," *British Journal of Political Science* 26, no. 4 (1996): 441–70; Bueno de Mesquita, *Predicting Politics*.

<sup>35</sup> D. Black, *The Theory of Committees and Elections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958).

<sup>36</sup> J.S. Banks, "Equilibrium Behavior in Crisis Bargaining Games," *American Journal of Political Science* 34 (1990): 599–614.

<sup>37</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *Predicting Politics*.

<sup>38</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *Principles of International Politics: People's Power, Preferences and Perceptions* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2003).

<sup>39</sup> Kugler and Feng, "Foreword," 233.

<sup>40</sup> Kugler and Feng, "Foreword".

specifications of the various dimensions of the issue.

The EUM defines policy choices as a product of competition between political actors who make policy decisions. In this sense it is a non-cooperative game. The game is constructed in such a way that different actors suggest diverse policy proposals to each other to induce support – or opposition - from other players. Sometimes the actors are powerful enough to make credible proposals and to change other players' positions, sometimes they are not. In such cases the cost of trying to change the others' position may be very costly. It is assumed that the actors, in each round of bargaining, make expected utility calculations.

According to the model's logic, the bargaining rounds continue as long as the players think continuing negotiations is better – or less costly - than giving up. If a player encounters a situation in which continuing negotiations will generate more costly results, maintaining the status-quo appears to be a better alternative than making more proposals to change the other actors' positions. While engaging in bargaining, there are two basic factors that affect decision makers: estimates of the expected utility to be gained from choosing (a) alternative policy proposals, and (b) the policy satisfaction to be gained from making such a deal plus the personal cost of such a political move for the leader, as the leaders calculate how reaching such an agreement will affect their reelection or staying in power. Their decision about maintaining the status-quo or making further policy proposals results in predictable policy decisions for the issues in question or in failure to reach an agreement.<sup>41</sup>

### **1.3. The three variables: capabilities, policy position, salience**

In this section, the nuts and bolts of the EUM's functioning and the data required are presented. The model is a game in which the actors simultaneously make policy proposals to each other to influence the others' decision. Proposals are different points on the policy continuum. Players evaluate other policy proposals and they are assumed to create coalitions by shifting positions on the issue in question. The analysis is carried out by evaluating each round that players are engaged in. The rounds are played sequentially until the issue is resolved, i.e. a player or players shift position, make a deal etc.- or maintaining negotiations becomes costlier than the benefits one can achieve. In each game, each player knows three factors: (1) the potential influence (capabilities) of each actor on the issue examined; (2) the current stated policy position of each actor on each issue examined; and (3) the salience each actor associates with the issues in question. The actors do not know what each actor associates with alternative outcomes or their perception of risks and opportunities. As in many international relations games, each actor has its own perceptions about the other actors and makes its moves based on these perceptions, sometimes in error.<sup>42</sup>

A player's potential influence (capabilities) on the issue depends on how much power and resources this actor can allow on the issue concerned. If the actors are nation states, for instance, the power or potential influence of the country on the issue might not include all of the resources the country has available. It is rather the pool of resources that a country can allocate to the specific issue. However, if the issue is related to an international crisis that can lead to a full-scale war, then all the resources of the country might reflect that country's potential influence. A convenient way to determine players' potential influence is to code 100 for the most powerful stakeholder on the issue and determine the other actors' influence

<sup>41</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *Principles of International Politics*.

<sup>42</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *Principles of International Politics*.

relatively. For example, in a study conducted about the disarmament of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) using the EUM, the IRA's influence was coded as 100 while Sinn Fein and the UK Executive's capabilities were both coded as 80. Having practically no influence on the IRA's decisions, the Northern Ireland Unionist Party's influence was coded as 2.<sup>43</sup>

Second, the current stated policy position represents the actors' chosen position between policy satisfaction and personal security for that actor. Therefore, it is not the best or most preferred position for the actor nor is it the outcome that the policy maker expects to achieve. In the same study on disarmament of the IRA, the UK Executive's and opposition's policy positions were coded as 90 and 100, the latter representing the strictest position against IRA arms. Although the most preferred outcome for the UK Executive would naturally be the total disarmament of the IRA, their coded negotiation position represented a slight discrepancy from the strictest position for various reasons.

Third, the salience scores show how important the issue is to the actor. In other words, the players decide how to distribute resources across issues according to their preference.<sup>44</sup> The salience score indicates how important the particular issue is for the actor compared to other issues. Bueno de Mesquita<sup>45</sup> suggests that assigning high values of 90-100 for salience indicates an issue is of utmost importance; 50-60 would mean the issue is one among several important ones, and 10-20 stands for an issue of minor importance to the actor. To give an empirical example, in a study conducted about the preference for economic system in Afghanistan after the coalition-led overthrow of the Taliban regime, the salience was coded as 99 for Osama bin Laden while for regional actors such as Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan it was 20. The divergence between the scores show the economic system was of utmost importance for bin Laden while for some regional actors it was a minor issue.

The forecaster program requires these three values to be defined for each actor in order to run an analysis. It is strongly suggested to resort to the knowledge of area experts to determine the values for the three variables. In fact, the whole success of the model depends on reliable data gathered from area experts.

#### 1.4. Limitations

The model has limitations as well as strengths. One limitation arises from its imprecision in predicting the exact timing of the decisions made. Another problem is that there is no 'objective' data for many of the issues at hand. Because of that, the knowledge of experts about the issues of concern is required.<sup>46</sup> However, collecting the related data using expert interviews is also a challenging and cumbersome task because it requires time and funding.

The main specific difficulty related to the interviews conducted for the study presented in this article was to explain to area experts the mathematical model that they were supposed to consider while answering questions. Such an understanding is crucial because, otherwise, it is generally difficult to objectively assign values to positions analyzed in the model since the EUM model requires numerical values assigned to variables in a relative manner. Therefore, it was important to carefully explain to the area experts the principles and working of the model, and once these principles were understood, area experts were able to assign numerical

<sup>43</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, McDermott, and Cope, "The Expected Prospects for Peace in Northern Ireland".

<sup>44</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *Principles of International Politics*.

<sup>45</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *Principles of International Politics*.

<sup>46</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *Predicting Politics*.

values to the analyzed positions vis-à-vis each other in a relatively easy fashion. Hence, conducting such interviews is challenging in terms of both research-specific and general practical issues.

Moreover, creating a model to predict complex political events requires simplification, such as, the issues are assumed to be unidimensional. Such a task in turn requires a higher level of abstraction but may suffer from losing some details. This does not mean the model is not rigorous; however, it should be noted that such a model cannot be built without such a simplifying effort. Lastly, the interpretation of the timing of the results is rather an art than a science because the model does not provide a definite time frame for the estimated results.

## **2. Personal History with Respect to the EUM**

I used this theory, its methodology and software to produce short-term forecasts regarding the Iranian nuclear crisis in the 2005-2007 period. My graduate education emphasized methods training more than any other field such as IR or comparative politics. Among all quantitative methods I was most interested in game theoretical modeling due to its analytical rigor. After taking three courses in game theory, I was most interested in an approach combining game theory, expected utility theory, traditional area expertise, and agent-based modeling with computer simulations. I also considered such alternative methods as a traditional historical approach or case study method since these studies have some advantages and disadvantages. Using the traditional approaches, researchers can have more details and less abstraction in their work; however, these approaches do not have modelling's benefits of precision and simulation. Thus, I preferred the expected utility modeling and game theoretic simulation, which in contrast to the above-described methods, combines the advantages of both traditional area expertise and state-of-the-art modeling. This computerized method allows for agent-based analysis of multi-actor complex interactions, which the complex case of Iran exactly fits. Thus, while conducting research for my PhD dissertation I used this method to analyze three episodes of the Iran nuclear program in 2005, 2006 and 2007.

I was trained in game theory but not specifically for this particular method. Thus, I learned it mostly by self-study. I occasionally relied on the help of Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, the scholar who introduced this method, for advanced issues that I could not resolve myself. I believe this is a very rigorous method with sound scientific background, but it requires a background in mathematics, game theory and economics to adopt it. The main challenge I faced while using such method is that you can never acquire the copyrighted software and full information about its source code. For example, the software used for this research is called 'Dynamic Expected Utility Model' which is owned by the New York based company Decision Insights Inc. Such analysis is also performed by a second company named Sentia Group, located in California. Due to such private ownership and strict copyright rules, researchers have to rely only on the output files provided by the software.

## **3. Iran's Nuclear Program: Introduction<sup>47</sup>**

Iran is a key actor affecting the political stability of the Middle East and the global energy markets. An isolated Iran in a crisis situation regarding its nuclear program is a threat to the world's political and economic security. Given the problems the US and its allies face

<sup>47</sup> The author would like to thank Bruce Bueno de Mesquita for providing access to the Policy Forecaster © software program that is used to conduct the expected utility analyses in this paper.

in Afghanistan, Iraq and regarding the Israeli-Palestinian question during the first decade of 2000s, Iran's attitudes and actions in the region were considered to be vital.<sup>48</sup> More specifically, overthrowing the regimes in Afghanistan in 2002 and Iraq in 2003 resulted in the unintended consequence that Iran's "rivals" (Taliban, al-Kaida and Saddam Hussein) were neutralized by the US-led coalition forces. Allegedly, this situation has given Iran an opportunity to increase its influence over the region since then, boost support for terrorist groups and become an important actor in Iraqi politics by exercising influence over the Shia majority. This view has become so prevalent that Israel's bombing of Hezbollah in southern Lebanon during the summer of 2006 was perceived as a proxy war between the US and Iran.

Iran's stability is also vital for the world economy. Its vast oil and gas resources are critical for the security of the energy supply to the world markets. There are two factors that contribute to Iran's important role for global energy security: the volume of its resources and production, and its geographical position in the center of energy transport routes. Iran holds the second largest oil reserves (following Saudi Arabia with 11.4% of total), as well as gas reserves (following Russia with 15.5% of total) in the world. In 2006, Iran was the fourth largest producer of oil and natural gas in the world. As of 2007 its oil production is estimated to be at an output quota of 4.3 million barrels per day (about 5.4% of the world production), and there is more oil and gas potential that has not yet been revealed.<sup>49</sup>

Second, many see Iran as the most attractive route for Caspian oil and gas. It also has the potential to supply oil and gas to Central and Eastern Asian countries. It even controls the Hormuz Strait and thus the transportation route for a substantial amount of Middle Eastern oil resources. These political and economic concerns make the stability of Iran and the de-escalation of the conflict surrounding its nuclear program of great importance for global security today. A military operation or imposing comprehensive economic sanctions can seriously threaten the delicate political balances in the region and dramatically increase global oil and gas prices.<sup>50</sup>

#### 4. Model Application Example: Forecasting the Future of Iranian Nuclear Issue

To evaluate the dynamics of this conflict and forecast the future developments, I used the dynamic expected utility model described in the first section.<sup>51</sup> There are various benefits of using this approach. One of them is it provides analysts an opportunity to apply systematic means to evaluate alternative processes and outcomes to the issue at hand. Furthermore, the model has been extensively tested against various issues of nature in real time and its success in forecasting unknown outcomes is supported by empirical evidence.<sup>52</sup> The EUM helps in understanding which policy outcomes are likely to emerge as well as the nature of interactions, conflicts and coalitions that may emerge among the actors. An analysis of Iran's nuclear program in 2005, 2006 and 2007 based on EUM is presented in the next section.

<sup>48</sup> Nihat Ali Özcan and Özgür Özdamar, "Uneasy Neighbors: Turkish-Iranian Relations since the 1979 Islamic Revolution," *Middle East Policy* 17, no. 3 (Fall 2010): 101-17; Nihat Ali Özcan and Özgür Özdamar, "Iran's Nuclear Program and Future of US-Iranian Relations," *Middle East Policy* 16, no. 1 (2009): 121-33.

<sup>49</sup> "(The) BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2007," BP, <http://www.bp.com/productlanding.do?categoryId=6848&contentId=7033471>.

<sup>50</sup> For example, a financial analyst claimed oil price per barrel can double if Iranian oil stopped flowing altogether. Chris Isidore, "Will Iran Dispute Push Oil to \$130?," *CNN*, February 7, 2006, [http://money.cnn.com/2006/02/07/news/international/iran\\_oil/index.htm](http://money.cnn.com/2006/02/07/news/international/iran_oil/index.htm).

<sup>51</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, Newman, and Rabushka, *Forecasting Political Events*; Kugler and Feng, "Foreword".

<sup>52</sup> Stanley Feder, "Factions and Policon: New Ways to Analyze Politics," in *Inside CIA's Private World*, edited by H. Bradford Westfield (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

#### 4.1. Expert-generated data

Experts<sup>53</sup> who specialize on Iran and Middle Eastern politics were asked to identify relevant stakeholders (actors) and generate the coding of their policy positions, capabilities and salience they attach to the Iranian nuclear issue. The coding took place independently in December 2005, September 2006 and March 2007.<sup>54</sup> The experts received very detailed instructions about how to code the data.<sup>55</sup> Due to limited space, I briefly report the findings of the two earlier forecasts and then focus on the forecast from March 2007 regarding the application of the method to the case.

#### 4.2. First analysis and forecast: December 2005

The first data were collected in December 2005. At this point, the so-called EU3 countries had increased pressure on Iran to stop enrichment activities in Isfahan and not to begin enrichment at the other plants. Because the Iran-EU3 negotiations were stopped in August 2005 Russia's proposal to resolve the issue was at the center of the discussions.

The issue continuum includes three major policy positions for the stakeholders. The data were coded by an experienced analyst who has specialized on Iran for over twenty five years. All Iranian actors' positions were represented by 100, defined as "Continue developing nuclear technology that can be used to produce nuclear weapons" by the expert. On the other extreme of the continuum is Israel's position, i.e. "No uranium enrichment at all", represented by 0. China's position (85) was the closest to Iran's, owing to its close economic ties with the country. While IAEA's position was 60, rest of the actors' positions were coded as 70, which represents "Continuing transferring of nuclear technology to Iran but uranium enrichment made in Russia". After the collapse of negotiations between the EU3 and Iran, this "moderate" position was subscribed to by the US, EU, India, Pakistan, regional powers such as Saudi Arabia and Russia itself as the initiator of the proposal.

Figure 1 reveals the total and used capabilities<sup>56</sup> by positions. The first group holds the largest share of capabilities (the moderates); it includes the US, the EU3, the EU Commission, India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Russia and the IAEA. The second group includes Iranian actors, i.e. the Iranian Supreme Leader, Iranian government (President Ahmedinejad –Hawks-), the parliament (Majles) and also China. Lastly, Israel represents its position as a single actor.

<sup>53</sup> The author would like to thank Mark Gasiorowski, Arif Keskin, Sedat Önal and Nihat Ali Özcan for coding the relevant data.

<sup>54</sup> For all three sets of coding, a second expert was asked to code the relevant data in the same time period for intercoder reliability purposes. In all three simulations, the predictions with the primary and secondary coders' data did not differ.

<sup>55</sup> An important point to mention about the instructions is that the experts were asked to code the specific dynamics of the issue at the time. This way, I attempted to overcome the difficulties associated with imprecision in timing of the model. For example, in the first analysis, the expert was asked to consider the specific bargaining that was being made during the last months of 2005 over the Russian proposal to enrich uranium in Russia. This way, the model's predictions and real events that unfolded can be compared to observe the success of the forecasts.

<sup>56</sup> To analyze how the distribution of capabilities affects the bargaining for the Iranian nuclear crisis one should take the discounted power of the actors into account. This is done by comparing the actors' effective power. To observe the effective powers of the actors, the model uses a variable created by absolute powers of the actors discounted by salience attached to the issue.

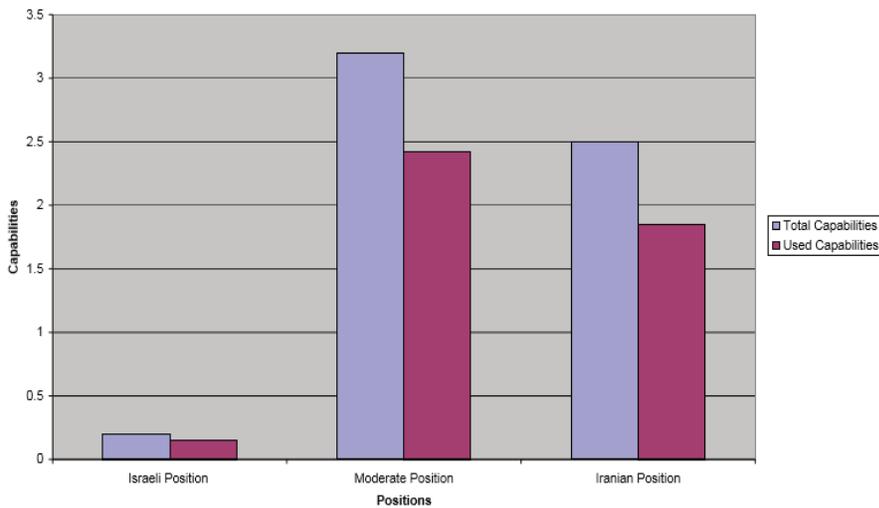


Figure 1: Total and Used Capabilities by Position (December 2005)

Figure 1 shows that the group that has the most power subscribes to the moderate position group with 55%, while the actors close to the Iranian position represent only the 42% of the total capabilities. A realist account of international politics would expect the moderate group to deter Iran from enriching uranium. However, the strategic interactions between actors result in different conclusions than one would expect by observing the mere power distribution. The more influential actors do not necessarily achieve their favorite policy in international politics, as the following discussion will illustrate.

The expected utility analysis concluded that the bargaining on Iran's nuclear program in this time period would result in an outcome that strongly favored Iran. The estimation of the model, after three simulated iterations, is 100, which is the Iranian position that favors continuing uranium enrichment. The analysis therefore indicated that Iran would not give in to international pressures and continue developing its nuclear program as it was planned, i.e. begin enrichment in other facilities. The data were received from the area expert in December 2005. At this point, the international community doubted whether the negotiations with the EU3 would resume, the deadlock would endure or whether Iran would choose to escalate the situation. In January 2006, the Iranian government declared it would restart its nuclear program. The data was finalized and the analysis completed in December 2005, before the Iranian government's decision to resume enrichment-related activity in January 2006. Although there is no hard rule about how frequently the analyses should be repeated to capture changing dynamics of an issue, the general practice is to consider a prediction valid for six months and repeat simulations afterwards. Considering the six months time frame after December 2005, this initial simulation predicted the outcome of the bargaining about Iran's nuclear program correctly.

#### 4.3. Second analysis and forecast: September 2006

The second set of data was coded by a different area expert in September 2006. The expert, a native of Iran, focuses on Middle Eastern and Iranian politics and has worked for various think tanks in the region. The rapidly changing dynamics of the issue requires collecting

data on the three variables over time. Therefore, the first analysis is updated with later data collections.

The issue continuum defined by the area expert is shown in Table 1 and 2. At the one extreme is Israel's position, which is defined as "No uranium enrichment at all" and represented by 0. The expert suggested that Israel favored strict IAEA inspections and considered military operation to be a viable option in case diplomacy did not work. The US and UK's positions (15 and 20 respectively) are the closest to Israel's, meaning that both are against uranium enrichment and weaponry technology by Iran but still favor a "diplomatic" solution if can be reached. On the other hand, after the failed negotiations with Iran between 2003-2006, the EU also changed its attitude. The expert's coding captured this change. The EU's (except the UK) position was coded as 30, which favored continuing the use of diplomacy but called for intensifying the use of economic sanctions targeting the nuclear program. The regional Arab countries' position was very close to the EU's.

Table 1- Policy Position Scale (September 2006)

Position	What it represents
0	No uranium enrichment at all; strict IAEA inspections, military solution if necessary (Israel's positions)
15	Against enrichment. Still favors diplomacy but can strike Iran if necessary. (US)
20	Against enrichment, however, does not favor military intervention for the time being. (UK)
30	Against enrichment. Favors diplomacy. Till Iran stops enrichment, push for IAEA control; use the UN sanctions specifically targeting the nuclear program. (EU)
35	Against enrichment, favors diplomacy. (Arab countries in the region)
50	Approves peaceful use of nuclear technology but against weapon grade material production. Use diplomacy. (Russia, China, Turkey, Pakistan, India)
55	Suspend uranium enrichment. Return to negotiations with the EU, take subject from the UNSC domain to the IAEA. (Rafsanjani, Khatemi group)
70	Continue with the program as it is but to prevent a regime change, may give concessions. (Supreme Leader Ali Khamanei)
90	Continue developing nuclear technology that can be used to produce nuclear weapons, withdraw from the NPT. Almost no room for concessions.

Table 2- Actor Profiles (September 2006)

Abbreviation	Actor	Resource (1-100)	Position (0-100)	Saliency (1-100)
EU	EU	70	30	65
RUS	Russia	70	50	65
US	United States	100	15	85
IS	Israel	90	0	85
CHI	China	60	50	60
IND	India	30	50	50
PAK	Pakistan	30	50	50
TUR	Turkey	30	50	55
ARB	Arab Countries in the Region (Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf Cooperation Council)	50	35	65
IAEA	IAEA	100	30	100

The largest group of countries in the simulation subscribed to a rather “compromise” solution. Represented by Russia, China, Turkey, Pakistan and India, these countries approve of the peaceful use of nuclear technology despite their resentment towards the production of weapon grade material by Iran. As a policy tool this group still favored using negotiations.

Lastly, Iran’s internal politics were represented by three groups or individuals. First, the expert suggested that despite their declined influence, an opposition group headed by former president Khatemi and Rafsanjani favors suspending the enrichment and returning to negotiations with the EU. Their aim is to take the issue from UNSC domain to an IAEA problem. On the other hand, the expert also made a distinction between the Supreme Leader Khamanei’s and hawkish groups’ (including then president Ahmedinejad’s) perspectives on the issue. By the fall of 2006, the expert claimed that Iranian internal balance of power had turned against President Ahmedinejad, and his furious comments about the nuclear program and Israel were – despite any public comments - condemned by the Mullahs. This expert suggested that the Supreme Leader supported the nuclear program, however, only up to the point that it starts threatening the survival of the Islamic regime. The Iranian hawks’ position was described as the will to continue developing nuclear technology that can be used to produce nuclear weapons and leave almost no room for concessions. Therefore, their respective positions were coded as 70 and 90.

The total and used political capabilities that can be exercised by actors on the Iranian nuclear issue are shown in Figure 2. After negotiations with the EU3 collapsed and Iran rejected the so-called Russian proposal in January 2006, we see a diversification of positions. As of December 2005, the moderate position was dominant. In the fall of 2006, we observe that the Western powers shifted to a less pro-Iranian stance. In fact, the group that has the most effective bargaining power is against uranium enrichment in Iran and considers the military option a possibility. The EU position gathers the third largest support, which is very close to the second compromise position. I believe the area expert correctly represented the changing dynamics of the bargaining: after the failure of negotiations, France and Germany subscribed to a more skeptical outlook on Iran while the US and UK began to announce that they would not allow Iran to acquire nuclear weapons capabilities and also did not rule out a military option.

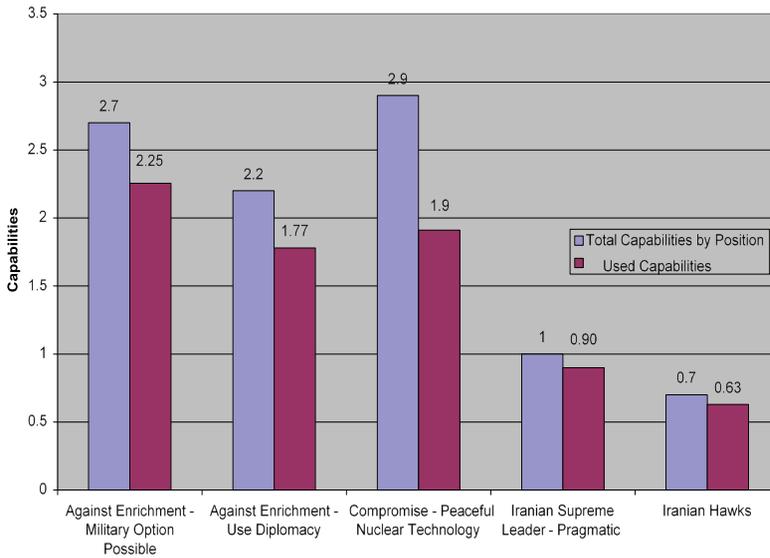


Figure 2: Total and Used Capabilities by Position (September 2006)

Figure 3 shows the simulation of political dynamics regarding the Iranian nuclear issue as of fall 2006. The rounds of bargaining are plotted on the x-axis. “Rounds” are contextually defined as time frames of a simulation in the expected utility model. The z-axis shows the policy positions of actors while the y-axis denotes the actors. One can observe how the positions of each actor and the forecast of the model changed round by round during the simulation. The forecast of the simulation was the EU position (30) at the end of the fifth round of bargaining.

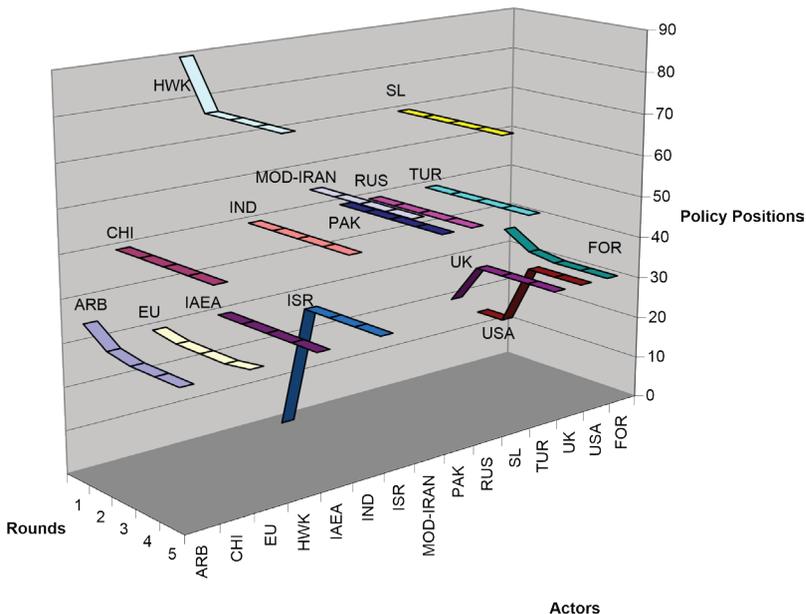


Figure 3: Political Dynamics on Iranian Nuclear Issue (September 2006)

The EU position is against enrichment taking place in Iran. This position favors using diplomacy and UN sanctions specifically targeting the Iranian nuclear program. This forecast, presented in September 2006, accurately predicted the outcome of late 2006. On December 23, a UN Security Council resolution was passed that initiated sanctions specifically targeting Iran's nuclear program. When the initial positions are reviewed, although the EU proposal bore the third largest bargaining power, it was able to draw support from the US, the UK<sup>57</sup> and Israel, which ended up in the EU's position. This reflected the nature of real bargaining that took place where countries led by France and the IAEA asserted that a "smoking gun" was not found and diplomacy and sanctions should continue as the predominant policy option.

#### 4.4. Third analysis and forecast: March 2007

The latest set of data was collected in March 2007.<sup>58</sup> The area expert, who specializes in Iranian politics and recently returned to Europe after having lived in Tehran for several years, was asked the following question: "What is the attitude of stakeholders toward the nuclear program of Iran?" The expert was asked to define the stakeholders and articulate the approaches of each actor and corresponding policy options. This means that every policy position was defined both in terms of the stakeholders' attitude toward the program and their policy preferences, such as using force to destroy the Iranian nuclear program, using economic sanctions only targeting Iran's nuclear program, using sanctions targeting the Iranian economy as a whole or allowing the peaceful use of nuclear energy in Iran.

Table 3 presents a range of attitudes stakeholders subscribe to, from the outright opposition against Iran's nuclear program to the position favoring a full nuclear fuel cycle within Iran that can be used to produce nuclear weapons. The area expert carefully determined very specific policy positions and corresponding attitudes and policy preferences numerically. The expert was asked to justify each position value and the distance between those positions during the interview. What the positions represent in terms of attitudes and policy preferences is explained in the third column of the Table 3.

<sup>57</sup> The expert preferred to code the UK separate from the EU's for it has pursued a rather independent foreign policy regarding the Middle East in the past.

<sup>58</sup> The third analysis was finished during the spring of 2007. In July, a new set of coding was completed by a different expert. The results of March and July 2007 did not differ and there was no significant development regarding the Iranian nuclear program between the two dates. Therefore I present the results of the coding from March 2007.

Table 3- Policy Position Scale (March 2007)

Position	Actor	What it actually means
0	Israel	Against uranium enrichment. Favors strict IAEA inspections. Military strike a strong option.
10	United States	Against uranium enrichment but still uses diplomacy for the time being. Will strike if diplomacy does not work.
20	EU IAEA	Against Iran's enrichment for weaponry, very limited nuclear technology. Use diplomacy, does not favor military intervention.
25	Turkey Arab Countries in the region	Against enrichment that can cause weapon development. Use diplomacy.
30	Russia	Against Iran going nuclear. Approves peaceful nuclear technology. Favors diplomacy.
40	China	Against Iran going nuclear. Approves peaceful technology. Does not want Iran being isolated because of trade.
42	India	Against Iran going nuclear. But closer to Iran due to non-aligned movement.
45	Pakistan	Against Iran going nuclear. Approves peaceful technology. Does not want Iran being isolated because of trade.
75	Khatemi	Moderate Iranian position: Favors continuing negotiations with the EU. More inclined to diplomatic resolution.
80	Rafsanjani	Moderate Iranian Position: Favors continuing negotiations and diplomacy. Depending on the deal, can find a midground.
90	Majlis	Strong but to some extent pragmatic Iranian position.
95	Supreme Leader Ali Khamanei	Strong but to some extent pragmatic Iranian position. To prevent a regime change, this Iranian actor can suspend the program.
100	Hawks: President Ahmedinejad Guardian Council	Continue developing nuclear technology that can be used to produce nuclear weapons at all costs.

Table 4- Actor Profiles

Abbreviation	Actor	Resource (1-100)	Position (0-100)	Saliency (1-100)
IS	Israel	60	0	90
US	United States	100	10	85
EU	EU	60	20	80
IAEA	IAEA	50	20	70
TUR	Turkey	10	25	70
ARB	Arab Countries	10	25	60
RUS	Russia	70	30	75
CHI	China	50	40	60
IND	India	10	42	60
PAK	Pakistan	20	45	60
KHTM	Khatemi	1	75	70
RAFS	Rafsanjani	2	80	80
MAJ	Iranian Parliament	5	90	90
SL	Supreme Leader Ali Khamanei	50	95	90
HWK	Hawks: President Ahmedinejad Guardian Council	30	100	100

The policy positions disclosed in Table 4 show a significant change in the stakeholders' attitudes towards Iran's nuclear program by March 2007. The new coding represents the changing international opinion on Iran's nuclear program and increasing skepticism about its intentions. While Israel and the US maintained their positions since 2006, we observe that the EU, IAEA, Turkey and the region's Arab actors gradually shifted to a less pro-Iranian stance on the nuclear issue. In fact, a close observation of public statements of these actors shows that the international community at this point had stronger doubts about the "peaceful" nature of the Iranian nuclear program. An even more striking change was the position shift of Russia and China. The expert who coded the data clearly stated that Russia and China were against Iran becoming a nuclear power. Although these two countries blocked sanctions against Iran during the 2003-2006 period, their attitude seems to change by late 2006 and during 2007. The most obvious indicator of this change was that Russia and China voted for the Security Council resolutions 1737 and 1747 against Iran's nuclear program in this period. This, of course, changed the balance of power against Iran.

The third expert also suggested a changing balance of power within Iranian institutions. Similar to the second expert's views, this coding also reflected a difference between Iranian Supreme Leader Khamanei's and the Iranian Hawks' positions and power. According to the experts' views, international pressure convinced the Supreme Leader that although the development of a nuclear program was Iran's right, it could be suspended to prevent regime change, while the Hawks considered maintaining the program at all costs. During the interview, the expert also mentioned that the Supreme Leader and the Mullahs did not favor Ahmedinejad's high-profile attitude about the nuclear program and considered it as a threat to the Islamic regime. The bargaining power of the Supreme Leader is significantly higher than Hawks' in the coding. Such coding reflects the institutional structure of the Iranian system, as well as the balance of influences at the time on the nuclear issue in Iran.

Figure 4 shows the dynamics of the Iranian nuclear issue in terms of the total and used capabilities variables. Although the absolute values changed, the values for the relative capabilities of actors' vis-à-vis each other remain similar to those of the September 2006 data. This shows that no actor significantly changed the resources that can be devoted to the issue. The most powerful position is still the position that considers expanded economic sanctions and military intervention as a possibility if Iran maintains enriching uranium that can be used to produce nuclear weapons. The important point, however, is that Turkey and regional Arab countries came closer to the EU's position, while the position of compromise actors (Russia, China, India and Pakistan) also moved to a less pro-Iranian stance on the issue continuum. That is, although the term "compromise" is still used for consistency, these four actors' position in 2007 was further away from Iran compared to the September 2006 coding.

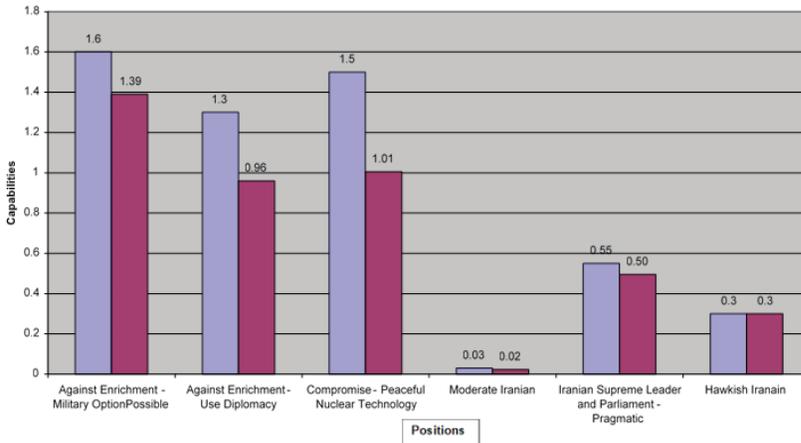


Figure 4: Total and Used Capabilities by Position (March 2007)

Figure 5 illustrates how the actors changed their positions during each bargaining round. After four rounds of bargaining, the EUM’s forecast was the US position, which is represented by 10. That is, the analysis of March 2007 concludes that the bargaining on the nuclear program of Iran was likely to end with a policy option then favored by the US. According to the definition of the expert, the US was against Iran’s then enrichment practices. In terms of policy preferences, the US still preferred diplomacy; however, if it believed the ongoing efforts would not work, it would push for wider sanctions and would not hesitate to use force against Iran’s nuclear facilities. This means, based on the data collected in March 2007, the forecast suggested the US’ position of not allowing Iran to acquire nuclear weapons capability was likely to succeed, as the real-life events also concluded in 2013 and 2015.

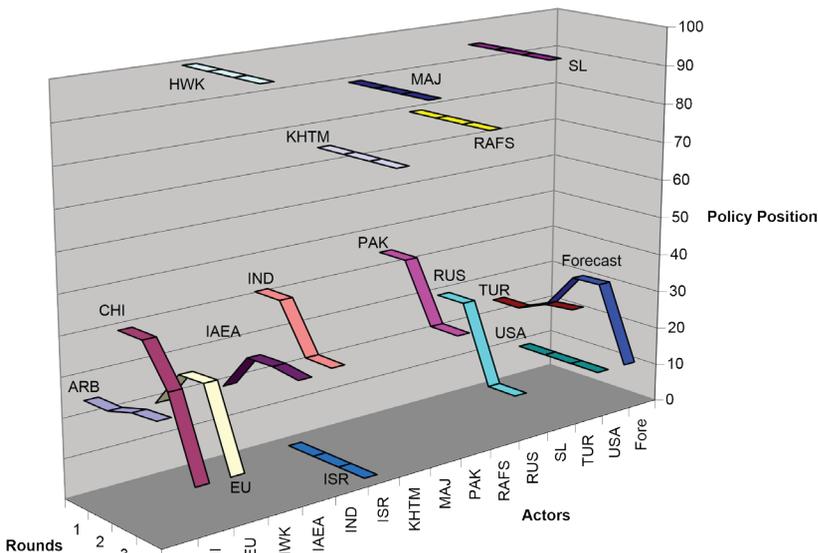


Figure 5: Political Dynamics on Iranian Nuclear Issue (March 2007)

Figure 6 shows the position shifts of Iranian and other actors during the bargaining. An analysis of these shifts is important because it gives important insights into the possible future development of the situation. According to the analysis the range of outcomes supported by Iranian actors did not change during the bargaining. No Iranian actor was compelled by other Iranian or non-Iranian stakeholders to change his position. For Iranians, the range of outcomes was stable in the 75-100 range, which means no Iranian actor considers giving in to the pressures by other international actors. For all non-Iranian stakeholders, on the other hand, the range of acceptable outcomes initially was in the 0-45 range. As the rounds progressed, this range shrunk to 0-30. Therefore, the model predicted that Iran was likely to lose even the moderate support it was receiving from actors like China, India, Pakistan and Russia. The significant discrepancy between Iranian and non-Iranian actors' positions shows that there was no middle ground the actors could agree to and that Iran was more likely to be isolated in the near future. The data and the forecasts after December 2005 also showed such a trend. Since then the range of outcomes supported by non-Iranian actors dropped from 30-70 levels to 0-30. This shows that international support and the legitimacy of Iran shrank as skepticism about Iran's intentions increased and a deadlock continued. Indeed, the crisis went on until 2013, witnessing even US threats of air strikes in 2009 and additional UN security council sanctions imposed before 2010 and showing decreasing international support to Iran.<sup>59</sup>

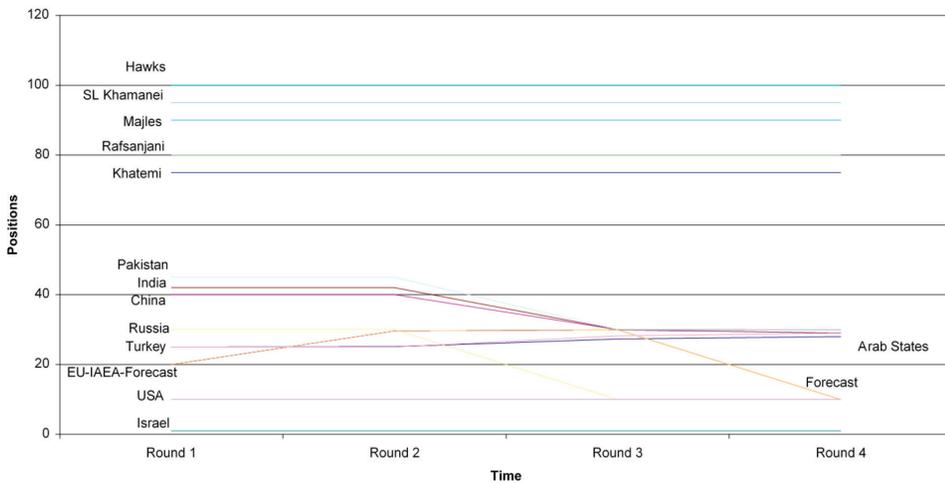


Figure 6: Stakeholders Position Shifts and Range of Outcomes Supported (March 2007) (Iranian Actors: 75-100. Rest of the Actors: 0-30)

The EUM also takes the perceptions of stakeholders into account to analyze expected relationships regarding the issue. This is accomplished by studying the relationships between each pair of stakeholders (Bueno de Mesquita 2003). That is, one can analyze how pairs of actors perceive each other's intentions, both numerically and verbally. Table 5 shows the verbal summaries of Iranian Supreme Leader's perceptions at round 4.

<sup>59</sup> "Iran Nuclear Talks: Timeline," *The Guardian*, April 2, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/02/iran-nuclear-talks-timeline>.

Table 5- Verbal Summaries of Iranian Supreme Leader's Perceptions

FocalGroup	RivalGroup	FocalView	RivalView	JointView
SL	HAWKS	+ Conflict	+ Conflict	+ Conflict
SL	MAJLES	+ Conflict	+ Conflict	+ Conflict
SL	RAFSANJANI	- Conflict	+ Conflict	- Conflict
SL	KHATEMI	- Conflict	+ Conflict	- Conflict
SL	PAKISTAN	- Conflict	+ Stalemate	+ Compromise
SL	INDIA	- Conflict	+ Stalemate	+ Compromise
SL	IAEA	- Conflict	- Stalemate	+ Compromise
SL	TURKEY	- Conflict	+ Stalemate	+ Compel
SL	ARAB	- Conflict	+ Stalemate	+ Compromise
SL	USA	- Conflict	- Stalemate	+ Compel
SL	EU	- Conflict	+ Stalemate	+ Compel
SL	RUSSIA	+ Conflict	+ Stalemate	+ Compel
SL	CHINA	+ Conflict	+ Stalemate	+ Compel
SL	ISRAEL	- Conflict	- Stalemate	+ Compel

The employed model is based on certain logical conditions regarding the inferences about the behavior of actors and the end of the bargaining. If a player believes that challenging a rival is gainful for him and also believes the rival agrees with this assessment, then the former expects the latter to either compromise or give in to coercion. A compromise occurs if the challenger's demand is greater than what the rival thinks is necessary to give. Coercion occurs if the challenger's demands appear to be a smaller utility loss for the rival than the rival expected them to be. A continuation of the status quo or stalemate occurs if a player and his rival believe making further proposals to each other will induce losses. And finally, if a player and his rival believe they will gain from challenging the other and expect to win, then conflict is expected between the parties<sup>60</sup>.

The verbal summary table is employed to study the perceptions of the actors. The third column (Focal view) presents what kind of a relation the challenger is expected to have with the rival actors listed. The fourth column shows what the challenger believes the rival thinks. In the fifth column appears what the predictive model proposes about the type of relationship that will appear as a result of the interaction when everyone acts according to these expectations.

Note that a "+" sign indicates that the focal group is expected to have an advantage while "-" indicates the rival is expected to have an advantage. "Conflict" means both actors expect to gain from challenging each other. "Compromise" means either the rival "+" or the focal group "-" is expected to shift its policy stance toward the other. "Compel" indicates either the rival "+" or the focal group "-" is expected to acquiesce by accepting the policy stance of the other player. "Stalemate" indicates the status quo will continue<sup>61</sup>.

Let us analyze the perceptions of the Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamanei at the end of the bargaining (Round 4) in the simulation based on 2007 data. In the third column (Focal

<sup>60</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *Principles of International Politics*.

<sup>61</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *Principles of International Politics*.

view), we observe that the Iranian leader's perception of his relation with all the other actors was one of conflict. That is, he perceived a conflictual relationship regarding the nuclear issue with both Iranian and non-Iranian actors. The directions of the relationship, represented by (-) and (+) signs are important to note. Ali Khamanei expected to gain from challenging all the rivals, however, according to his anticipation, the US, the EU, Israel, and other regional actors with the minus sign were expected to be advantageous in such a confrontation. The fourth column shows what the Supreme Leader believed the rival actors believe. The EUM makes an analysis of expected relationships between the actors based on these two perceptions. The last column (Joint view) denotes that. According to this analysis, if all actors make moves based on these perceptions, the model predicts the Iranian leader would "compel" in favor of the US, the EU, Israel, China, Russia and Turkey. That is the top Iranian decision maker was, at the time of analysis, expected to be forced by influential global and regional actors to give assurances about the nature of Iran's nuclear program. The most critical point is that, according to Khamanei's perceptions, the cost of challenging the rivals such as the US was still less than the benefits associated with it. However, the EUM's forecast was fairly stable in the sense that no pro-Iranian resolution to this problem could be observed in the six-months period following the analysis in 2007. The difference between a leader's perceptions and reality when making foreign policy decisions is crucial to understand seemingly "difficult to understand" decisions. This analysis shows that Khamanei still expected to gain from challenging other stakeholders although the international opinion did not favor his position anymore, just like North Korean leaders have done since the 1990s.<sup>62 63</sup>

Finally, the major position shifts by stakeholders during the bargaining can be observed in Table 6. The EUM provides a detailed account of shifts by each actor during the iterations of the game. A general overview of shifts by the most influential actors shows that the US drew support from China, the EU and Russia, which made a significant difference in the outcome. Reviewing such shifts is important to produce concrete policy prescriptions.

Table 6- Major position shifts during the simulation (March 2007).

Round	FocalGroup	Shift	OldPos	NewPos	MovedBy	OrigPos
2	CHI	-10	40	30	RUS	40
3	CHI	-20	30	10	USA RUS	40
3	EU	-20	30	10	USA	20
2	IND	-12	42	30	RUS	42
2	PAK	-15	45	30	RUS	45
2	RUS	-20	30	10	USA	30

In round 2, Russia was given a proposal to shift from 30 to 10 by the US, which turned out to be credible. The EU also received an identical proposal in round 3 which caused a shift to the US position. The significant change of the Chinese position came in the third round when the US and Russia convinced China to shift to the American position. India and Pakistan as important regional powers were also convinced to shift their positions by Russia.

The analysis showed that there was a great likelihood that Russia and the EU could be

<sup>62</sup> Patrick James and Özgür Özdamar, *The United States and North Korea: Avoiding a Worst-Case Scenario*, ed. Ralph Carter (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2004); Bueno de Mesquita, *Principles of International Politics*.

<sup>63</sup> Bueno de Mesquita, *Principles of International Politics*.

convinced by the United States to move to a more pro-American position at the time of the analysis during 2007. Such a move could have two significant effects on US policy. First, two of the most influential actors in world politics would join the pro-American camp on the nuclear issue. Second, the analysis showed Russia could make a significant difference in terms of drawing support from non-western powers such as China, India and Pakistan. In rounds two and three, Russian credible proposals caused significant position shifts by those three actors towards the American position.

### 5. Advanced Methodological Features of the EUM: Simulations and Alternative Scenarios

A major advantage of using EUM is that researchers can create alternative future and historical scenarios to analyze different paths to the actual events. Simulations can be designed to model possible changes in stakeholders' attitudes that cannot be foreseen at the time. This can be done by simulating any combination of the three variables. To create alternative future scenarios regarding the Iranian nuclear program, I ran more than thirty alternative simulations where stakeholders changed their initial positions while the resources and salience variables remained the same. As discussed above, these simulations were made to predict the six months following the coding and analysis in March 2007.

Table 7 presents fifteen of those scenarios that produced some interesting results. These simulations produce important insights for policy makers dealing with the Iranian nuclear program as they create alternative resolutions to the problem. Using scenarios is necessary because researchers and area experts may not always be aware of all the inputs that influence the real policy-makers, as well as unforeseen events (such as external shocks) that may change the actors' attitudes and so the course of history; the simulations can help therefore in covering the consequences of such unknown changes and events.

Table 7- Summary of the Alternative Scenarios Simulations

Simulation Number	Simulated Actor(s)	Change Towards	Original Position(s)	Simulated Position(s)	New Prediction	Effect
1	Russia	Pro-Iran	30	60	40	Significant towards Iranian position
2	Russia	Pro-Iran	30	70	88	Very significant towards Iranian position
3	Russia	Pro-Iran	30	80	67	Significant towards Iranian position
4	Russia	Pro-West	30	20	10	Not significant
5	Russia	Pro-West	30	10	10	Not significant
6	China	Pro-Iran	30	70	10	Not significant
7	China	Pro-Iran	30	80	77	Very significant towards Iranian position
8	China	Pro-West	30	20	10	Not significant
9	Russia and China	Pro-Iran	30-30	55-55	90	Very significant towards Iranian position
10	Russia and China	Pro-Iran	30-30	75-75	77	Very significant towards Iranian position
11	Russia and China	Pro-West	30-30	20-20	10	Not significant
12	EU	Pro-Iran	20	75	87	Very significant towards Iranian position

13	EU-Russia-China	Pro-Iran	20-30-30	50-50-50	49	Significant towards middle position
14	Khamanei	Middle Position	95	50	29	Significant towards middle position
15	Khamanei-Hawks-Majles-Rafsanjani-Hatemi	Middle Position	95-100-90-80-75	50-50-50-50-50	10	Not significant

Table 7 illustrates possible position changes by the most influential actors. In all three forecasts, a careful review of hundreds of pages of output by the EUM showed that there were three most influential actors causing change in the outcome of the bargaining: China, the EU and Russia. The United States and Iranian actors also brought about changes; however, because their stances on the issue seemed fairly constant, I focused on simulating the other three actors' positions that might cause a change.

The first five simulations reproduced the Russian position. Russia has a traditionally large influence on world affairs as a former superpower and even more on the regional affairs concerning it. Considering the Russian-Iranian trade relations and including nuclear technology, Russia's effect becomes even more important to consider. The third column represents the change of position towards a pro-Iranian, pro-Western or middle stance; the fourth and fifth columns show the actor's original and simulated initial positions respectively. The sixth column shows the model's new prediction while the last one briefly illustrates the size of the effect. The first three simulations move Russia to a more pro-Iranian position.<sup>64</sup> These three simulations show that if Russia can be convinced by Iran to move to a more pro-Iranian position, the bargaining is likely to end in a position favoring Iran. Especially when the Russian support is at 70, the forecast is 88, which is fairly pro-Iranian. This shows that, for western actors, Russian support in dealing with the Iranian nuclear program is vital to achieve favorable results. For American and European policy-makers, Russian support is necessary in Middle Eastern, Caucasian and Eastern European affairs and challenging it may bring more losses than benefits. On the other hand, when the Russian position is shifted towards more western positions, there is no significant change in the outcome. That is, the current levels of Russian support in dealing with Iran must be maintained and the western actors should encourage Russia to eschew positions more supportive of Iran.

China has also been one of the most influential actors, however its effect did not appear to be as large as Russia's during our three analyses. Only after the Chinese position becomes significantly pro-Iranian does the model's prediction change towards the Iranian position. Simulation number 7 shows that if China becomes fairly pro-Iranian (i.e. its initial position is 80), the model's prediction is 77.

What could be the effects of a Sino-Russian alliance on the Iranian nuclear issue? Such a scenario is not a remote possibility. In fact, it is frequently argued that China and Russia currently attempt to balance the American domination in world politics. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a mutual security setting where Russia and China are founding members and Iran is an observer, is suspected to reach this aim. In fact, during the 2003-2006 period, Chinese and Russian policy makers prevented a UNSC resolution against

<sup>64</sup> Note that only Russian positions simulated to 60, 70 and 80 are presented here. Positions less than 60 are also simulated but they did not bring real change in the outcome and are not represented here due to space limits. The same procedure is applied for all other stakeholders; i.e. although more simulations were run only those produced significant changes are presented here.

Iran. What if Russia and China decide to protect Iran from western pressure and isolation? Simulations 9 and 10 show that the combined effect of a Sino-Russian coalition may prove supportive for Iran in breaking isolation and maintaining its nuclear program. If China and Russia move a little more to the so-called moderate position (i.e. 50) then the forecast of the model is a strongly pro-Iranian outcome (i.e. 90). This possibility sent a warning message to policy-makers back in 2007: If Russia and China shift to a so-called moderate position that allows transferring nuclear technology to Iran for peaceful purposes, it is likely that Iran will achieve the time and room for maneuvering that is necessary to acquire nuclear weapons production capabilities. The real-life developments that took place in 2015 also confirmed the significance of these simulations. Only after Russia and China agreed with the other Western powers (P5+1) in 2015 and applied pressure on Iran was there a resolution to the issue.

Simulating the EU's position did not produce significant changes. Only when the EU adopts a significantly pro-Iranian position (Simulation 12), which is difficult to expect in real-life politics, do the forecasts produce a pro-Iranian result. Simulation 13 shows a different situation. In this scenario all three influential actors shift to a moderate position (50). This is a possible scenario if China, the EU and Russia aim to balance the US' policies in the Middle East, like in the case of the Iraq War in 2003. The prediction of the model in such a scenario centers around the moderate position. That shows if Iran can convince these three actors that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, there is a great chance that under the condition of allowing thorough inspections, its nuclear program can be maintained.

Finally, the Iranian Supreme Leader's and all Iranian actors' positions are simulated in simulations 14 and 15 respectively. The first alternative scenario demonstrates if the Supreme Leader adopts a middle position then the Iranian nuclear program loses ground. The model predicts the initial Russian position (30) in March 2007 that suggests maintaining the Iranian nuclear program with very strict inspections to prevent weapon grade material production. In a not-so-likely scenario in which all Iranian actors support a moderate position (50), the model predicts a pro-US position as a resolution. This reflects the unfortunate nature of real-life politics for Iranians: if they aim to cooperate with Western forces and adopt a moderate position, there is a great possibility that eventually Iran will lose control over its nuclear program and will have to give in to western demands. Perhaps this explains why the Iranian Supreme Leader and Hawks have adopted a non-cooperating position since the beginning of the bargaining.

To sum up, in 2007 I concluded that Russia's and China's support was a must if the US, European and regional policy-makers want to achieve favorable results such as preventing Iran from going nuclear. In 2007 this analysis concluded: 'without the support from these two important powers, it will be more than challenging for the US and the EU to create multilateral initiatives to deal with the Iranian nuclear program'. This conclusion was supported by real life developments such as the nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1, which was concluded with the active involvement of Russia and China in the P5+1 block against Iran's gaining nuclear weapons capabilities.

Thus, the analyses from 2005 to 2007 showed that the stakeholders' interests regarding the Iranian nuclear issue were not likely to be reconciled in the short run and the only options for a resolution from the US perspective included economic, political or military coercion. In the following years, the world indeed witnessed further escalation of the crisis and expansion of unilateral and multilateral sanctions. The relative de-escalation started only after the 2013

initiation of secretive talks between the P5+1 countries and Iran and continued until 2015 when a nuclear deal was reached.<sup>65</sup> However, the latter developments occurred only after some important actors as well as political settings on both the US and Iranian sides were changed

## 6. Concluding Remarks

A major advantage of using this model for international conflict issues is that it allows for analysis of strategic moves by actors. An examination of such moves can lead to important policy recommendations. This simulation concludes, for example, that getting the support of Russia and China are the most crucial steps in dealing with Iran's nuclear program, thus demonstrating the importance of a multilateral approach to the issue of Iran's nuclear program. Iran could probably not resist extreme international isolation in the event that Russia and China join the US and the EU. But when the EU and the US are balanced by Russia and China, Iran's bargaining power increases.

One shortcoming of the model is its imprecision in predicting the exact timing of the decisions made. Also, the model does not provide any information on how long this outcome will be stable. Therefore, many studies using this model have repeated their simulations over time with new data (preferably every six months) to control for changes in the bargaining conditions and external shocks, or they have developed alternative (counterfactual) scenarios.<sup>66</sup>

The state of graduate methods training in IR field in Turkey is, sadly, rather embarrassing. Most PhD programs do not offer basic methods seminars. I believe high quality scholarship can only be produced if scholars test explicitly stated hypotheses with replicable methods and original data in either qualitative or quantitative manner. In the long-run, we, as the Turkish IR community, have to resolve this issue by introducing basic and advanced methods training for the next generation of researchers. In the short-run, for current students, I suggest they reach out to 'sister disciplines' such as economics, psychology or sociology and take their methods training during their graduate studies as a quick solution to this problem. All three disciplines offer more advanced methods training than do IR or political science. The methodological skills gained in these courses will help students significantly in their projects.

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<sup>65</sup> "Iran Nuclear Talks: Timeline".

<sup>66</sup> Organski and Lust-Okar, "The Tug of War over the Status of Jerusalem"; Fuchs, Kugler and Pachon, "Nafta: From Congressional Passage to Implementation Woes"; Kugler, Yeşilada, and Efirid, "The Political Future of Afghanistan and Its Implications for Us Policy".

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## System Dynamics Modeling in International Relations

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### Abstract

*This article provides an introduction to system dynamics modeling with a particular focus on the use of system dynamics models in political science and international relations. A system dynamics approach offers an alternative to traditional qualitative and quantitative methods by providing a dynamic and endogenous point of view, which allows for understanding the dynamic interactions between variables and making short- and long-term projections for alternative policy choices. This approach is particularly useful to tackle the complex problems of contemporary politics, in which the solutions require combining the insights from different disciplines. Applications of a system dynamics approach in the social sciences cover a broad spectrum, from war initiation and termination to social inequality, from demographics to human development and democratization. This article starts by presenting the brief history of system dynamics models and their use in social sciences, and comparing a system dynamics approach to traditional qualitative and quantitative research methods by discussing the advantages and disadvantages of each one. This discussion is followed by the explanation of the essential components of system dynamics models. Finally, the article provides several applications from international relations via developing models of arms races and spread of intrastate conflicts.*

**Keywords:** Quantitative methods, modeling, arms races, intrastate conflict

### 1. Introduction

With the proliferation of inexpensive computing power, the role of modeling and simulations in social science has been growing at a dramatic pace. The increasingly complex dynamic problems of contemporary world politics require increasingly complex and dynamic (re) actions and solutions. System dynamics modeling provides a useful tool to tackle the intricate problems that the world faces today.

The system dynamics approach is different from traditional quantitative methods. Traditional statistical methods often define the dependent variable as a function of several independent variables and test the relationship between these variables using data. These models can demonstrate statistical correlations and enable us to make short-term forecasts based on non-causal correlational relationships. The system dynamics approach, on the other hand, is based merely on causal relations. Through understanding the causal mechanisms, the system dynamics approach provides us a tool to understand and manipulate dynamic problems. For this reason, traditional stochastic or econometric models of political

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phenomena are being supplemented more and more by dynamic simulation methods drawn from multidisciplinary perspectives.

Let's start the examination of system dynamics models by defining what a system is and discussing the benefits of using a system dynamics approach rather than more traditional approaches. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a system is "a set of things working together as parts of a mechanism or an interconnecting network; a complex whole."<sup>1</sup> System dynamics studies the dynamics of the systems and interconnection of their pieces.

Many questions in political science and international relations can be explained using a system dynamics approach. Elements of politics and international relations affect each other. For an illustration, consider the politics of the international monetary system. An interest rate hike by one country, especially if that country is one of the major economies such as the United States, causes a chain reaction in the exchange rates and interest rates of all other countries. This, in return, affects the balance of payments of countries, production, domestic and international winning coalitions, and so on. Thus, we know that all the different aspects of international politics influence each other. There are some aspects within the system that are endogenous, that is, the internal structure of the system directly causes them. Thus, we may be able to change or manipulate these endogenous elements to influence the outcome. There are also some aspects that are exogenous, or outside the system. The system dynamics approach models these endogenous and exogenous relations and analyzes the interrelationship and feedback mechanisms between different factors. System dynamics modeling takes the principles of physics and engineering and applies them to various other disciplines including social and administrative sciences as well as business management, demography, education and healthcare, energy and environmental policy, medical sciences, public policy, urban planning, and many other disciplines.

Why do we need system dynamics and systems thinking? To answer this question, we can focus on the classic argument that we live in a world that is rapidly changing. Things are accelerating, and relationships are becoming increasingly complex. Although this is true and systems thinking helps us survive and thrive in this complex world, there are other contributions of the system dynamics approach to the academic and policy worlds. In spite of the many new analytical tools and advanced methods that we have, we see that many policies that we implement are either failing or are creating unexpected side effects or adverse consequences. System dynamics models are particularly useful in these settings. Without a systems perspective, there is a higher likelihood of breaking or damaging one thing while trying to fix or improve another. Using the system dynamics approach, we can see the relationships clearly and become better problem solvers in a complex environment. Understanding the system that underlies the patterns that underlie the events we see from above allows us to solve problems and manipulate policies at each level.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The System Dynamics Approach

System dynamics is a computer-aided approach to policy analysis and design. It applies to dynamic problems arising in complex social, managerial, economic, or ecological systems

<sup>1</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. "system," accessed May 20, 2018, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/system>.

<sup>2</sup> Nigel Gilbert and Klaus G. Troitzsch, *Simulation for the Social Scientist* (Second Edition) (Berkshire: Open University Press, 2005).

-- literally to any dynamic system characterized by interdependence, mutual interaction, information feedback, and circular causality. It can be related to and combined with formal models, like game theory, and extended to agent-based and computational models such as knowledge-based systems and machine learning.

The history of the system dynamics approach in social and political research is parallel to the history of research involving nonlinearity. It is hard to point to an exact date of origin, but significant contributions started to be made in the 1950s and 1960s by mathematical sociologists like Herbert Simon<sup>3</sup> and James Coleman,<sup>4</sup> and computer scientists like Jay W. Forrester.<sup>5</sup> The use of dynamic models in the social sciences accelerated with advances in mathematics, the broader application of these models in related fields such as population biology,<sup>6</sup> and the increased availability of data and computers.<sup>7</sup>

Continually increasing computing power and the ready availability of computers has allowed the social sciences, like the physical sciences, to employ more complex and technical research designs. We see an increase in the number of quantitative studies in social sciences especially during and after the 1970s.<sup>8</sup> However, the majority of the earlier (and current) social and political science theories and models employ a linear, and sometimes even a binary, approach.

The “hegemony of linear models” in political science is the result of a path-dependent trend caused by the historical dominance of linear models and the way social science data are collected. Consequently, the sociological imprint of linear models in the social sciences is still significant.<sup>9</sup> Linear models have been dominant in political science research, especially in quantitative studies, because the researchers historically have been constrained by their mathematical skills and the prevalent technology of their time. In the 1970s, when empirical social science became widespread, linear algebra was state of the art. Nevertheless, linear models are algebraically easier and more manageable than nonlinear, complex models. Moreover, between the 1960s and 80s, computers, which greatly assist in solving these complex models, had extremely limited computational abilities and were difficult to be accessed by most researchers. Therefore, social scientists had to be restricted to using the basic linear model, which provided a sufficient explanatory power. Also, calculating the main parameters (i.e., slopes) of the linear model was easy, and even slow computers could estimate these parameters quickly using relatively simple computer codes.

The second reason linear models are still dominant in political science is related to the way social and political science data are collected and structured. One issue with the data is that only a small number of the existing datasets have a sufficiently long range to allow for observing nonlinear trends. Except for some measures, many datasets that are frequently used do not extend back before the 1990s or 1980s.<sup>10</sup> Considering the slow-changing nature

<sup>3</sup> Herbert A. Simon, *Models of Man: Social and Rational* (New York: Wiley, 1957).

<sup>4</sup> James S. Coleman, *Introduction to Mathematical Sociology* (New York: Free Press, 1964).

<sup>5</sup> Jay W. Forrester, “Industrial Dynamics: A Major Breakthrough for Decision Makers,” *Harvard Business Review* 36, no. 4 (1958): 37–66.

<sup>6</sup> Despite population biology may at first sound irrelevant to social sciences, its main concern, the interaction of various life forms within an existing ecosystem, can be easily extended and implemented in social and political theories.

<sup>7</sup> Courtney Brown, *Serpents in the Sand: Essays on the Nonlinear Nature of Politics and Human Destiny* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995).

<sup>8</sup> Gary Goertz and James Mahoney, *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> Brown, *Serpents in the Sand*.

<sup>10</sup> Moreover, measures that range back over 50–100 years are mainly cruder ones such as Polity (which measures regime type or the level of democracy). More elaborate measures require more detailed components, which are not available for collection.

of many political and social phenomena, one would need a much longer temporal dimension to assess the nonlinear dynamics. The second issue with the data is that most data are collected in a focused and isolated way. Thus, datasets often do not provide information about the environment and the social context within which the data is formed. For instance, most surveys only inquire about some basic demographic information but fail to provide information about the local, national, or the global context. However, to be able to evaluate the dynamics accurately, we would need to have information regarding how our level of analysis interacts with the context with which it is involved.

Despite the fact that we often use linear models, hardly ever anything in the universe or political science is actually completely linear. Thus, statistics, regression analysis, and econometrics are inherently biased as we regularly measure nonlinear continuous time processes at two points, difference the variables, and evaluate a model/coefficient fit based upon it.

Another alternative to using linear models (and system dynamics modeling) is to use traditional qualitative techniques. Qualitative research provides a detailed description of events and cases of interest and presents a vibrant and holistic picture that focuses on naturally occurring events in their natural settings and allows for the study of processes, of how and why things happen the way they do. Since the subject of interest is studied in detail, influences of context are not stripped away. Therefore, tests of causality and chronological flow can be carried out. These characteristics alleviate the problems of linear models and capture the nonlinear nature of events. Moreover, the holistic approach of qualitative research can generate unexpected, unforeseen findings and new integrations and interpretations.

However, there are several downsides of qualitative research. Conducting qualitative studies is generally time-consuming and labor intensive. The detailed and holistic approach requires digesting an overload of data by the researcher, which makes the quality of the research dependent on a researcher's attributes and skills and might inject subjectivity in the analysis. Moreover, since qualitative studies generally focus on a small sample of cases, they are often unable to aggregate data and make systematic comparisons, which cause these studies to lack generalizability. In addition, since precise definitions of the concepts analyzed need not be provided, issues of reliability and validity emerge, which might bring doubts on the credibility and quality of findings.

System dynamics modeling incorporates some of the advantages of qualitative and linear quantitative models and ameliorates most of their disadvantages. In systems dynamic modeling, the concepts are precisely defined so that the communication among scholars is unambiguous. The assumptions are clear so that the limitations of the models are apparent. The logical structure of the models provides an extensive guide for making formal deductions. System dynamics models alleviate the linearity constraint by taking into account the linear or nonlinear continuous path for each variable. Moreover, through system dynamics, we can talk about and analyze the evolution of various variables together in a system that we are interested in as well as the evolution of the system itself. The ability to evaluate the dynamics of a set of variables is especially convenient when anticipating the changes is useful in a puzzlingly complex system with very scarce data. We can easily create a deterministic model to represent a system and introduce uncertainty by using stochastic differential equations or running Monte Carlo Simulations. In this regard, although a system dynamics model is built to represent the reality, it is not constrained by reality. This characteristic makes

system dynamics models beneficial for theory development and enables them to study rare-occurring events, such as the spread of civil war into another civil war. It also grants some generalizability to the models and allows for simulating different scenarios, providing clear implications for policy actions.

Undoubtedly, system dynamics models are still models, and thus are simplifications of the reality. “All models are wrong.” Only the reality is the reality, and any model that we develop will be a limited, imperfect representation. A model’s accuracy and its predictive power highly depend on its assumptions. If we start modeling with inappropriate assumptions, the results of our model will be invalid. Given its highly deductive structure, system dynamics models provide high internal and low external validity. Also, given the nature of complex models, it is challenging to test the process validity. Finally, the advantage of the versatility of system dynamics models can turn into a disadvantage if we start building “garbage in, garbage out” models with little theoretical basis and scientific value. A system dynamics model can become very complex when lots of factors and variables are modeled. In these cases, using different simulation techniques, such as Agent-Based Models (ABMs) can provide better results, although ABMs also suffer from the weaknesses above.

Any issue or question that includes emergence and a long-term equilibrium can be analyzed using system dynamics modeling. Most social processes fit this description. In comparison with linear methods, system dynamics modeling has a superior ability to represent the dynamic aspects of change. Thus, one can benefit from system dynamics modeling when studying almost any social science question. With the increasing availability of more extended time-series data that incorporates more extensive information, coupled with the advancing technical and computational capabilities of the researchers, the utilization of dynamic models will likely be more frequent in social sciences.

The approach begins with defining problems dynamically, proceeds through mapping and modeling stages, to steps for building confidence in the model, and its policy implications. After identifying the problems, one should advance to the modeling and simulation stages. Mathematically, the basic structure of a formal system dynamics model is a system of coupled, nonlinear, first (or higher) order differential (or integral) equations. Simulation of such systems is easily accomplished by partitioning simulated time into discrete intervals of length  $d_t$  and stepping the system through time one  $d_t$  at a time.

Here, let’s consider what a system is and why we are using a system of equations rather than using a single equation. A system is a set of interrelated, interacting, or interdependent components.<sup>11</sup> The system is essentially a conceptual construction. Yet, there are some common properties of each system. Systems are hierarchical structures. They can include sub-systems or different levels (integrations). The components (variables) of the system demonstrate different and distinct behavior over time as they interact with each other.

Since we are interested in how interrelated actors or variables within the system behave and the evolution of their behavior together in a system, we often define systems as a set of equations. Using a set of equations signifies that we are not limited by the single equation or linear logic of traditional statistics. This also means that we do not have to misrepresent the deductions of the social theory due to algebraic requirements of statistical models.<sup>12</sup> We are interested in explaining and predicting the complex, interactive behavior of different

<sup>11</sup> Brown, *Serpents in the Sand*.

<sup>12</sup> Brown, *Serpents in the Sand*.

elements of our theory, so a system captures these types of phenomena. Moreover, solving a single equation requires the same tools as solving a set of equations. All we do is write nonlinear system in terms of derivative and then solve numerically, with some approximation technique – Euler, 4<sup>th</sup> order Runge-Kutta, Bursch-Stoller, etc.

Another property of systems is that they can be symmetric or asymmetric. A symmetric system consists of equations with the same algebraic structure. An asymmetric system includes equations with different algebraic structures. Whether a system is symmetric or asymmetric has no implications for the generalizability or theoretical value of the models. Despite the majority of the social science questions involve asymmetric systems, symmetric systems can generate unexpected and novel results as well.

Overall, several principal notions characterize the system dynamics approach.<sup>13</sup> First, dynamic thinking is at the center of system dynamics models. System dynamics approach examines concepts over time, which enables the analysis of their evolution. The system dynamics approach emphasizes a continuous view. The continuous view strives to look beyond events to see the dynamic patterns underlying them. Moreover, the continuous view focuses not on discrete decisions but the policy structure underlying decisions. Events and decisions are seen as surface phenomena that ride on an underlying tide of system structure and behavior. Thus, the behavior of actors and factors are a consequence of the structure of the system. The most common way of demonstrating the dynamic and continuous aspects of the variables is to use time series graphs.<sup>14</sup>

Second, stocks (levels) and the flows (rates) that affect the stocks are essential components of the system structure. That is, the models focus on the initial level and growth or decrease over time. Stocks (accumulations, state variables) are the memory of a dynamic system, and flows (positive or negative accumulations and their rates of change) are the sources of its disequilibrium and dynamic behavior.

Third, system dynamics thinking accentuates causation rather than correlation. In the system dynamics thinking, we are interested in the effect of one variable on the other variable. This effect, or the causation, is demonstrated using causal diagrams. In a causal diagram, arrows going from one variable to the other indicate the causal influence of one variable on the other variable. The positive and negative signs that are placed next to the arrows indicate a positive or a negative relationship (not addition and subtraction).

Fourth, conceptually, feedback and feedback loops are at the heart of the system dynamics approach. Feedback loops form (or exist) when decisions change the state of the system, which consequently changes the structure and information that affect future decisions.<sup>15</sup> Thus, it entails a back and forth exchange between the components (or the actors) of the system, causing the conditions and information that influence future actions to change. Consequently, the feedback loop implies circular causality.<sup>16</sup> Diagrams of loops of information feedback and circular causality are tools for conceptualizing the structure of a complex system and for communicating model-based insights. The loop concept underlying feedback and circular

<sup>13</sup> George P. Richardson and David F. Andersen, "Systems Thinking, Mapping, and Modeling in Group Decision and Negotiation," in *Handbook of Group Decision and Negotiation*, ed. D. Marc Kilgour and Colin Eden (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> Susan Howick et al., "Linking Event Thinking with Structural Thinking: Methods to Improve Client Value in Projects," *System Dynamics Review* 22, no. 2 (2006): 113–40.

<sup>15</sup> Yu-Che Chen and Michael J. Ahn, *Routledge Handbook on Information Technology in Government* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>16</sup> George P. Richardson, *Feedback Thought in Social Science and Systems Theory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991).

causality by itself is not enough, however. The explanatory power and insightfulness of feedback understanding also rests on the notions of active structure and loop dominance, which enable the user to derive nonlinear results. There are two types of feedback loops. Reinforcing loops cause infinite growth whereas balancing loops try to move the variable into the desired state.

Lastly, a system dynamics approach involves endogenous thinking and reckons system as the cause. It provides an endogenous point of view. The concept of endogenous change is fundamental to the system dynamics approach. It dictates aspects of model formulation: exogenous disturbances are seen at most as triggers of system behavior; the causes are contained within the structure of the system itself. So, the endogenous aspect of the system emerges from the notion of feedback.<sup>17</sup> According to the endogenous point of view, the root causes of an issue are not considered as exogenous forces appearing from outside. Instead, these causes are connected to the system using feedback loops, which endogenizes the sources of system behavior.

A system and the variables within the system can behave in several general ways. If a variable keeps increasing or growing over time, it means that it is demonstrating growth behavior. The growth behavior is observed when the positive, or reinforcing, feedback loop is consistently dominant. This growth can be linear or exponential, based on the magnitude of the impact of the feedback loop (yet, exponential growth is a more common pattern). Note that even when a variable is demonstrating growth behavior, there can still be multiple feedback loops affecting the variable, some positively and some negatively. If the variable shows growth behavior despite the presence of multiple feedback loops, which affect the variable on opposite directions, this means that the positive feedback loops are the dominant ones. The decay behavior has almost identical characteristics to the growth behavior. In the decay behavior, positive feedback loops are replaced with negative, balancing, feedback loops. The main difference is that there is often an implicit goal of zero, and the time it takes for the system to reach zero is called its half-life.

Another pattern of behavior is the goal seeking one. If a variable demonstrates goal seeking behavior, it means that it approaches a stable equilibrium over time. The goal seeking behavior is observed when the balancing feedback loop is dominant. In the real world and particularly in social systems, the system hardly ever reaches its goal of equilibrium, because random shocks happen frequently. For example, economic theory states that prices arrive at an equilibrium where supply and demand meet in a free market economy. However, in the real world, prices are not stable. They move around the equilibrium price. In a political-economic context, we can think about the goal-seeking behavior as inflation targeting.<sup>18</sup> Although the central bank sets a target inflation level, that target is rarely reached due to price shocks.

Oscillating behavior is another general behavior pattern observed in dynamic systems. It is typically caused by a balancing feedback with delays. This delay causes the rate of change of the system to be zero when the system moves from an increasing trend to a decreasing trend or a decreasing trend to an increasing trend. When this transition happens, there is a period of stock between two or more flows.<sup>19</sup> Based on the structure of the system, the

<sup>17</sup> Jay W. Forrester, "Market Growth as Influenced by Capital Investment," *Industrial Management Review* 9, no. 2 (1968): 83–105.

<sup>18</sup> Ben S. Bernanke and Frederic S. Mishkin, "Inflation Targeting: A New Framework for Monetary Policy?," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 11, no. 2 (1997): 97–116.

<sup>19</sup> Craig W Kirkwood, *System Dynamics Methods: A Quick Introduction* (College of Business Arizona State University, 1998).

oscillations are expected to diminish and reach equilibrium or increase in size and frequency. A social science example is the demographic consequences of the conflict. Major wars often cause youth bulges as a result of the disturbance they cause in the birth and death rates.<sup>20 21</sup> It takes generations until the effect of conflict diminishes. These youth bulges have long-term economic and social effects, increasing the likelihood of long-term conflict.<sup>22</sup>

The last type of general behavior is the S-Curve or the limited growth. In a limited growth system, the magnitude of the effect of positive and negative feedback loops might be in near parity, or where the dominant loop changes over time. Yet, this might still result in a long-run equilibrium. Limited growth systems often start with the dominance of the positive feedback, which causes the system variable to increase exponentially. However, over time as the negative or balancing feedback starts dominating, the growth slows down, and the system reaches equilibrium. The majority of the spread or adoption models demonstrate an S-Curve pattern. As Schelling demonstrates, many social mechanisms, such as the spread of new ideas or adoption of new technologies demonstrate this pattern.<sup>23</sup> For instance, when a new idea emerges, people start talking about it if they are intrigued by it. The more people intrigued about it, the more people talk about it, which causes an exponential growth in the number of people exposed to this idea. However, since there is a limit to the number of people that can be exposed to this idea, the spread slows down over time and arrives at equilibrium. Through this process, the spread of the idea follows an S-Curve pattern. Another area where limited growth is observed is the demographic and economic transitions, which are key to the power based theories of war.<sup>24</sup> Historically, nations in preindustrial stages had low levels of productivity and population growth. As they are industrialized, they experience a significant spurt in their power as a result of increased productivity and population. However, as nations reach the stage of power maturity, both the productivity and the population growth decelerate and reach an equilibrium. The power transitions that result from these dynamic changes are one of the major causes of major power conflict.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to the aforementioned general patterns of behavior, a system can show different types of behavior at different times. We can observe different virtuous positive or negative circles, death spirals, growing or declining oscillatory patterns, things getting better before they start declining, or things getting worse before they get better. For instance, through dynamic modeling, we can see that third-party intervention in civil wars decreases the severity of the conflict in the short-term but causes the severity to increase in the long-term. The variety of patterns enables us to better understanding the system and underlying factors, gain more comprehensive insights, and make more accurate forecasts.

A system dynamics approach has been previously utilized in various physical as well as in social science settings. The majority of the system dynamic work in political science deals with the evolution of peace and conflict. Starting with Richardson's seminal work on

<sup>20</sup> Boris Uralnis, *Wars and Population* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971).

<sup>21</sup> Ali Fisunoglu, "Beyond the Phoenix Factor: Consequences of Major Wars and Determinants of Postwar Recovery" (PhD diss., Claremont Graduate University, 2014).

<sup>22</sup> Henrik Urdal, "A Clash of Generations? Youth Bulges and Political Violence," *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (2006): 607–29.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas C. Schelling, "Social Mechanisms and Social Dynamics," in *Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory*, ed. Peter Hedstrom and Richard Swedberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 32–44.

<sup>24</sup> A.F.K. Organski et al., *Births, Deaths, and Taxes: The Demographic and Political Transitions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984).

<sup>25</sup> A.F.K. Organski, *World Politics* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968).

arms races and conflict,<sup>26</sup> numerous studies have been published that deal with war. Due to its emphasis on the importance of system dynamics, students of power transition theory developed several system dynamics models of conflict. For example, Abdollahian and Kang, as well as Kadera, demonstrate that the structural conditions, mainly power parity and the satisfaction with the status quo, are the primary determinants for war (or lack of war) in the international system. Also a member of the realist school of thought, Jervis<sup>27</sup> asserts that the anarchy in the international system is a result of its complex systemic structure, in which states compete for more power and security.

Several other studies also focused on the evolution of conflict or cooperation using a system dynamics approach. Kadera<sup>28</sup> develops a dynamic model of the spread (or “contagion”) of civil and interstate wars. She examines three principal components in the model. One component is the transmission mechanism, which covers factors such as geographic distance, openness and willingness to engage and other various ways international actors expose one another to conflict. The second component, barriers, deals with potential components that slow down the spread of conflict such as neutrality agreements, and the third component, resource constraints, is designed to capture the social welfare trade-off associated with military expenditures. Kadera finds that in all fifty simulation cases there was a positive equilibrium, suggesting that even if states endeavor to avoid the ongoing conflicts in a given region and do not get involved, they still cannot effectively stop the spread of war. Kadera’s dynamic model also reveals that systemic characteristics of contagion are expected to move regional engagement towards a positive equilibrium, forcing regional actors to participate. The results also suggest that aggregate amount of war in a system decreases as barriers are replaced with transmission mechanisms. Overall, lowering the number of interactions in the system reduces the spread of war.

In a more recent study, Kadera and Morey<sup>29</sup> develop the fighting versus investing model and demonstrate that weaker countries are better off when they fight a counterforce war and that targeting industrial production facilities rather than military forces shortens the war and decreases the likelihood of a stalemate. For several other important studies that employ dynamic models on interstate war, see Zinnes and Muncaster,<sup>30</sup> Abdollahian, Baranick, Nicholson, and Nickens,<sup>31</sup> and Morey.<sup>32</sup>

As a result of the US invasion of Iraq and global increase in terrorist activities,<sup>33</sup> the last 15 years have seen an increase in the number of studies focusing on civil war, insurgency, and terrorism. Let’s consider a dynamic model of terrorist recruitment, as developed by Faria and Arce.<sup>34</sup> According to the model, at time 0, a terrorist organization has a certain

<sup>26</sup> Lewis F. Richardson, *Arms and Insecurity: A Mathematical Study of the Causes and Origins of War* (Pittsburgh: Boxwood, 1960).

<sup>27</sup> Robert Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997)

<sup>28</sup> Kelly M. Kadera, “Transmission, Barriers, and Constraints: A Dynamic Model of the Spread of War,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42, no. 3 (1998): 367–87.

<sup>29</sup> Kelly M. Kadera and Daniel S. Morey, “The Trade-Offs of Fighting and Investing: A Model of the Evolution of War and Peace,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25, no 2 (2008): 152–70.

<sup>30</sup> Dina A. Zinnes and Robert G. Muncaster, “The Dynamics of Hostile Activity and the Prediction of War,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 28, no. 2 (1984): 187–229.

<sup>31</sup> Mark A. Abdollahian, Michael Baranick, Brice Nicholson, and Matt Nickens, “A Formal Model of Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations,” *Military Operations Research* 14, no. 3 (2009): 5–30.

<sup>32</sup> David S. Morey, “When War Brings Peace: A Dynamic Model of the Rivalry Process,” *American Journal of Political Science* 55, no. 2 (2011): 263–275.

<sup>33</sup> National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), Global Terrorism Database [Data file] (2017), <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>.

<sup>34</sup> Joao Ricardo Faria and Daniel G. Arce M., “Terror Support and Recruitment,” *Defence and Peace Economics* 16, no. 4

number of militants, which would be the stock variable. Terrorist organizations can recruit new members amongst the population. Recruitment is expected to be easier if there are more hard-core believers of the organization's ideology and if the overall public support to the organization is high. Recruitments can be curtailed using liberal values such as increasing democracy or reducing oppression, or increasing economic activities or well-being. Alternatively, governments can choose deterrence strategies through the use of security forces or punishments. The results of Faria and Arce's model indicate that liberal measures are more successful at decreasing terrorist recruitment through their impact on public support whereas deterrence policies decrease the recruitment of fanatics. Elimination of terrorism in the long run is possible if the counter-terrorism measures are affordable and the number of hard-core supporters is not large.

For several other important studies that employ dynamic models on intrastate war, terrorism, and insurgency see Hoover and Kowalewski,<sup>35</sup> Chamberlain,<sup>36</sup> Blank, Enomoto, Gegax, McGuckin, and Simmons,<sup>37</sup> Banks and Sokolowski,<sup>38</sup> Kadera and Kim.<sup>39</sup>

Dynamic models cover a wide range of other areas in political science and international relations including, but not limited to, the evolution of democracy and values,<sup>40</sup> electoral politics,<sup>42</sup> and environmental politics.<sup>44</sup>

### 3. How Did I Get Involved with System Dynamics Modeling?

Since my main area of research, the effect of state capacity and conflict on development, lies at the intersection of international relations, development, and economics, I have had intensive training in economics during my undergraduate and graduate studies. I have an undergraduate degree in economics,<sup>46</sup> which was followed by a PhD in Political Science and Economics. Many economics classes involve some degree of mathematics, which helped me become familiar with mathematical models and quantitative methods. As a result of my academic background, one may think that I was already in an advantageous position to learn advanced modeling skills. However, as I argue throughout this article, most types of modeling in international relations do not necessarily require previous knowledge of advanced mathematics. The main prerequisite for learning these models is having a systematic and

(2005): 263–73.

<sup>35</sup> Dean Hoover and David Kowalewski, "Dynamic Models of Dissent and Repression," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36, no. 1 (1992): 150–82.

<sup>36</sup> Todd Chamberlain, "Systems Dynamics Model of Al-Qa'ida and United States 'Competition,'" *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* 4, no. 3 (2007): 1–23.

<sup>37</sup> Larry Blank et al., "A Dynamic Model of Insurgency: The Case of the War in Iraq," *Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy* 14, no. 2 (2008): 1–26.

<sup>38</sup> Catherine M. Banks and John A. Sokolowski, "From War on Drugs to War against Terrorism: Modeling the Evolution of Colombia's Counter-Insurgency," *Social Science Research* 38, no. 1 (2009): 146–54.

<sup>39</sup> Kelly M. Kadera and Sang-Ki Kim, "Breaking Natural Selection: A Dynamic Model of Civil War and Third-Party Intervention," (paper presented at the EPSA 2013 Annual Conference, Paper 862, Barcelona).

<sup>40</sup> Viktoria Spaizer et al., "The Dynamics of Democracy, Development and Cultural Values," *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 6 (2014): e86468.

<sup>41</sup> Mark A. Abdollahian et al., "Dynamics of Cultural Change: The Human Development Perspective," *International Studies Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (2012): 827–42.

<sup>42</sup> Adam Przeworski and John Sprague, *Paper Stones: A History of Electoral Socialism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

<sup>43</sup> Courtney Brown, *Ballots of Tumult: A Portrait of Volatility in American Voting* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1991).

<sup>44</sup> Peder Hjorth and Ali Bagheri, "Navigating Towards Sustainable Development: A System Dynamics Approach," *Futures* 38, no. 1 (2006): 74–92.

<sup>45</sup> Thierry Malleret, *Disequilibrium: A World Out of Kilter* (Amazon Kindle Edition, 2012).

<sup>46</sup> I was originally double majoring with International Relations, but I decided to drop the double major after being admitted to a PhD program in my senior year, mainly to avoid the required Constitutional Law class.

analytical way of thinking. In this regard, the main benefit of my previous economics training when I started learning about modeling probably was having a higher than average self-confidence, which turned out to be groundless.

Although I had previously taken some classes that included formal models, including several economic growth models and game theory, the first time I was introduced to system dynamics modeling was when I took a summer class on differential equations in graduate school. I took this class on the recommendation of my PhD advisor. His reasoning was that in some branches of peace science in which I was interested, such as the deterrence theory or evolution of power and state capacity, being knowledgeable about modeling is particularly useful because data in these fields are either low-quality or non-existent. He insisted that taking this class would teach me the mathematical foundations needed to learn more advanced modeling and simulation techniques. Indeed, the differential equations class was followed by seminars in complexity, dynamic modeling, and agent-based modeling.

Currently, many political science or international relations graduate programs all over the world offer courses on complexity, modeling, and simulation. In addition to directly taking classes from international relations or political science departments, one can also find courses on modeling in different departments, including mathematics or computer science. Further study of these methods can also be carried on in short-term courses of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) or the European Consortium of Political Research (ECPR) as well as via the programs and annual conferences of the Computational Social Science Society of the Americas, the European Social Simulation Association, or the System Dynamics Society. Participating in these courses or conferences not only helps one get acquainted with these methods, but it is also useful for meeting researchers with similar methodological interests from different fields of study, which can result in fruitful collaborations.

The assertion that formal models, dynamic models, and simulations have a steep learning curve and there is little payoff to learning these methodologies is a misconception. In fact, the nature of formal modeling is quite similar to the nature of qualitative research in the sense that theorizing in both traditions starts by simplifying descriptions, establishing concepts, and endeavoring to reach generalizations. So, these models should be considered as a way of thinking rather than a set of complex techniques. Just like the majority of the researchers working with statistics cannot (and do not need to) solve the sophisticated methods they use, one does not have to have a perfect command on all the intricacies of dynamic models, especially for using these models in applied analyses. After understanding the logic and working principles of dynamic models, one can learn using one of the free or paid ODE solvers mentioned in the following paragraphs, which are increasingly accessible due to the rapid increase in the number of instructive videos, websites, or applications.

Since the early days of my undergraduate education, I have always been mainly interested in quantitative methods. Still, I had not considered pursuing system dynamics models and complexity research until my advisor forced me to take the differential equations class I mentioned above. When the class started, at first, I thought the complexity and abstractness of some of the readings were overwhelming. However, after getting used to the structure, I realized that this is not different than learning a new language. The best thing about this language was that I did not need to learn all the vocabulary, because the computer programs I mentioned above were generating the sentences for me. Another really useful aspect of

these methods is the close-knit structure of the academic community. The organizations that I mentioned in this section are relatively small in size, but they frequently hold research and training workshops. Moreover, almost all of the members are incredibly encouraging, and they have an extraordinary support group for all levels of learners.

Nevertheless, learning these models is likely to be challenging, at least in its earlier stages, particularly for people who have never dealt with mathematics or some sort of modeling before. Considering many students of international relations fall into this category, it is not surprising that system dynamics modeling, or modeling in general, has been a small subsection of international relations methodology up to now. No matter whether one chooses to take courses or learn these methods by herself, I have three sets of advice, based on my personal experience, which can potentially be helpful throughout the process.

First, developing theoretical skills to go in hand in hand with system dynamics modeling is crucial. On one hand, the primary task of social scientists is theory development. Thus, system dynamics modeling is only a tool to assist the researcher in providing answers to the questions related to her research program. So, international relations or social science theory should not take a backseat, especially in the earlier parts of the career. On the other hand, system dynamics modeling is only one type of modeling within the toolbox of available methods. The majority of the social science scholars who work with system dynamics modeling are also knowledgeable on several other models. In this regard, learning additional methods as well as modeling techniques and principals is likely to improve the quality of the overall research by providing alternatives for each research question. Thus, it is a good idea to consider taking courses including - but not limited to - game theory, complexity, the logic of algorithms (and genetic algorithms), formal modeling, agent-based modeling, and simulation techniques.<sup>47</sup>

Second, as discussed above, system dynamics is a computer-aided approach in social sciences. Consequently, being familiar with some major computer programs and investing in technical skills is the key to success for doing system dynamics modeling or modeling in general. Numerous programs focus on different types of models. Several programs are capable of solving system dynamics models. Some of these programs are free to use while others require a fee for purchasing. The most frequently used programs that have to be paid for include MathLab, WolframAlpha, Wolfram Mathematica, and Maple. On the other hand, there are free alternatives to these programs. Although the free programs generally are not able to create extravagant graphs like the paid alternatives, they do cover the basics of solving a set of lower or higher order ODEs using Euler's, Runge-Kutta, Bursch-Stoller and other methods. These free alternatives include the ODE Toolkit, Octave-Forge, or dCode. Another alternative is to write your own program (or find one of the existing packages) using R, C++, Python, or Java.

Modeling and quantitative research can be considered as an ecosystem. Many models are either complements or constitute the foundations of other models. In more advanced modeling settings, different models can be nested within each other. For these reasons, one should also consider investing in data visualization and simulation skills, in addition to the programs mentioned above, some of which are also capable of data visualization of running

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<sup>47</sup> These courses mostly focus on the deductive aspects of research design. In addition to these, taking several courses on probability and statistics would enable the researcher to incorporate stochasticity in the models and/or test the propositions derived from these models with actual data.

simulations. For example, learning geographic information systems software, including GRASS GIS, QGIS, or ArcGIS, is useful for developing models and simulations with a geospatial content. Tableau and SigmaPlot are useful for visualizing and analyzing any type of data. Repast, Swarm, or Vensim are useful for running agent-based models. There are many different modeling techniques and software. So, as one digs deeper in a modeling perspective, she will find the most suitable specific software that meets her needs.

Third, like the rest of graduate school and academia, probably the most crucial skills to master (system dynamics) modeling are related to personal and psychological traits. Learning a new model can be difficult. There will be much blood, sweat, and tears before grasping the fundamentals of modeling, and even after then, it will sometimes be tough to come up with an original model that sufficiently captures the reality. For this reason, starting the learning process with a high level of motivation, persisting on trying even after several failures, and being patient is essential for becoming proficient. Also related to the personal traits, it is also essential to remember networking and forming a group of collaborators or friends that are available for help or consultation when the modeling is stuck.

#### 4. Developing System Dynamics Models

In this section, I discuss several aspects that are important in developing system dynamics models in addition to demonstrating the process by a building dynamic model and giving examples of several more sophisticated models.

To show the setup, let's consider a simple arms race model. First modeled by Lewis Richardson,<sup>48</sup> the basic arms race model assumes that the level of a country's military expenditures is proportional to the military expenditures of its rival, but restrained by domestic or economic constraints the country faces. We can set up the system with the following two equations:

$$\frac{dx}{dt} = ay - mx + r \quad (1)$$

$$\frac{dy}{dt} = bx - ny + s \quad (2)$$

In these equations,  $x$  and  $y$  represent the military expenditures of two countries at time  $t$ . The constants  $a$  and  $b$  depict the intensity of the rivalry (or how much a country fear its rival),  $m$  and  $n$  depict the scale of the constraints (domestic economy, interest groups, etc.), and  $r$  and  $s$  depict the existing level of enmity or distrust against the other country that would carry on even if military expenditures were wholly cut (negative values for  $r$  and  $s$  would represent the feelings of neighborliness or friendliness).

Although this is an elementary model and a significant simplification of the reality, several results emerge from this model. It can be observed that the military expenditures of the two countries are interdependent. The evolution of the military spending in each country ultimately depends on how much its rival spends, how much the countries fear each other, and how much the countries distrust each other. In the equilibrium, countries may choose to disarm entirely on one extreme. On the other extreme, if they sufficiently fear and distrust

<sup>48</sup> Richardson, *Arms and Insecurity*.

each other, each country might keep increasing its spending to cause an endless spiral of increases. Alternatively, they might end up at a stable equilibrium somewhere in the middle. More detailed explanations and discussions of implications of the basic arms race model can be found in Zinnes and Gillespie<sup>49</sup> and Intriligator and Brito.<sup>50</sup>

The basic arms race model can be demonstrated using the following causal diagram, drawn using Vensim:

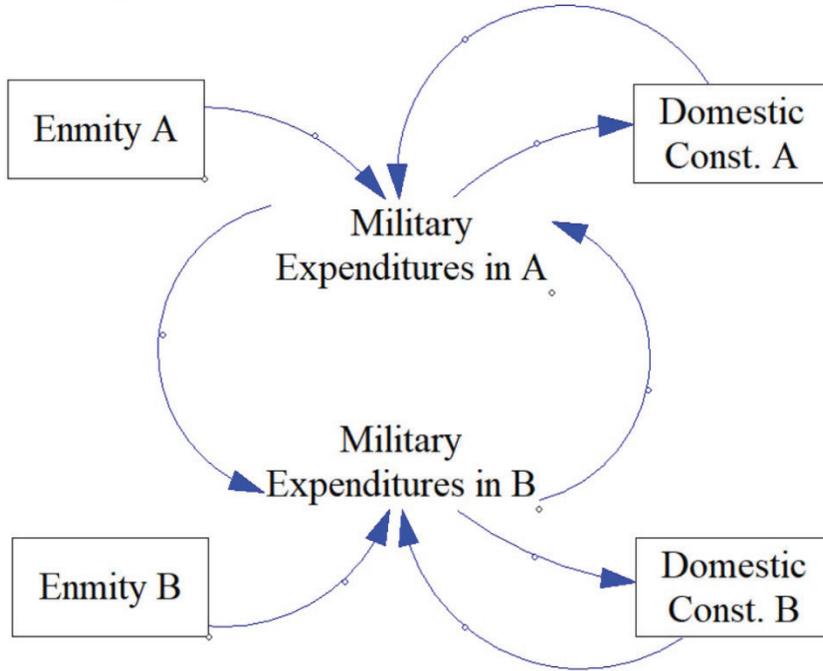


Figure 1: Causal Diagram of the Basic Arms Race Model

This causal diagram in Figure 1 represents equations (1) and (2) explained above. The arrows show the direction of the relationship. This model does not include the positive and negative signs because Vensim's simulation mechanism does not require these signs near the arrows as they are defined within the variables.

The arms race model can easily be expanded in a system dynamic setting to make the model more realistic and the results and forecasts more accurate using additional variables and interactions. In Figure 2, such a model is presented. This more sophisticated model considers the economic capacity and total armament as stock variables, affected by flow variables like the economic growth, desired strength ratio, investment, and depreciation. These additional variables are connected to each other within the system of each country. In addition, the systems of two countries are connected to each other via the total armament and target armament variables.

<sup>49</sup> John V. Gillespie and Dina A. Zinnes, eds., *Mathematical Systems in International Relations Research* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977).

<sup>50</sup> Michael D. Intriligator and Dagobert L. Brito, "Arms Races," *Defence and Peace Economics* 11, no. 1 (2000): 45–54.

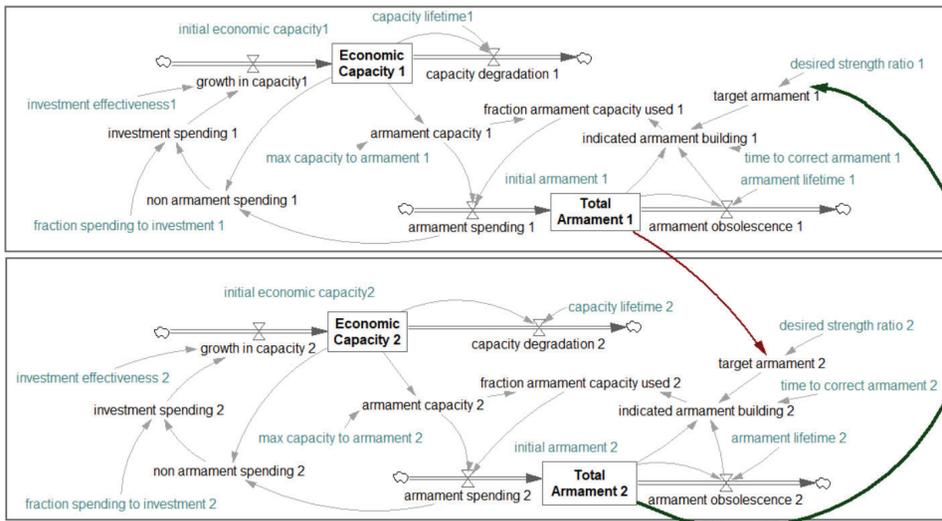


Figure 2: Causal Diagram of the Arms Race Model with Additional Variables

As discussed above, models are only a simplification of reality. One of the early projects of system dynamics, *Industrial Dynamics*, had 60 levels and almost 250 variables.<sup>51</sup> On the other hand, a similar model, *Urban Dynamics*, successfully explained the causes of urban boom or decay with 3 levels and 9 principal variables.<sup>52</sup> Whereas models like *Industrial Dynamics* or the arms race model in Figure 2 are more common in public or defense policy, operations management, manufacturing, and the industry, many theoretical scientific models tend to be relatively straightforward. This has to do with the properties of a good theory, particularly the importance of parsimony.<sup>53</sup> More complicated models do not necessarily bring along scientific superiority. Particularly in the system dynamics setting and modeling social dynamics, building overly complex models can cause some of the variables to “explode,” that is, showing infinite growth or quick decay behavior, which causes the rest of the model to misbehave. Moreover, smaller models are more accessible and easier to understand. Thus, gaining insights from smaller models is easier and often more rewarding.<sup>54</sup>

Lastly, I present a model that I developed on the spread of intrastate war. This model takes a spread of disease model from epidemiology and extends it to explain the mechanism through which an intrastate conflict is spread from an “infected” country to a “susceptible” country. It shows that refugees can act as the channels to carry the conflict disease from the initial country by disturbing economic and social dynamics of the host whereas the state capacity of the host country acts as the immunity system.

I set this system up as a set of five differential equations. In these equations, evolution of conflicts in both the initial country (*country a*) and a *country b* that shares a border with *country a* are endogenous. Economic conditions in both countries and the flow of refugees are also modeled as endogenous variables. On the other hand levels of democracy, state capacity

<sup>51</sup> Jay W. Forrester, *Industrial Dynamics* (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1961).

<sup>52</sup> Jay W. Forrester, *Urban Dynamics* (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1969).

<sup>53</sup> W. Phillips Shively, *The Craft of Political Research* (10th Edition) (New York: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>54</sup> Navid Ghaffarzadegan et al., “How Small System Dynamics Models Can Help the Public Policy Process,” *System Dynamics Review* 27, no. 1 (2011): 22–44



The set of differential equations are solved using a graphical ODE solver. Amongst the programs I discussed above, I use ODE Toolkit (v.1.4). I first run a baseline model for two theoretical less developed countries with average levels of state capacity (thus, with values of  $RPC = 0.3$ ). The graph in Figure 4 represents the behavior of endogenous variables over time from their baseline. As we can see from the ODE output, the economy of *Country a* is shrinking as the level of conflict in *Country a* increases. As a result of the economic decline in *Country a*, the number of refugees coming from *Country a* to *Country b* increases. The increase of refugees in *Country b* leads to an increase in the level of conflict, which results in a decrease in economy.

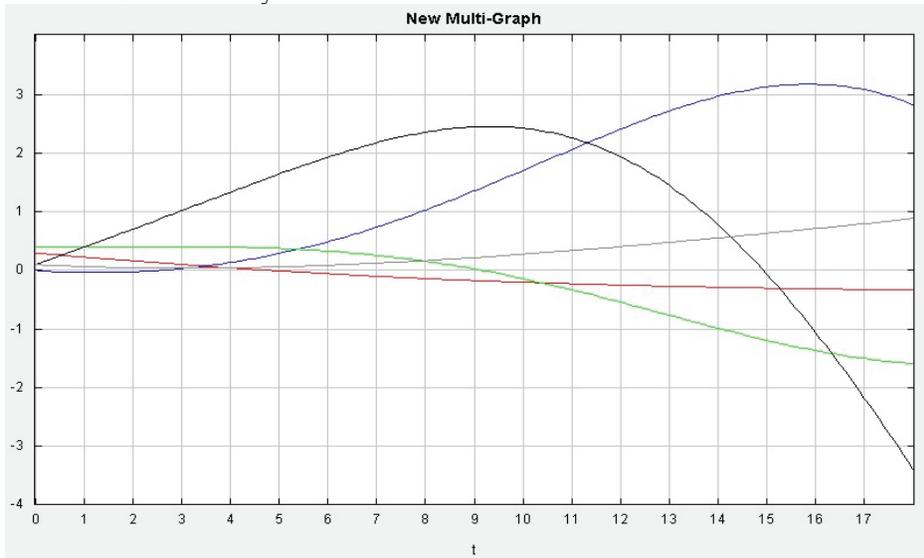


Figure 4: Trajectory for  $Mid\_RPC_a$  &  $Mid\_RPC_b$ , where the Blue line represents Conflict in B, Green line represents Economy of B, Black line represents Refugees, Red line represents Economy of A, and Grey line represents Conflict in A.

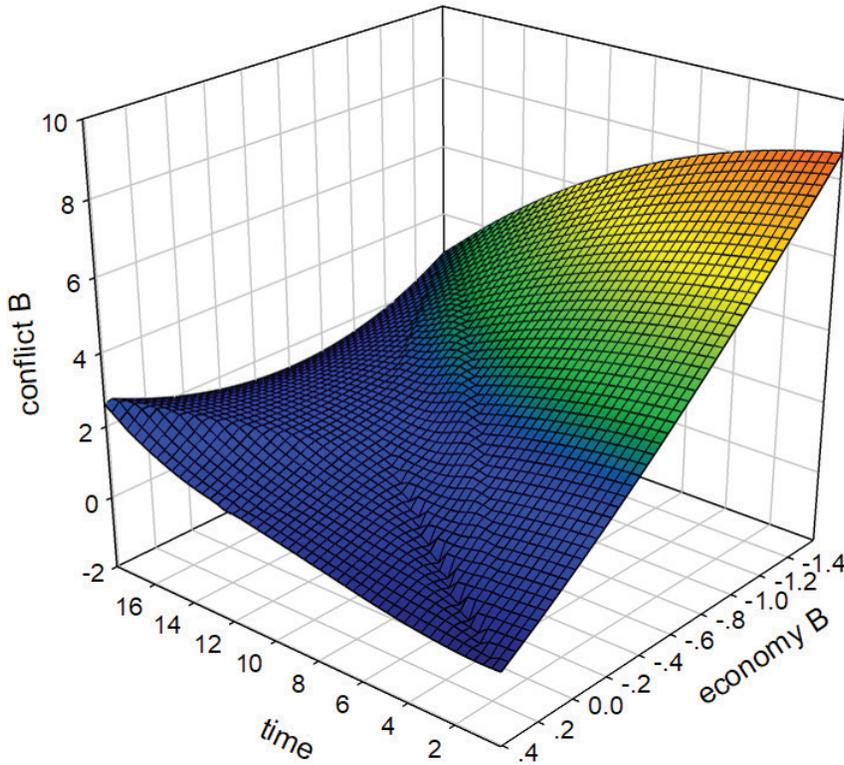


Figure 5: The 3D Visualization of  $Mid\_RPC_a$  &  $Mid\_RPC_b$ .

However, as the level of economy in *Country b* goes down, the country becomes less attractive to refugees, so the number of refugees decreases after the decline in the economy becomes apparent at time 10. The rate of decrease in refugees is high since the level of conflict increases rapidly, and the economy in *Country b* even becomes worse than the economy in *Country a*.

The 3D graph in Figure 5, drawn using SigmaPlot 12.5 with the results of the solutions of the ODEs, presents a visualization of the main variables. We can see that with a middle-level of RPC when the level of economy in *b* is low, the level of conflict in *b* remains at a high level. It first increases then decreases, because the number of refugees first increases then decreases due to the change of economy. However, when the level of economy in *b* is relatively high, the level of conflict slowly increases at a low level. Also, we can also see that as time passes and the level of economy decreases, the level of conflict increases.

One of the main advantages of system dynamics models is that after the model is set up, we can investigate different scenarios by changing the initial values of variables. Let's demonstrate this by exploring what happens when we increase the level of state capacity of the neighboring country *b* from average to high. To do this, I increase the RPC in *Country b* to 0.45, while keeping other initial values same as before.

As we can see in Figure 6, the results change entirely. Although the levels of conflict and economy in *Country a* remain the same, those of *Country b* go to opposite directions. With the high level of RPC, the economy in *Country b* improves at a steady speed before period 13

and at an even higher speed after that. As the gap between *Country a*'s economy and *Country b*'s economy increases, the number of refugees going to *Country b* also becomes larger and larger. In the previous scenario, the level of conflict in *Country b* increases as the number of refugees increases. However, this time when RPC is high, the level of conflict in *Country b* does not increase. It even decreases after the economy improves sharply. It tells us that when the RPC is high, the country can handle a large (or larger) number of refugees without having higher levels of conflict.

The 3D graph in Figure 7 helps us understand this scenario better. Interestingly, when the level of the economy is low, the level of conflict first decreases rapidly then increases slightly, making a u-curve in the graph. However, when the level of the economy is high, the level of conflict is much higher, though it decreases at a steady speed. It is because the superb economy attracts too many refugees, which adds the likelihood of instability. What's more, when looking at both the economy and conflict across time, the model shows that as the level of economy increases, the level of conflict does not change much. This is in line with the first postulate that high level of RPC in *Country b* will reduce the likelihood of intrastate conflict. Also, when the economy starts at a high level, the decrease in the economy over time also results in the decrease in the level of conflict.

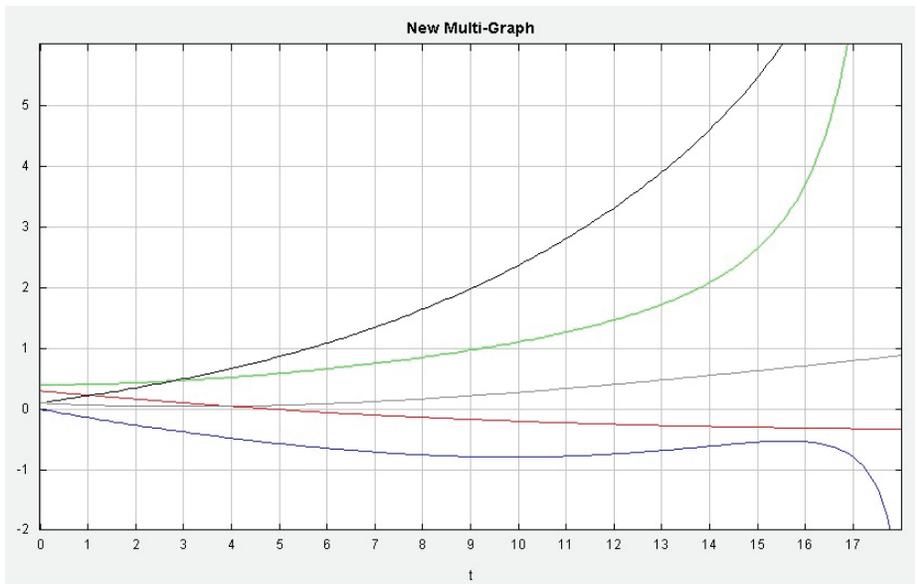


Figure 6: Trajectory for Mid\_RPC<sub>a</sub> & High\_RPC<sub>b</sub>, where the Blue line represents Conflict in B, Green line represents Economy of B, Black line represents Refugees, Red line represents Economy of A, and Grey line represents Conflict in A.

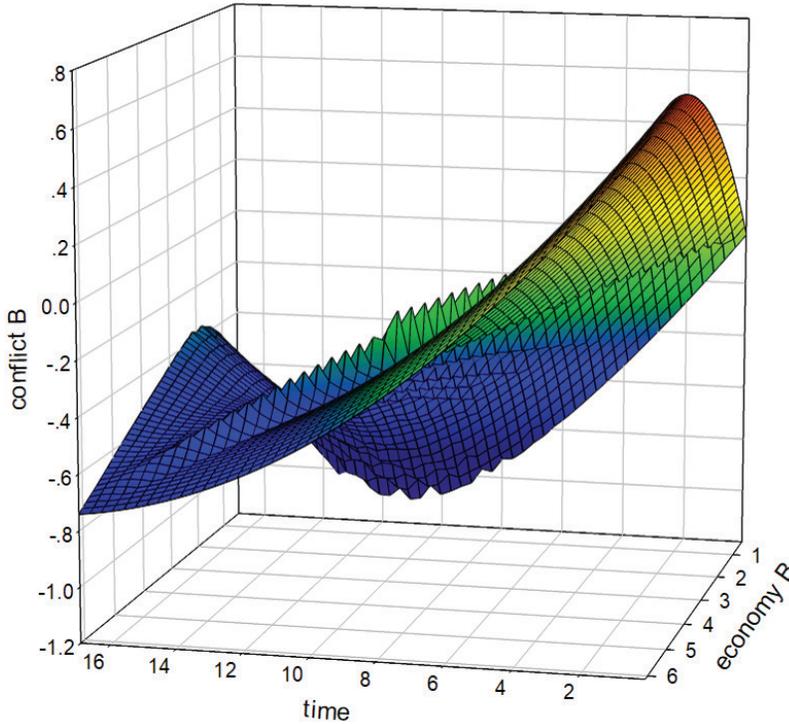


Figure 7: The 3D Visualization of Mid\_RPC<sub>a</sub> & High\_RPC<sub>b</sub>.

## 5. Conclusions

This article provides an introduction to system dynamics models with a particular focus on their applications on political science and international relations. As discussed throughout the article, a system dynamics approach has many advantages (and disadvantages). Methods in international relations, after all, are a means to an end. As international relations scholars, our priority should be to develop theories of world politics. Nevertheless, research methods are crucial instruments for us to approach different questions. Ultimately, I argue that system dynamics models are a useful and valuable addition to the methodological toolbox of students of international relations.

System dynamics models provide an interdisciplinary perspective bridging different fields in social sciences as well as social sciences and public policy, physical sciences, and engineering. The majority of the complex problems of the 21st century are not discipline-specific. Especially with increased physical and virtual interconnectedness, almost every decision creates multiple shock waves in many different areas. The butterfly effect is relevant today, more than ever. Thus, combining the knowledge and wisdom from different disciplines is crucial for dealing with modern problems.

The majority of the academic work in international relations and conflict studies in Turkey uses qualitative techniques,<sup>56 57</sup> and formal models are an unambiguous minority

<sup>56</sup> Oner Akgul, "A Bibliographical Study on the Academic Research of Peace and Conflict in Turkey," (paper presented at the 7th Eurasian Peace Science Meeting, Istanbul, 2018).

<sup>57</sup> Cenker Korhan Demir and Engin Avci, "Turkish Terrorism Studies: A Preliminary Assessment," *All Azimuth* 7, no. 1 (2018):

with respect to the choice of methods.<sup>58</sup> However, quantitative techniques and modeling bring along many benefits, especially in recent years, in which the computational power has been growing geometrically. A few decades ago, only a few social scientists would be able to use system dynamics modeling, mainly due to the extremely high costs of entry; i.e., advanced mathematical skills. These barriers to entry have been significantly lowered in the recent years. Thus, we should observe, and have been observing, more extensive use of these methods.

Still, in my opinion, system dynamics approach should be treated as a complement rather than a substitute for “traditional” qualitative and quantitative methods. Personally, I still carry out the majority of my research using these traditional methods and inductive techniques. Each question requires a different design and knowing the advantages and disadvantages of all, or many, methods and designs help you choose the most appropriate one for the question and data you have.

Supplementing system dynamics modeling with simulations and learning alternative simulation techniques is the natural next step after mastering system dynamics modeling. Using microsimulations, queuing models, multilevel simulations, cellular automata, multi-agent (or agent-based) models, or learning models allow for including more levels to the simulation, controlling for communications between agents, and modeling different and more complex types of agents.<sup>59</sup> Each of these features makes the model slightly more realistic, generating more accurate outcomes. These models can then be used for experimenting different policy choices and analyzing the effect of different choices on short- and long-term outcomes.

To my knowledge, this is the first paper that introduces the system dynamics approach in Turkish international relations and political science literature. As the methodological scope in Turkish academia widens, as well as the above-mentioned technical reasons for the increased use of nonlinear and system dynamics models, one can expect the more frequent use of such models. Understanding world politics from a multi-disciplinary and multi-method perspective is crucial for solving new types of emerging problems. Thus, the movement towards a more integrated approach is necessary. Fluency in not just one, but multiple quantitative, qualitative, and methodological approaches are essential to understanding the strengths and weaknesses of each. This will undoubtedly expand the topics that can be studied and enhance the relevance and pertinence of the works produced in Turkish academia in political and international academic domains.

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21–44.

<sup>58</sup> Mustafa Aydın, Fulya Hisaroglu, and Korhan Yazgan, “Türkiye’de Uluslararası İlişkiler Akademisyenleri ve Alana Yönelik Yaklaşımları Üzerine Bir İnceleme: TRIP 2014 Sonuçları,” *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 12, no. 48 (2016): 3–35.

<sup>59</sup> Gilbert and Troitzsch, *Simulation for the Social Scientist*.

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## **An Eclectic Methodological Approach in Analyzing Foreign Policy: Turkey's Foreign Policy Roles and Events Dataset (TFPRED)**

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### **Abstract**

*This article describes the steps in developing an eclectic coding scheme that utilizes the Role theory framework. Role theory proposes that foreign policy is conducted with an attempt to fulfill the role conceptions that decision-makers formulate. Studies utilizing this framework usually identify national role conceptions (NRCs) in the foreign policy speeches of decision-makers with various research techniques. Following the literature, this article first explains how to use content analysis in identifying the most frequently referred NRCs in Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP). Then, unlike the literature, it takes a step further and offers event data analysis to look at the performance of these NRCs as well. With such an approach, it develops the Turkish Foreign Policy Roles and Events Dataset (TFPRED). The TFPRED is a dataset that is the product of a combination of 'hand-coded content analysis' with 'computer-assisted event data analysis'. The article presents a detailed explanation of the steps in using content analysis and event data analysis to build the TFPRED. It also explains the development of the eclectic methodological approach and gives an assessment of the author's experiences in combining the two methods.*

**Keywords:** Content analysis, computational social science, event data, foreign policy analysis, multi-methods research

### **1. Introduction**

Role theory provides a productive framework to understand and explain foreign policy. The theory argues that foreign policies of states are directed by the role conceptions that are established by foreign policy-makers. Just like human beings in social life, states adopt certain roles and conduct their foreign relations accordingly. Hence, the initial step in analyzing foreign policy is to identify the national role conceptions (NRCs). Therefore, the majority of the studies that utilize the role theory framework focus on identifying the NRCs and their sources. A variety of methods can be used for such a purpose including interviews, public opinion polls, and content analysis. Some studies apply a combination of these different tools to increase the validity of their claims.

In my research I have developed an original approach through a combination of two research methods: content analysis and event data analysis. It is an eclectic approach combining the powerful sides of qualitative and quantitative approaches to research. In this

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article I give a step-by- step explanation of how I developed this approach and then show an empirical application: the Turkish Foreign Policy Roles and Events Dataset (TFPRED)<sup>1</sup>. The TFPRED is a dataset including coded information on Turkey's foreign policy words (NRCs) and deeds (role performance).

After explaining the eclectic methodological approach I analyze Turkish foreign policy (TFP) in the Justice and Development Party (JDP) (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* or *AK Parti*) era by utilizing the TFPRED. Applying role theory as a tool of analysis provided a comprehensive and structured framework to consider material as well as non-material variables that affect the foreign policy orientation(s) of the country. The theory is a useful tool to measure the impact of Turkey's foreign policy makers' vision on the actual foreign policy behavior of the country.

The temporal domain of this study starts from March 2003 and ends in August 2014. In this period JDP established three governments (the 59<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup> and 61<sup>st</sup>). I compare the words and deeds of the three governments and build a generic methodological model that is applicable to other periods as well. With this methodological approach, I establish two main claims. First, there is a need to analyze both the discourse of the decision-makers' (TFP words) and the actual practices of the country (TFP deeds). TFP decision-makers have certain role conceptions that they expect their country to perform. However, all role conceptions are not performed in the country's foreign policy practices. Therefore I needed a two-phased data collection process: Data collection phase I – Content Analysis, and data collection phase II— Event Data. Second, Turkey's relationship with one region to another varies, and analysis of the JDP decision-makers' speeches indicated that some role conceptions have certain regional directions. Therefore, there was a need to categorize roles in terms of their regional direction. Building on this need, I proposed a new categorization for role conceptions: region-specific (Rg) roles and general/overarching (Ge) roles. Rg roles are divided into three sub-types. (1)  $R_{type1}$  roles are those that are directed to a single region. (2)  $R_{type2}$  roles are those that refer to multiple regions. (3)  $R_{type3}$  roles are those that refer to all regions. Finally, (4) Ge roles are those that have no specific regional direction.

The above-mentioned two claims are results of certain methodological choices. The following sections provide a structured explanation of how I made these choices. To this aim, I have divided this article into three main parts. First, I give a brief review of the literature on different applications of role theory framework and the use of event data in FPA. Second, I give a step-by-step application of these two methods, with examples of coded speeches, data sheets, news reports, and specific portions of the TFPRED dataset. Third, I give a brief summary of the empirical results of this methodological approach on TFP together with certain informative charts and graphics. In the conclusion, I make a critical assessment of the limitations of this methodological approach.

## 2. Role Theory Framework: Combining Content Analysis and Event Data

### 2.1. Role theory and the need to use event data

Holsti's study on national role conceptions (NRCs) is a seminal work that established the

<sup>1</sup> The TFPRED dataset is regularly updated. The author's current research (2018-2019) on the dataset at the Institute for Quantitative Social Science of Harvard University is supported by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) - 2219 - International Postdoctoral Research Scholarship.

roots of role theory<sup>2</sup>. The study provides a classification of states based on the NRCs of state leaders. Leaders, as Holsti argues, have cognitive perceptions about the roles that their state can play in the international arena. Their observations of the international environment are filtered through these perceptions, and their behavior is conducted accordingly. State foreign policies are conducted with an attempt to fulfill the role conceptions that the foreign-policy makers formulate. Based on a content analysis of leaders' speeches from 1965 to 1967, Holsti identifies seventeen foreign policy role conceptions of the leaders in the era.

Since role conceptions are argued to determine state foreign policy activities, identifying such role conceptions in leaders' speeches is proposed as a way to predict future foreign policy behavior of states. On this framework, Walker<sup>3</sup> adds that role conceptions are not just self-attributions of leaders but they are also based on the interaction of those leaders with the international environment. Roles are not just determined by leaders themselves but they are also affected by the events that happen in the international relations of those specific states. Reviewing role theoretical studies, Thies<sup>4</sup> similarly argues that although role conceptions can be analyzed through leaders' speeches, they could also be extracted through a study of states' foreign policy actions. Accordingly, I argue that a list of foreign policy role conceptions can be determined both with reference to the 'discourse' (leaders' speeches) and the 'practice' (foreign policy actions) of states.

The existence of various role conceptions means that countries do not generally play single roles but in some cases they play multiple ones. In the same line of argumentation Holsti<sup>5</sup> also argues that multiple roles could be determined and played by states. Hence, the existence of multiple roles might lead to role conflict in some cases. For instance, Barnett<sup>6</sup> in his analysis of the Arab state-system finds out that there is a conflict between roles emphasizing state-sovereignty and the ones emphasizing pan-Arabism. Similarly, Tewes<sup>7</sup> identifies a role conflict between Germany's stances on the issue of the EU enlargement and integration. Role conflict in such cases might either lead to a choice between conflicting roles or to a re-interpretation of specific role conceptions.<sup>8</sup>

Indeed, role theory has been fruitfully utilized as a practical tool in FPA as a rich literature has been produced since Holsti<sup>9</sup>. Granatstein<sup>10</sup> focused on Canadian role conception that motivates the country for initiating peacekeeping activities. Hedetoft provides a role theoretical analysis of the UK, Denmark and Germany. He emphasizes the relationship between the self-images of these states, their war mentalities, and their foreign policy behavior.<sup>11</sup> Breuning<sup>12</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Kalevi J. Holsti, "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy," *International Studies Quarterly* 14 (1970): 233-309.

<sup>3</sup> Stephan G. Walker, "Role theory and Origins of Foreign Policy," in *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy*, eds. Charles F. Hermann, Charles Kegley, James Rosenau (London: Harper Collins, 1987), 269-84.

<sup>4</sup> Cameron Thies, "Role Theory and Foreign Policy" (International Studies Association Compendium Project, Foreign Policy Analysis Section, May 2009), <http://myweb.uiowa.edu/bhlai/workshop/role.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Holsti, "National Role Conceptions," 276.

<sup>6</sup> Michael N. Barnett, "Institutions, Roles and Disorder the Case of Arab State System," *International Studies Quarterly* 37 (1993): 271-96.

<sup>7</sup> Henning Tewes, "Between Deepening and Widening: Role Conflict in Germany's Enlargement Policy," *West European Politics* 21 (1998): 117-33.

<sup>8</sup> Barnett, "Institutions, Roles and Disorder," 288.

<sup>9</sup> Holsti, "National Role Conceptions," 233-309.

<sup>10</sup> Jack L. Granatstein, "Peacekeeping: Did Canada Make a Difference? And What Difference Did Peacekeeping Make to Canada?," in *Making a Difference? Canada's Foreign Policy in a Changing World Order*, ed. John English and Norman Hillmer (Toronto, Lester Publications, 1992), 222-34.

<sup>11</sup> Ulf Hedetoft, "National Identity and Mentalities of War in Three EC Countries," *Journal of Peace Research* 30 (1993): 291.

<sup>12</sup> Marijke Breuning, "Words and Deeds: Foreign Assistance Rhetoric and Policy Behavior in the Netherlands, Belgium and the United Kingdom," *International Studies Quarterly* 39 (1995): 235-54.

studies the discourse and practice of UK, Germany and Netherlands with regard to the issue of foreign aid. Chafetz et al.<sup>13</sup> analyze Belarus and Ukraine's foreign policy with role theory. Baehr<sup>14</sup> focuses on Netherlands's role conceptions. He argues that the country has assumed to be at the center of international law and its foreign policy is conducted accordingly. The literature is rich of such country studies.<sup>15</sup> It has also been applied to the Turkish case in a number of studies.<sup>16</sup>

Most of the studies that apply role theory have generally focused on identifying NRCs. Indeed, only a very limited number of the studies focus on how those role conceptions turn into foreign policy practice. Then, the argument is well-presented in the following lines<sup>17</sup>:

Most of the studies that apply role theory (...) have applied systematic methods (mostly content analysis) to analyze different leaders' foreign policy speeches.(...) these studies do not systematically observe how much these role conceptions affect states' foreign policy practices. Focusing on the sources of role conceptions and explaining them in detail only provides a partial application of role theory and does not fulfill the theory's promise. (...) While developing a well-structured focus on the independent variable (role conceptions) of the theory, the existing literature has neglected a systematic focus on the dependent variable (foreign policy practices).

To put it boldly, the theory assumes that states' foreign policy behavior is determined by the NRCs. These role conceptions are identified in the speeches of the decision-makers, through conducting interviews, analyzing official documents, or through the use of public opinion polls.<sup>18</sup> The literature is rich in this sense. In other words, the methods used to identify role conceptions and their sources are abundant. Then, an important question follows: "To what extent do these role conceptions turn into foreign policy practice?" The answer necessitates a tool to measure the parallelism between the conceptions and actual practices:

Together with an analysis of role conceptions, there is a need for a clearly explained, consistent, logical and systematic focus on the foreign policy practices of states. This focus bears a potential to bring significant contributions to the explanatory power of role theory and fill-in a significant gap in the literature.<sup>19</sup>

I accept that the analysis of state behavior starts with the impact of decision-makers' visions, and identifying such visions is a great contribution by itself. Yet, in order to have a complete analysis of foreign policy, one needs to focus on what states actually do as well; that

<sup>13</sup> Glenn Chafetz et al., "Role theory and Foreign Policy: Belarusian and Ukrainian Compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime," *Political Psychology* 17 (1996): 727–57.

<sup>14</sup> Peter R. Baehr, "Trials and Errors: The Netherlands and Human Rights", in *Human Rights and Comparative Foreign Policy*, ed. David P. Forsythe (Tokyo, New York, Paris: United Nations University Press, 2000), 49–86.

<sup>15</sup> See also: Daniel Bar-Tal and Dikla Antebi, "Beliefs about Negative Intentions of the World: A Study of Israeli Siege Mentality," *Political Psychology* 13 (1992): 633–45; Matthew S. Hirshberg, "The Self-Perpetuating National Self-Image: Cognitive Biases in Perceptions of International Interventions," *Political Psychology* 14 (1993): 77–98. ; Glenn Chafetz et al., "Role theory and Foreign Policy: Belarusian and Ukrainian Compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime," *Political Psychology* 17 (1996): 727–57; Guavav Ghose and Patrick James, "Third-Party Intervention in Ethno-Religious Conflict: Role theory, Pakistan and War in Kashmir, 1965," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 17 (2005): 427–45. ; Amy L. Catalinac, "Identity Theory and Foreign Policy: Explaining Japan's Responses to the 1991 Gulf War and the 2003 U.S. War in Iraq," *Politics & Policy* 35 (2007): 58–100; Rikard Bengtsson and Ole Elgström, "Conflicting Role Conceptions? The European Union in Global Politics," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8 (2012): 93–108.

<sup>16</sup> For instance see İsmail Erkam Sula, "Regional Directions of National Role Conceptions: Turkey's Foreign Policy in its Neighborhood" (PhD Diss., Bilkent University, Ankara, 2017); Özgür Özdamar, B. Toygar Halistoprak, and İsmail Erkam Sula, "From Good Neighbor to Model: Turkey's Changing Roles in the Middle East in the Aftermath of the Arab Spring," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 11 (2014): 93–113.

<sup>17</sup> Sula, "Regional Directions of National Role Conceptions," 323.

<sup>18</sup> The most frequently used method in observing role conceptions is content analysis. That is why I decided to use it in my own research.

<sup>19</sup> Sula, "Regional Directions of National Role Conceptions," 323–24.

is, states' actual practices. While NRCs can reveal reflections of policy-makers' visions, we also need data on the actual practices and a tool to observe any parallelism between the two. I offer event data as a useful method to fill-in this gap in Role theory.

Although they do not use the role theory framework, a similar motivation has possibly been one of the major incentives for scholars who develop large-scale events data sets. To get a grasp of what states actually do or how states actually behave in their foreign relations. Event data supports scholars in identifying certain patterns of foreign policy through providing empirically grounded observations of the actual foreign policy behavior of states. "Event data are generated by examining thousands of newspaper reports on the day-to-day interactions of nation-states and assigning each reported interaction a numerical score or a categorical code".<sup>20</sup> McClelland's<sup>21</sup> World Event Interaction Survey (WEIS) and Azar's<sup>22</sup> Conflict and Peace Data Bank (COPDAB) initiated the first two events data-sets. In both datasets the interactions between states in world politics are coded according to a specific coding scheme.

Being among the first event datasets, WEIS codes public events reported daily in the press. It identifies the flow of action and response between countries. The assumption is that "nations act consistently enough so that their past behavior is a source for the prediction of their present and future actions."<sup>23</sup> Through analyzing the past actions of states, the WEIS dataset attempts to reveal patterns of interactions between countries. McClelland analyzes if these patterns are observable in international relations. An 'Event' is taken as the unit of analysis and it is described as "Each event/ interaction is a daily report of an international event." Using the *New York Times* as its data source, the dataset codes five variables are coded: time, actor, target, arena, and event classification, and 22 event categories, which are themselves divided into multiple sub-categories, resulting in 63 categories in total. Each observed event is coded according to an issue area such as the Arab-Israeli Conflict, the 1967 war, the Cyprus issue, and the Vietnam conflict (along with 23 other issue areas). All countries in the world and some non-governmental actors are included in the dataset.<sup>24</sup>

COPDAB (Conflict and Peace Databank)<sup>25</sup> is a computer-assisted dataset covering the international and domestic events that happened between 135 countries from 1948 to 1978. In COPDAB, event statements are collected from public sources and transformed into 'descriptive events' (who said or did what to whom and when). Nation-states are taken as actors that act towards their domestic and world targets. Each event is aggregated by time periods, and the changes in the relations of states are interpreted statistically. Event statements are transformed into 'descriptive events', each one containing information on the date, actor, target, source (where/the public source that the event statement is gathered), issue type (military, economic, etc.), scale (Azar's scale on relative degree of 'Conflictiveness' and 'cooperativeness' of the event), and the issue area. Similar to WEIS, COPDAB also categorizes events. Each country, public source, event type and the scale of each event has

<sup>20</sup> Phillip A. Schrodt, "Event Data in FPA," in *FPA: Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation*, ed. Laura Neack et al., (NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995), 146.

<sup>21</sup> Charles McClelland, "World Event/Interaction Survey (WEIS) Project, 1966-1978," (ICPSR 05211, 1978).

<sup>22</sup> Edward E. Azar, "Conflict and Peace Data Bank (COPDAB), 1948-1978" (College Park, MD: University of Maryland, Center for International Development and Conflict Management, 1993).

<sup>23</sup> McClelland, "World Event/Interaction Survey," 1.

<sup>24</sup> McClelland, "World Event/Interaction Survey," Appendix A.

<sup>25</sup> Azar's COPDAB was later incorporated in Global Event-Data System (GEDS) Project produced under the coordination of John L. Davies at the Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM)

a specific code explained in the codebook. So an event statement like: “May 23, 1968 -- Egypt loans Syria \$750,000 for Economic Development” will be coded as the following: “680520365165202LOAN 2004\$750,000 ECONOMIC AID FOR DEVELOPMENT”.

WEIS and COPDAB are of significant importance since most subsequent event datasets have utilized the coding scheme developed by these early examples. For instance, CASCON (Computer-Aided System to Handle Information on Local Conflicts)<sup>26</sup> analyzes crisis events under a case/phase categorization. CREON, which was formed in 1969,<sup>27</sup> recorded events, defined as “any action resulting from a decision by political authorities of a state that has the power to commit the resources of the national government.”<sup>28</sup>

The SHERFACS<sup>29</sup> dataset builds data on international conflicts based on a crisis/phase scale. In SHERFACS, each event is coded under the six-phases of crisis. KEDS (Kansas Event Data System) utilizes the WEIS categorization and provides a machine-coding system for generating event data.<sup>30</sup> The KEDS System also collaborated with PANDA (Protocol for the Assessment of Nonviolent Direct Action) developed by Bond et al. at Harvard.<sup>31</sup> New verb categories have been developed in collaboration with the variety of event datasets utilizing the KEDS system. These categories have been built into two major event data systems - IDEA (Integrated Data for Events Analysis) and CAMEO (Conflict and Mediation Event Observations). CAMEO is based on the previous coding systems developed through the KEDS system. Another version of the most recent event data-coding scheme is IDEA developed by Bond et al.<sup>32</sup> Last but not the least, TFAED (the Turkish Foreign Affairs Event Dataset<sup>33</sup>) initiated a study on TFP between 1990 -2013.

Event data is based upon recognizing patterns of state behavior. Through a step-by-step process, researchers collect stories, code data, and find generalizable patterns through quantitative analysis in order to obtain predictive capacity on possible future behavior. Previously, datasets like WEIS and COPDAB relied on human analysts, basically collecting news reports and hand-coding each event in the dataset. However, later versions of event data such as KEDS and CAMEO utilize a software program called “Text Analysis by Augmenting Replacement Instructions (TABARI)” which is developed specifically for the purpose of event data generation. Recently, Schrodt and Yonamine, and Tüzüner and Biltekin gave a step-by-step explanation of developing event datasets.<sup>34</sup> Those steps are benefited from in the developing of the TFP Roles and Events Dataset (TFPRED) for the purposes of this study.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Lincoln P. Bloomfield and Robert R. Beattie, *CASCON Project: Local Conflict Data, 1945–1969. ICPSR05301–v1* (Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, 1999).

<sup>27</sup> Charles Hermann, Margaret Hermann, Maurice East, Barbara Salmore, Stephen Salmore, and Linda Brady, *Comparative Research on the Events of Nations (CREON) Project: Foreign Policy Events, 1959–1968. ICPSR05205–v1*. (Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium, 1977).

<sup>28</sup> Hermann et al. *Comparative Research on the Events of Nations*, i.

<sup>29</sup> Frank L. Sherman, “SHERFACS: A Cross-Paradigm, Hierarchical and Contextually Sensitive Conflict Management Data Set,” *International Interactions* 20 (1993): 79–100.

<sup>30</sup> Phillip A. Schrodt, *CAMEO Conflict and Mediation Event Observations Event and Actor Codebook*. (Parus Analytics, 2012; first in 1998).

<sup>31</sup> Doug Bond, Joe Bond, Churl Oh and J. Jenkins, & Charles Lewis Taylor, “Integrated Data for Events Analysis (IDEA): An Event Typology for Automated Events Data Development,” *Journal of Peace Research* 40 (2003): 733–45. Cited in Schrodt, *CAMEO Conflict and Mediation event Observations*.

<sup>32</sup> Bond et al., “Integrated Data for Events Analysis (IDEA)”.

<sup>33</sup> Musa Tüzüner and Gonca Biltekin, “A Pilot Study of Quantifying Turkey’s Foreign Affairs: Data Generation, Challenges and Preliminary Analysis,” *All Azimuth* 2, no. 2 (2013): 47–70.

<sup>34</sup> Phillip A. Schrodt and Jay Yonamine, “A Guide to Event Data: Past, Present, and Future” *All Azimuth* 2, no. 2 (2013): 5–22; Tüzüner and Biltekin, “A Pilot Study of Quantifying”.

<sup>35</sup> Sula, “Regional Directions of National Role Conceptions”.

## 2.2. Combining content analysis and event data to analyze TFP: A step-by-step explanation

The utility of role theory is that it provides a structured framework for foreign policy analysis. Indeed, in most studies NRCs are presented as the end products of foreign policy analysis. However, as noted above, I argue that NRCs should not be seen as the end-product but rather the starting point of foreign policy analysis. Once understood in that way, I believe role conceptions are a good way of summarizing and explaining the decision-makers' vision in a compact conceptual manner. While defining each role conception that is identified, the researcher also summarizes the decision-makers' foreign policy vision in a very compact manner.<sup>36</sup> In this section I will provide a detailed explanation on how to build a methodological tool to analyze both. In TFPRED, I coded 87 foreign policy speeches (approximately 238,000 words) of Turkish decision makers and approximately 36,000 news reports.<sup>37</sup> The following section provides a step-by-step explanation of the research procedures that I applied in TFPRED to combine content analysis and event data.<sup>38</sup>

### 2.2.1. Hand-coded content analysis coding scheme

*RT Step 1 - Deciding on the method:* The first step requires the researcher to decide on the proper method to identify NRCs. For various reasons including resource availability, time-management, and financial constraints, I decided to use content analysis of the foreign policy speeches of JDP decision-makers. I looked at the literature and the speeches of the leaders, found 22 role conceptions and coded data according to the coding scheme explained in the next steps below.<sup>39</sup>

Table 1 - TFPRED Role Conceptions

Code	Role	Code	Role
R1	Global System Collaborator	R12	Regional Subsystem collaborator
R2	Defender of Peace & Stability	R13	Western Country
R3	Trading State	R14	Eastern Country
R4	Protector of the Oppressed	R15	Bridge across Continents (Geo.)
R5	Central/Pivotal Country	R16	Faithful Ally
R6	Mediator	R17	Model Country
R7	Peace-maker/Prob. Solver	R18	Developer
R8	Independent	R19	Energy Transporting Country
R9	Active Independent	R20	Good Neighbor
R10	Rising Power	R21	Regional Leader
R11	Bridge across Civilizations	R22	Regional Power

*RT Step 2 – Preparing the content analysis coding scheme:* Content analysis is generally done with a purpose, which is framed with a clear research question. The data in this study were collected with a purpose to answer the following: “What are the most frequently

<sup>36</sup> Yet foreign policy is not just the vision, the relationship between the vision and actual behavior is not direct and automatic. If you cannot measure the relationship between the vision and practice you cannot explain or analyze the foreign policy of a state. Role theory gives a compact and structured framework to fully analyze foreign policy. However without measuring the parallelism it is of limited use for analyzing foreign policy.

<sup>37</sup> Sula, “Regional Directions of National Role Conceptions”.

<sup>38</sup> The best way in learning a research method is applying it. It is a trial and error process during my PhD dissertation research. Certain decisions are made in developing the coding scheme. The decisions I made in developing the TFPRED are presented in the step-by-step explanation below.

<sup>39</sup> At this stage the experience that I developed in the TUBITAK project was quite helpful: Özgür Özdamar, Burak Toygar Halistoprak, ve İsmail Erkam Sula, *Türkiye'nin dış politika rolleri: Ampirik bir yaklaşım* (TÜBİTAK SOBAG Proje 112K163, 2014).

referred to foreign policy role conceptions in the selected speeches?” Relying on my role theory research framework, I divided this question into a list of five sub-questions: 1) How many different role conceptions are uttered and how do they differ from one government period to another?; 2) Do Leaders’ role preferences differ from one another or is there a consistency between them?; 3) Which roles are most/least preferred by each leader?; 4) Do role conceptions have regional-orientation or general-orientation?; and 5) Which regions/countries are the role conceptions directed at?

The coding scheme can only be prepared after determining the research question(s).<sup>40</sup> The coding scheme should (at least) explain the a) sampling method (selection of the raw material), b) coded information (What to code?), and c) the measurement strategy (How to code it?). Once the scheme is determined then one can generate content analysis data by choosing a sample of speeches. In TFPRED the sampling method refers to the rules that I applied in selecting the leaders’ speeches. For scientific reasons, one needs to have a clear, replicable and certain strategy in selecting the sample to be analyzed. The study (TFPRED) used a systematic sampling method<sup>41</sup>. That is to say, before including a speech in the sample, I confirmed that the speech was related to the subject matter of the study. So, a speech was only selected if its main topic was TFP. I also applied additional rules: a) the speech should be longer than 1000 words, b) the speech should be on general TFP not region or issue-specific, and c) the speech should include at least three role references. Next, I used purposive sample selection. The purposive sampling included speeches of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Prime Ministers. After selecting 87 speeches with this strategy I started coding each speech separately.

Here an important step is to determine which information to code. Especially hand-coding is a time-consuming and difficult task. In order to save time for future studies an important tip that should be noted here is that one should “code as much as much information as possible”. Data collection should first and foremost focus on collecting information relevant to the research questions at hand, but one should also keep in mind that some side questions might also be answered as one starts content analysis. In TFPRED, all speeches are coded separately in an MS Excel Worksheet, and each word, paragraph and context that refer to specific foreign policy role conceptions are coded separately. The next step is to decide on the measurement strategy.

In TFPRED, the role conceptions were coded with a specific system of enumeration. For the purposes of TFPRED I needed to measure three main subcategories: 1) frequency, 2) space, and 3) regional orientation. *Frequency* simply counts whether a foreign policy role occurs and how often it is referred to. I observed the percentage shares of each role as well. *Space* discovers how long the role is stated. For instance, in how many different contexts and paragraphs is the role elaborated? How many sentences or words refer to the role? *Orientation* is coded in order to detect the regional direction of the role references. Is the role directed towards a specific region (Rg) or does it have general orientation (Ge)

<sup>40</sup> Here, I have to mention an important point that I observe in some graduate students who are in the process of developing their research. I have seen some colleagues who decide on the methods that they are going to use before exactly determining their theoretical arguments or research questions. A research should not start with the method but instead it should start with a question/problematic. I strongly recommend the reader to keep in mind that the variety of research methods are there to show their utility in the process of conducting a research, based on a pre-determined research question and a theoretical framework. Regardless of their variety, methods are ‘strict’ whereas theoretical arguments are ‘flexible.’ If the method to be used is determined beforehand, the strictness of methods will limit the innovative capacity of the researcher.

<sup>41</sup> Sula, “Regional Directions of National Role Conceptions”.

without any regional direction?

*RT Step 3: Coding Data on TFP Role Conceptions:* Once the coding scheme is determined the next step is to prepare code sheets. The coding sheet should include space for all necessary information. Each speech will be coded to a separate code sheet. In TFPRED I had 22 roles. According to the coding scheme described above, a sample code-sheet will look something like the following:

Table 2-A Sample Coding Sheet

Speech Code : Coded By :				Coding Date :															
Leader : Speech # : Speech Date : Speech Source :				Speech Title : Speech Size (App.# of words): Speech Subject : Audience :															
TFP ROLES		Freq # of references	Space # of Contexts	Space # of paragraphs	Orientation (Regional or General)				Region/Country										
Code	Role				Rg	Rg#	Ge	Ge#	Rg1		Rg2		Rg3		Rg4		Rg5		
R1	GSC																		
R2	DoP																		
R3	TS																		
R4	Prot																		
R5	CC																		
R6	Med																		
R7	PM																		
R8	Indp																		
R9	AI																		
R10	Rise																		
R11	Brid																		
R12	RSC																		
R13	West																		
R14	East																		
R15	Brid																		
R16	FA																		
R17	Model																		
R18	Dev.																		
R19	ETC																		
R20	GN																		
R21	RL																		
R22	RP																		
Add?																			
New lines might be added depending on the number of roles. In TFPRED I have 22 roles																			

The code sheet above has space for all information that I need. In TFPRED, a sample coded sheet looks like the following.

Table 3- A Sample Coding Sheet TFPRED

Speech Code : **AG 15**  
 Coded By : **Erkan**

Coding Date: **16.10.2015**

FINAL CODING HERE – SAME AS TFPRED EXCELL DATASET																			
TFP ROLES		Y/N (1/0)	F#	S-C	S-P	OR				R/C									
#	ROLE					RG (1/0)	RG#	GE (1/0)	GE#	RG1 #	RG1 C	RG2 #	RG2 C	RG3 #	RG3 C	RG4 #	RG4 C	RG5 #	RG5 C
R1	Global System Collaborator	1	1	1	1	0	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R2	Defender of peace and Stability	1	6	5	6	1	2	1	4	-	-	-	-	2	2188	-	-	-	-
R3	Trading State	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R4	Protector of the Oppressed	1	2	2	2	1	2	0	-	-	-	-	-	2	1000	186	540x	-	-
R5	Central/Pivotal Country	1	2	2	2	0	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R6	Mediator	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R7	Peace-maker/Problem-solver	1	2	2	2	1	5	1	2	-	-	1	1AAR	4	2000	1000	-	-	-
R8	Independent	1	2	2	2	0	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R9	Active Independent	1	5	5	5	1	2	1	3	1	1AAR	-	-	1	1000	-	-	-	-
R10	Rising Power	1	1	1	1	0	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R11	Bridge across Civilizations (Ide)	1	1	1	1	0	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R12	Regional Subsystem Collaborator	1	3	3	3	1	2	1	1	-	-	1	1000	1	1000	-	-	-	-
R13	Western Country	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1000
R14	Eastern Country (Muslim Country)	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	-	-	-	-	-	1	1000	-	-	-	-
R15	Bridge across Continents (Geo)	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R16	Faithful Ally	1	2	1	2	1	2	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2000
R17	Model Country	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R18	Developer	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	-	-	-	-	-	1	1000	-	-	-	-
R19	Energy Transporting Country	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R20	Good Neighbor	1	3	2	3	1	3	0	-	-	-	1	1AAR	2	2000	-	-	-	-
R21	Regional Leader	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R22	Regional Power	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The codes in each column of the coding sheet refer to the following

Y/N : if the role is observed at least once in the speech, then I code “1”, if not “0”

F# : How many times did I observe the role in the speech?

S-c : S(Space) –C(Context) in how many different contexts is the role referred to?

S-p : S(Space) –P(Paragraph) in how many paragraphs is the role referred to?

OR : The orientation (Rg or Ge) of the role

Rg (1/0): If any of the references to the role is directed at a region I code 1 if not 0

Rg# : How many times is the role directed at a region?

Ge (1/0): If any of the references does not have a regional direction I code 1 If not 0

Ge# : How many times is the role uttered with no Rg direction?

R/C : R (Region) – C (Country)

Rg1 : The Balkans and Eastern Europe

Rg2 : The Caucasus, Central Asia, South Asia

Rg3 : MENA and Eastern Mediterranean

Rg4 : Sub-Saharan Africa

Rg5 : Euro-Atlantic

# : Number of references

C : Which country did the role refer to? If no C is found then code NA.

Each speech has to be coded in a separate code-sheet. Then the data is aggregated in an MS Excel Workbook.<sup>42</sup> The following table is taken directly from the dataset and shows how the aggregated version of the TFPRED content analysis data looks like.

<sup>42</sup> A total number of 87 speeches are coded in TFPRED. All codesheets and coded speeches are archived. If you are interested in seeing the codesheets you may reach the author from ismailerkam@gmail.com.

Table 4- TFPRED: Observed Role References in Total 2003-2014

	ROLE	Y/N	F#	[S-c]	[S-p]	Rg (1/0)	Rg#	Ge (1/0)	Ge#	Rg1#	Rg2#	Rg3#	Rg4#	Rg5#
R1	Global System Collaborator	58	169	148	167	0	0	58	169	0	0	0	0	0
R2	Defender of peace & Stability	75	378	316	353	61	242	60	136	29	45	156	8	4
R3	Trading State	49	146	118	128	30	84	33	62	4	30	22	17	7
R4	Protector of the Oppressed	42	159	115	139	41	126	12	33	5	7	106	7	0
R5	Central/Pivotal Country	45	114	100	113	1	1	45	113	0	0	1	0	0
R6	Mediator	28	55	49	51	26	48	7	7	0	16	30	2	0
R7	Peace-maker/Problem-solver	55	148	132	137	50	114	17	34	12	19	80	3	1
R8	Independent	24	44	42	44	3	3	22	41	0	0	3	0	0
R9	Active Independent	71	241	215	235	30	49	66	192	3	4	23	18	1
R10	Rising Power	30	55	49	54	0	0	30	55	0	0	0	0	0
R11	Bridge across Civilizations	36	54	50	54	0	0	37	54	0	0	0	0	0
R12	Regional Subs.collaborator	68	249	199	215	60	197	32	52	23	71	87	7	4
R13	Western Country	55	123	97	121	55	123	0	0	0	0	0	0	123
R14	Eastern Country	12	15	14	14	12	15	0	0	0	0	15	0	0
R15	Bridge across Continents	4	8	5	5	3	7	2	1	2	3	2	0	0
R16	Faithful Ally	36	82	62	80	35	81	1	1	0	0	0	0	81
R17	Model Country	11	14	14	14	10	13	1	1	0	0	12	0	0
R18	Developer	51	165	102	124	47	137	17	28	21	41	41	28	0
R19	Energy Transporting Country	27	42	35	42	9	13	26	29	2	9	1	0	3
R20	Good Neighbor	58	146	113	125	41	107	29	39	24	32	51	0	0
R21	Regional Leader	15	26	21	21	13	21	7	5	4	2	16	0	0
R22	Regional Power	42	97	64	65	39	93	10	4	19	27	40	8	3
	<b>TOTAL</b>	892	2530	2060	2301	566	1474	512	1056	148	306	686	98	227

*RT Step 4- Interpreting data:* Once the data is collected in the desired manner then one can start interpreting it. TFPRED separates and aggregates leader-by-leader and government-by government data from 2003 to 2013. I utilized MS Excel charts and graphs to compare and interpret the findings. Some examples are provided in the sections below. But before starting interpretation let us look at the necessary steps for the second data collection method: Event data.

**2.2.2. Event data coding scheme**

Event data coding techniques are abundant. However, the utility and accessibility of each technique is determined by the capabilities of the researcher. First, the software programs are not particularly user-friendly. Each coding software program works in the basic Terminal (MacOS) or Command Prompt (Microsoft) environment. Understanding and utilizing these coding programs takes time and requires basic knowledge of Linux/Unix/MsDos commands. In some instances, one might need to modify the software program codes in order to make proper use of them. So, a researcher needs to learn (at least) basic programming language in order to generate machine-coded event data. It is easy to reach these software programs from the websites of the above-mentioned datasets. However, the news sources where the raw (original/not coded) material is downloaded are not always found free of charge. So, the coding scheme greatly depends on at least two conditions: first, the financial resources of the researcher and second, access to basic computer programming capabilities.

*ED Step 1: Deciding on the Relevant Software and Finding the Machine-Readable Source Text:* There are a couple of ways of finding the source but the options are limited according to the institutional and financial capabilities of the researcher. Once the sources are found, then comes the limitation of the version of the software program that the analyst will be using in the coding process. For instance, the most recently developed program by event data analysts, PETRARCH (Python Engine for Text Resolution and Related Coding Hierarchy), reads events from .XML files. However, I have not been able to find a free newswire source that

provides downloadable .XML files. Since Bilkent University provides access to LexisNexis Academics, a web source that provides downloadable files with the .HTML .TXT and .PDF file formats. I decided, following a similar method utilized by Tüzüner and Biltekin,<sup>43</sup> to utilize the latest version of the previous event data software TABARI (Textual Analysis by Augmented Replacement Instructions – Version 0.8.4b2), which is able to read .TXT files.

Once the original raw source files are acquired, then the researcher needs to use (at least) three sets of software programs to generate and interpret event data. First, filtering software is needed to convert the original TXT file into a TABARI-readable .TXT file. This software filters the unnecessary details in the newswire document, keeps the date and the ‘lead’ sentences of each news story and sorts them according to the release date. Then, the filtered files are processed through the TABARI software, which generates event data in the “Who, did What, to Whom, When” structure. Remember here that the resulting output. TXT file of the TABARI software will have hundreds of thousands of lines of events in the “Who (Target), did what (event), to whom (target), and when (date)” format, which makes thousands of pages in a single TXT file waiting to be analyzed and interpreted. This analysis and interpretation is done through utilizing the basic aggregation functions of some statistics software programs. There are a couple of ways of making these interpretations. In TFPRED, I utilized a combination of Rstudio to make data aggregations and MS Excel to generate informative figures and graphics.

*ED Step 2: Keywords and Searching the LexisNexis Database:* For the purposes of my study, I decided to utilize the free event data generating software programs of the Computational Event Data System (CEDS), TABARI (Textual Analysis by Augmented Replacement Instructions), provided by Parus Analytical Systems.<sup>44</sup> The programs work with two major online databases: LexisNexis (for AFP Newswire) and Factiva (for Reuters) as news sources. I decided to utilize the LexisNexis database.<sup>45</sup> Downloading the online sources requires the researcher to decide on the exact keywords, and source type. At this step I used a modified version of the method utilized by Tüzüner and Biltekin<sup>46</sup>. Tüzüner and Biltekin’s TFEAD Dataset searched for all types of events between a larger range of actors than the study that I was planning to conduct in this study. For the purposes of my study, I was specifically looking for the events conducted one-way by Turkish government actors, towards international actors. So, the keywords needed to be determined accordingly. The keywords that I used for my search were “LEAD (Turkey OR Turkish OR Turk OR ANKARA).”

After deciding on the keywords, I entered them into the advanced search option and tried to search for the whole temporal domain of the study, between November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2002 and August 29<sup>th</sup> 2014. I soon realized that for some unknown reason the LexisNexis database only shows the first 1000 of news reports if the search results are expected to come up with more than 3000 reports, so I had to divide each year into six months in order to make sure that the results came up with fewer than 3000 results. Then, another surprising result of the great wisdom of the LexisNexis Database engineers was that a researcher could only download 500 news reports in a single TXT file, therefore requiring multiple .TXT files. After finishing my

<sup>43</sup> Tüzüner and Biltekin, “A Pilot Study of Quantifying,” 52.

<sup>44</sup> Parus Analytical Systems, <http://eventdata.parusanalytics.com/index.html>.

<sup>45</sup> LexisNexis database, <https://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/>.

<sup>46</sup> Tüzüner and Biltekin, “A Pilot Study of Quantifying,” 52.

LexisNexis journey, conducting approximately 23 separate “search-find” and 73 “download .TXT file” sessions, I downloaded 73 separate .TXT files each containing 500 news reports and saved them as raw material on my desktop. The search ended up with approximately 36,000 news reports from November 2002 to August 2014, making hundreds of thousands of pages saved in 73 separate TXT files. These files were formatted, divided into paragraphs, and made ready for TABARI by the filtering programs explained in the next section.

*ED Step 3: Filtering and Reformatting Raw Material:* The separate .TXT files downloaded from the LexisNexis website need to be merged, filtered, and sequentially sorted in order to create a single input file for TABARI. This was done with the use of three programs downloadable from the Parus Analytics website.<sup>47</sup> First, the “NewNexisFormat.pl” program runs through the news stories and re-writes their lead sentences into separate .TXT files. Then, the “nexisreverse.pl” program merges those separate files into a single TABARI readable .TXT file. Third, the “seqsort.pl” program does a date sort on the records if they are out of order.<sup>48</sup> After the use of these three programs, the NEWS reports that are downloaded from LexisNexis turn into a single TABARI readable text file containing the lead sentences of each report. The filtering process is very important to generate event data, otherwise, TABARI will not be able to read the news. The newly created and filtered single .TXT file becomes the input file for TABARI. The input file that I created for the TFPRED dataset, named “TFPRED160523.text,” contained approximately 150,000 lines of news reports (only lead sentences) from November, 2002 to August, 2014.

*ED Step 4: Utilizing the TABARI Software and Coded events:* For multiple reasons explained above I used the TABARI (Textual Analysis by Augmented Replacement Instructions – Version 0.8.4b2) program to code events.<sup>49</sup> The TABARI program folder can be downloaded from the Parus Analytics website. The folder contains most of the files that are necessary to run TABARI (the program file, options file, project file, and the actors and verbs dictionaries).

The TFPRED files were developed upon modifications of the GDELT dictionaries and options files provided by the Computational Event Data System Project. The GDELT dictionaries were also downloaded from the Parus Analytics website. In order to modify the dictionaries, first, a dry-run was made with the “Globalnet.131001” actors and verbs dictionaries. Then, events that are related to Turkey were analyzed and modifications made accordingly. In the dry-run, the filtered “TFPRED160523.text” file ended up with 14,204 events. Then the ministers of each government from 2002 to 2014, some city names from Turkey, and the Turkish version of the ministers’ and cities’ names (e.g. *Gül, Erdoğan, Bağış, İstanbul, İzmir etc.*) were added to the dictionaries. After modifications, a second run was made, ending up with 22,687 events. After further dictionary modifications another run was made, resulting again with the same number 22,687 events. The output file containing all 22,687 events was named “TFPRED160528”. This file contained events such as these:

<sup>47</sup> To download the filtering program visit the: <http://eventdata.parusanalytics.com/software.dir/filters.html> website and download the zip file entitled “NewNexisFormat.pl (Perl)”. The zip file contains a folder with three software programs and a readme file describing how to use them. For further details on the use of the filtering software please see the section 2.1. Of the TABARI Manual (0.8.4) downloadable from <http://eventdata.parusanalytics.com/tabari.dir/TABARI.0.8.4b3.manual.pdf>, accessed March 1, 2016.

<sup>48</sup> This step might seem confusing, but once you read the “Readme.txt” file downloaded from Parusanalytics (look at the previous footnote) the details become clarified. Both the readme file and the TABARI Manual explain the filtering process clearly.

<sup>49</sup> As it is also explained above once you have come to this step, it is assumed that you have already downloaded and filtered the news reports and have a single raw input file for the program to work on. Once ready, you can download the TABARI program bundle from the: <http://eventdata.parusanalytics.com/software.dir/tabari.html>, accessed March 1, 2016.

021118	TUR	ISR	090	Investigate
021118	IRQ	USAGOV	195	Employ aerial weapons
021118	IRQ	IGOUNO	128	Defy norms, law
...				
140827	EUR	IRN	036	Express intent to meet o
140828	TUR	TURGOV	112	Accuse
140828	TUR	TURGOV	112	Accuse

Once the events output file is created, then you can start working on event aggregation. Currently the “Events” package of the Rstudio (CranR) is the easiest and highly useful way to work on event data.<sup>50</sup> When the events are loaded into Rstudio the “events” package makes some additional tweaking of the data, removing duplicate events and sorting each event according to date.<sup>51</sup> The Rstudio-events package filtered data ended up with 20,187 events after the removal of mostly irrelevant (duplicate and sports related) events. However at this point the newly sorted and filtered data clarified that the TABARI software additionally codes phrases like “actor X said that it will do Y the next year” as if the promise has been made in the previous year. So, an event that took place in 14 March 2003 (Date: 030314) is coded as a promise that has been made the previous year (Date: 020314). Eighteen such instances were manually removed from the data set in order to fine-tune the events. As a result, the data ended up with 20,165 events between November 2002 and August 2016.

*ED Step 5: A short note on Rstudio “Events” package:* After working on the event data software (Text filtering, TABARI, PETRARCH) for approximately a year, the TFPRED data had finally become ready to aggregate and analyze. I had run the TABARI software a couple of times in order to reach the above-mentioned final document. Only some of the details are written here, however, I have prepared a long readme.txt file in the dataset and have put it in the TFPRED section of my website. Please note that, in my dissertation<sup>52</sup> I only provide a necessary summary of what I did to prepare Rstudio.<sup>53</sup> The document has details on how the R studio “events” package is used in filtering and aggregating the data to be utilized in the TFPRED data set.

Each step in building a data set requires a decision and each decision has certain consequences. In my work, I decided to utilize two programs - “R studio” and “MS Excel” and this is a result of many trials and failures. So the information in the document is based on my personal experience for the specific purpose of building the TFPRED data set. The document assumes that the reader has basic knowledge of R studio. If not, I still provide as much detail as possible but a best suggestion to those who would like to generate event data and aggregate with Rstudio might be a quote from Samuel Barclay Beckett: “Ever tried, ever failed, no matter, try again, fail again, fail better.”

<sup>50</sup> The aggregation choices are explained in detail by James E. Yonamine in an unpublished manuscript which can be downloaded from website. James E. Yonamine, “Working with Event Data: A Guide to Aggregation Choices” (unpublished paper), accessed April 1, 2015, <http://jayyonamine.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Working-with-Event-Data-A-Guide-to-Aggregation-Choices.pdf>.

<sup>51</sup> For those who are not familiar with CranR, there are video tutorials in the web explaining what CranR is, how Rstudio works and how the packages are to be downloaded. If you are interested in utilizing Rstudio (it is very useful for event data) a short google search for Rstudio tutorials might be quite helpful. Once the events package for R studio is downloaded the package contains a detailed explanation on how to use the commands. For further questions you might reach me via email: [ismailerkam@gmail.com](mailto:ismailerkam@gmail.com).

<sup>52</sup> Sula, “Regional Directions of National Role Conceptions”.

<sup>53</sup> The readme file is quite technical and provides a long and step-by-step explanation of what I did in Rstudio. I explained each step as clearly as I was able to. Please see the codebook. The works of Phillip Schrodtt and other event data scholars have been very helpful for me in understanding how to work with event data. Now, I would very much like to do the same and help others. For any questions, please do not hesitate to reach me via email: [ismailerkam@gmail.com](mailto:ismailerkam@gmail.com).

### 2.2.3. Matching the events with role conceptions

TFPRED observes the frequency and regional direction of 22 role conceptions and summarizes TFP practices via presenting data on the frequency (# of appearance), nature (conflict/cooperation continuum), and direction (regional orientation) of the events. After presenting TFP discourse and practice separately, I proposed a novel approach in observing the parallelism between the two. As shown in my dissertation; Appendix D 208 different events are coded in the dataset. In order to observe the parallelism, my study matched each of these events with relevant role conceptions. This Event-Role Matching Table is presented below:

Table 5- Role Conception/Event Code Matching Table

Code	Role	Event Codes
R1	GSC	Number of cooperative events (both verbal and material cooperation) From TR (source) to global IGO's (targets).
R2	DoP	0256, 026, 027, 028, 0356, 036, 037, 038, 039, 045, 087, 0871, 0872, 0873, 0874, 1123, 1124
R3	Trade. S.	0211, 0311, 061, 1011
R4	Protector	0233, 033, 0331, 0332, 0334, 036, 070, 071, 072, 073, 074, 075, 1054, 112, 1121, 1122, 1123, 1124, 162, 1621, 1622
R5	Central C.	This role is a verbal construction - Non-observable through event data
R6	Mediator	028, 039, 045
R7	Peace-maker	037, 1056, 107
R8	Independent	016, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 1241, 1246, 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 139, 160, 161, 162, 1621, 1622, 163, 164
R9	Active Indep.	Foreign policy activity (total number of events towards different regions)
R10	Rising Power	This role refers to a rise in economic and military power. Non-observable through event data.
R11	Bridge (Civ)	This role is a verbal construction - Non-observable through event data
R12	RSC	021, 0211, 0212, 0213, 0214, 022, 30, 031, 0311, 0312, 032, 050, 060, 061, 062, 063, 064, 101, 1011, 1014, 102
R13	West C.	Events to Rg5
R14	East C.	Events to Rg3
R15	Bridge (Geo)	This role is a verbal construction - Non-observable through event data
R16	Faith. A	Rg5 (013, 019, 021, 0211, 0212, 0213, 0214, 022, 030, 031, 0311, 0312, 032, 033, 0331, 0332, 0334, 050, 051, 052, 053, 057, 060, 061, 062, 063, 064, 100, 101)
R17	Model C.	This role is a verbal construction - Non-observable through event data
R18	Developer	033, 0331, 0332, 0334, 070, 071, 072, 073, 074, 075, 1122, 1123, 1124
R19	Energy T.	This role is currently non-observable through event data
R20	Good N.	021, 0211, 0212, 0213, 0214, 022, 030, 031, 0311, 0312, 032, 037, 055
R21	Rg. Leader	014, 100, 101, 102, 104, 105, 106, 107, 130, 131, 1311, 1312, 1313, 132, 134, 136, 138, 1382, 1383, 1384, 139
R22	Rg. Power	010, 012, 013, 017, 020, 040, 041, 042, 043, 044, 045, 046, 050, 051, 052, 053, 054, 055, 056, 057, 110, 111, 112, 1121, 1122, 1123, 1124

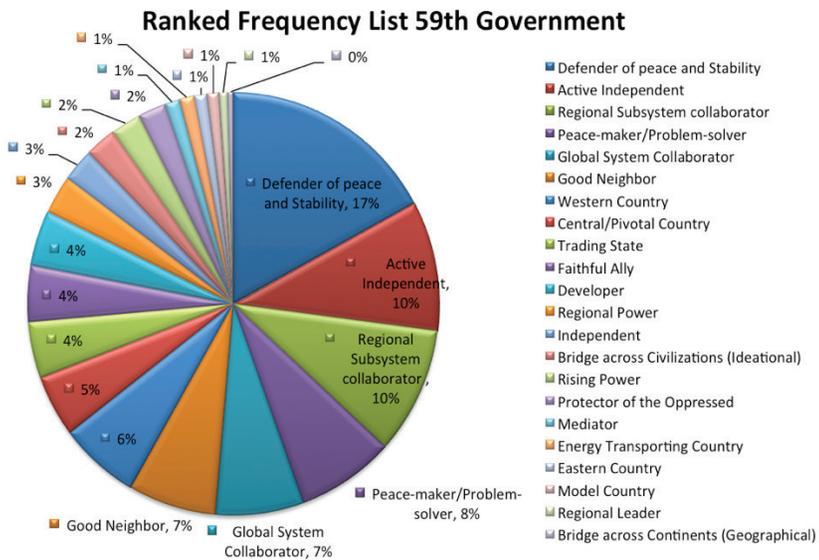
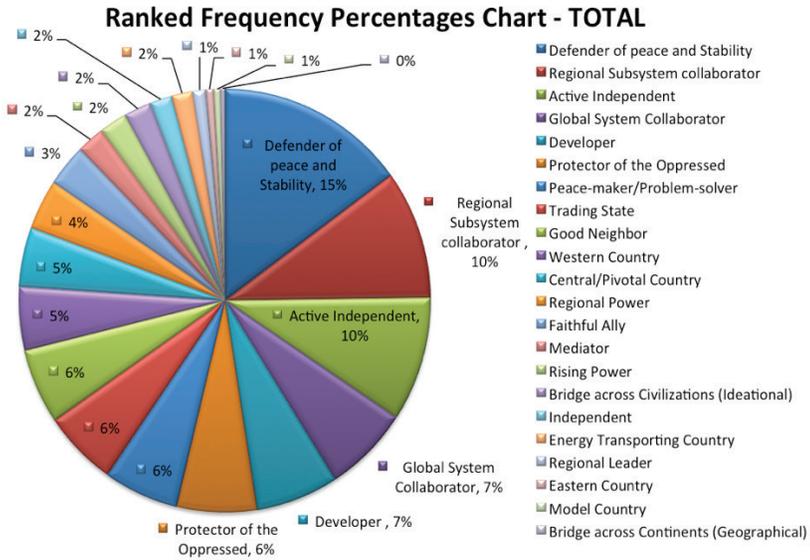
With the matching table above one can observe the appearance of each role conception in the foreign policy events of the country. Next, let us see how the parallelism between role references and events are observed

### 2.3. A combination of role theory and event data: the case of Turkey

This section gives short examples about the application of this methodology to the case of Turkey. Eighty-seven speeches are coded with the content analysis scheme explained above. The details of these speeches are as follows:



I calculated the percentages of role reference frequencies and made government based comparisons as well. From the data, I generated a number of exemplary figures in order to make certain interpretations.



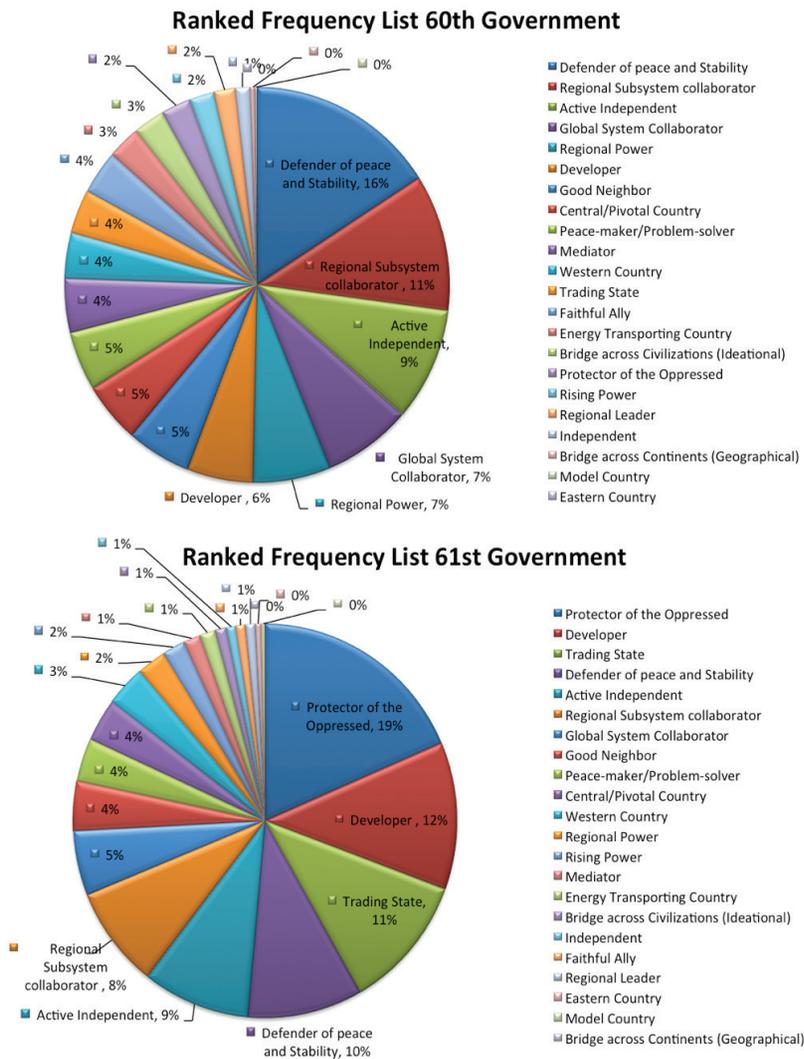


Figure 1: Government-by-government role reference frequency

The charts above show the government-by-government role reference frequency percentages. The figures also indicate the percentage shares of each role conception. I used the percentages in order to compare the weight of each role conception in the speeches. I also used these percentage shares later in comparing role references (words) and role performance (deeds). Once data on TFP role conceptions were collected and interpreted, I focused on TFP deeds. For this purpose, I used TABARI to generate event data, aggregated the data and made my interpretations. With event data one can observe and compare at least three types of foreign policy behavior: 1. Frequency, 2. Scale, 3. Category.

First, one can look at the *Frequency* (intensity of relationship) of foreign policy events. Here, I count the number of observed events (Monthly, quarterly or yearly) and use the rising or declining number of events as indicators of TFP activism:

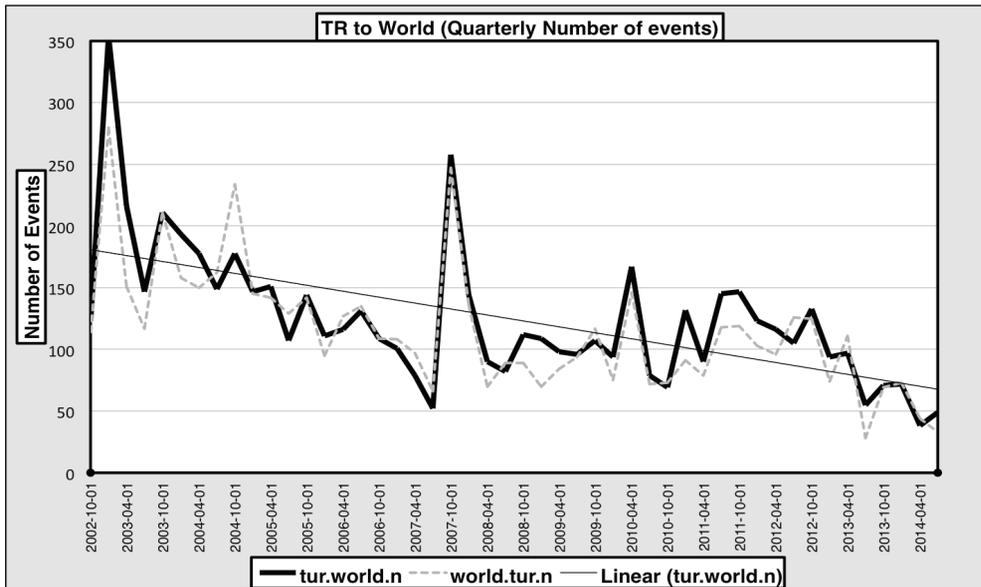


Figure 2: Number of events as indicators of TFP activism

From this figure one can make at least four main observations on TFP activism. First, TFP activity decreases before the general elections and makes a peak just after elections. Second, the number of observed foreign policy events increases when significant real life foreign policy crises (like revolutions, wars, political/military conflicts) emerge in the country's surrounding regions. Third, there is a correlation (if not causality) between domestic political crisis and foreign policy activity. As the significance of domestic political crisis increase, the country's foreign policy activity decreases. TFP activity falls below average when the country deals with domestic political turmoil like the E-Memorandum, Republican Meetings, constitutional disagreements, the terrorist bombing in Reyhanlı, the Gezi protests and the 17/25 December Investigations. Last but not the least, TFP activism follows a pattern of decline from one government to the other, between 2002 and 2014.

Second, one can apply a certain *Scale* to observe the nature of a country's foreign policy behavior. Here, alternative scales exist but the most commonly used and widely accepted version in event data analysis is the Goldstein scale. Accordingly, I scaled events along the cooperation (+10) and conflict (-10) continuum. Then I aggregated these scores (quarterly or monthly) in order to observe the conflictual/cooperative nature of the country's foreign relations. The figures emerged as follows:

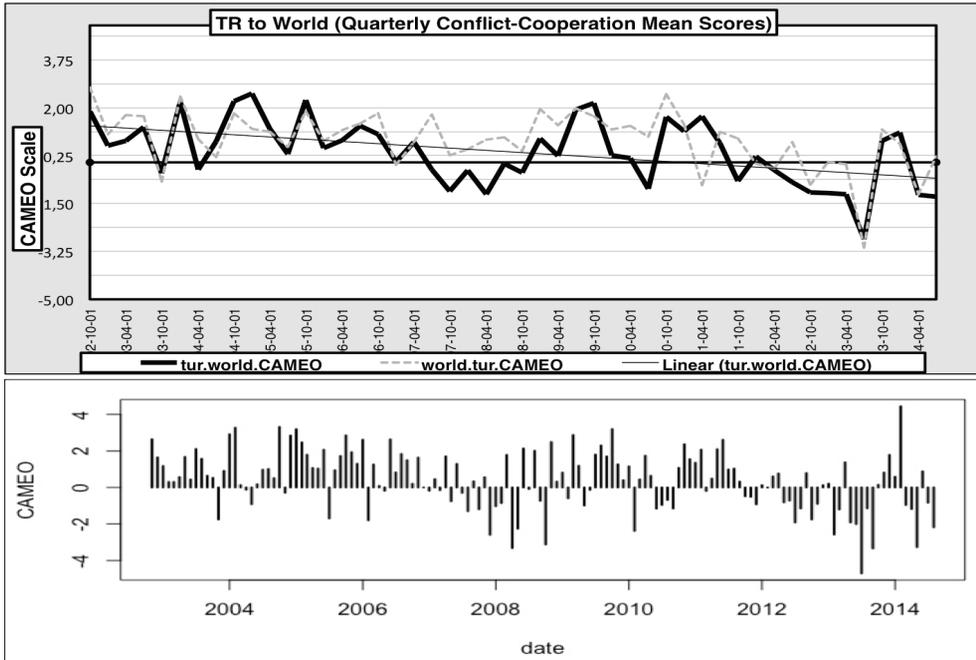


Figure 3: The nature of TFP behavior

TFP event scores indicate three main observations about the nature of Turkey’s foreign relations. First, the early JDP governments (58<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup>) followed a cooperative foreign policy towards the world. This period corresponds with the so-called “golden age” of Europeanization and the establishment of the “zero-problems” policy. The findings indicate that the initial activism in the JDP’s foreign policy was cooperative. Second, the TFP under the 60<sup>th</sup> government (July 2007- June 2011) turned into a mixture of conflict and cooperation. Third, the nature of the TFP turned towards conflict after 2010. As the foreign policy events towards the regions indicate, this turn towards conflict corresponds with the Arab Uprisings period in the MENA region. Overall, there is a significant pattern of decline in the average cooperation scores of the three JDP governments.

Third, one can look at the type of foreign relations by looking at their *Category*. Here, I categorized events along different event types, verbal cooperation/material cooperation, verbal conflict/material conflict. Then, I counted the number of cooperative and conflictual events and compared the type of foreign policy activism from one government to the other.

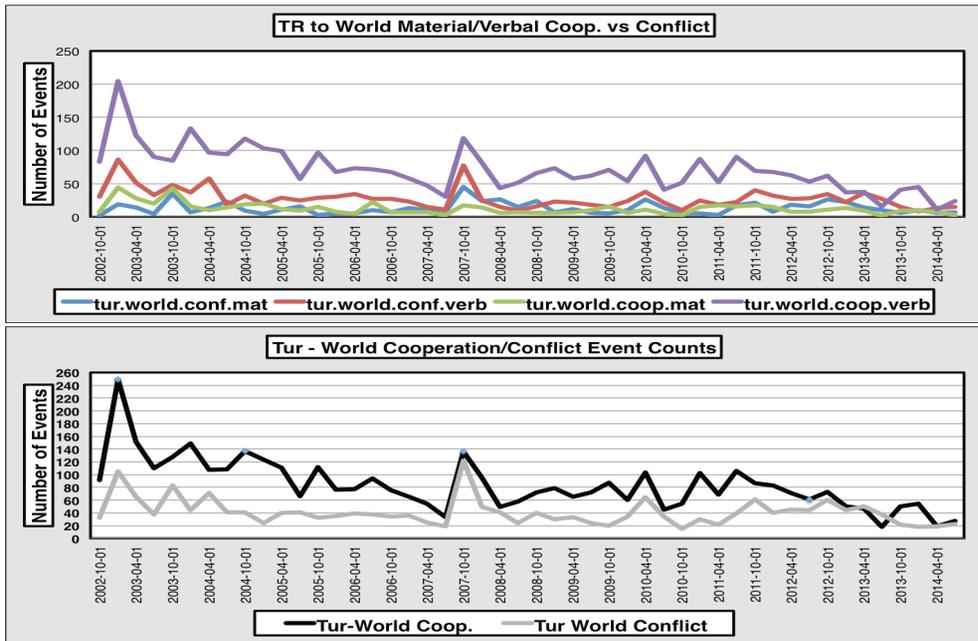


Figure 4: The type of foreign relations by looking at their *Category*

Event types also indicated similar findings with the event scales, with the JDP foreign policy turning towards conflict. As the figures indicate, the gap between the number of cooperative events and conflictual events closes. Cooperative events decrease while the number of conflictual events increases. The percentage share of cooperative events is 71% in the 58<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> governments, 67% in the 60<sup>th</sup> government, and 58% in the 61<sup>st</sup> government. Second, I also observed that the share of “verbal cooperation” is in decline. Third, there is a parallel significant pattern of increase in the share of material conflict: 5% in the 58<sup>th</sup> government, 8% in the 59<sup>th</sup> government, 12% in the 60<sup>th</sup> government, and 15% in the 61<sup>st</sup> government.<sup>54</sup>

After making these observations, I developed a novel approach to compare TFP Words (content analysis) and TFP deeds (event data). This comparison was made in four steps: (1) Match each event code with role conceptions; (2) observe the appearance of each role in TFP events; (3) calculate the percentage share of each role’s appearance; and (4) compare the percentage shares of each role in W/D. Then in comparing the words and deeds I applied the following scale:

- If the difference is more than - 15% then the role is “highly underperformed”
- If the difference is between -6% to -14% then the role is “underperformed”
- If the difference is less than 5% then the role is “performed”
- If the difference is between +6 % to +14 then the role is “overperformed”
- If the difference is more than + 15% then the role is “highly overperformed”

Then, an excerpt from the TFPRED dataset is as follows:

<sup>54</sup> I also applied these comparisons to each region. If you are interested in regional FP Behaviour please refer to Sula, “Regional directions of National Role Conceptions,” or email the author from: ismailerkam@gmail.com.

Table 8- TFPRED Words and Deeds Data Table

		FULL DATA TABLE																	
ALL DATA		TOTAL		GOVERNMENTS								REGIONS							
CODE	ROLE	Total - W	Total - D	G59W	G59D	G60W	G60D	G61W	G61D	Rg1W	Rg1D	Rg2W	Rg2D	Rg3W	Rg3D	Rg4W	Rg4D	Rg5W	Rg5D
R1	GSC	169	119	82	69	54	29	33	21	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
R2	Dop	378	128	203	52	115	48	60	28	29	8	45	20	156	76	8	2	4	23
R3	TS	146	38	51	20	26	9	69	9	4	2	30	14	22	14	17	0	7	8
R4	Protect	159	142	26	74	18	24	115	44	5	5	7	14	106	95	7	3	0	0
R5	CC	114	NA	56	NA	36	NA	22	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
R6	Mediate	55	33	14	7	32	22	9	4	0	0	16	6	30	21	2	0	0	0
R7	PM	148	14	91	11	35	2	22	1	12	4	19	5	80	2	3	0	1	0
R8	Indep.	44	359	30	155	9	103	5	101	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
R9	AI	241	5492	118	2468	67	1779	56	1245	3	NA	4	NA	23	NA	18	NA	1	NA
R10	Rise	55	NA	28	NA	15	NA	12	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
R11	Geobridg.	54	NA	29	NA	19	NA	6	NA	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
R12	RSC	249	443	116	233	81	149	52	61	23	39	71	86	87	168	7	5	4	145
R13	West	123	1654	75	959	27	422	21	273	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	123	
R14	East	15	2382	12	869	0	803	3	710	0	0	0	0	15	NA	0	0	0	0
R15	CivBridg.	8	NA	5	NA	3	NA	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
R16	FA	82	256	51	159	26	68	5	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	81	256
R17	Model	14	NA	11	NA	1	NA	2	NA	0	NA	0	NA	12	NA	0	NA	0	NA
R18	Develop.	165	137	50	73	40	31	75	33	21	4	41	14	41	92	28	3	0	0
R19	ETC	42	NA	14	NA	20	NA	8	NA	2	NA	9	NA	1	NA	0	NA	3	NA
R20	GoodN	146	154	82	71	39	57	25	26	24	23	32	43	51	88	0	0	0	0
R21	RL	26	154	8	51	13	57	5	46	4	11	2	28	16	114	0	0	0	0
R22	RP	97	2697	35	1254	47	874	15	569	19	202	27	421	40	1141	8	22	3	911
	TOTAL	2530	14202	1187	6525	723	4477	620	3200	146	298	303	651	680	1811	98	35	227	1343

From the table above, I excluded the roles that were non-observable with event-data and worked with the remaining roles.<sup>55</sup> The government based percentage shares of compared role conceptions in TFP words and TFP deeds are shown in the next figures:

<sup>55</sup> Central country, Geographical Bridge, Civilizational Bridge, Model Country, Energy Transporting country are excluded from data because they are not observable through event data (discussed in the conclusion). Certain other roles (Western Country, Eastern Country, and Active Independent) are excluded from overall comparison but analyzed separately because they require count only specific types of events and would misguide the overall comparison.

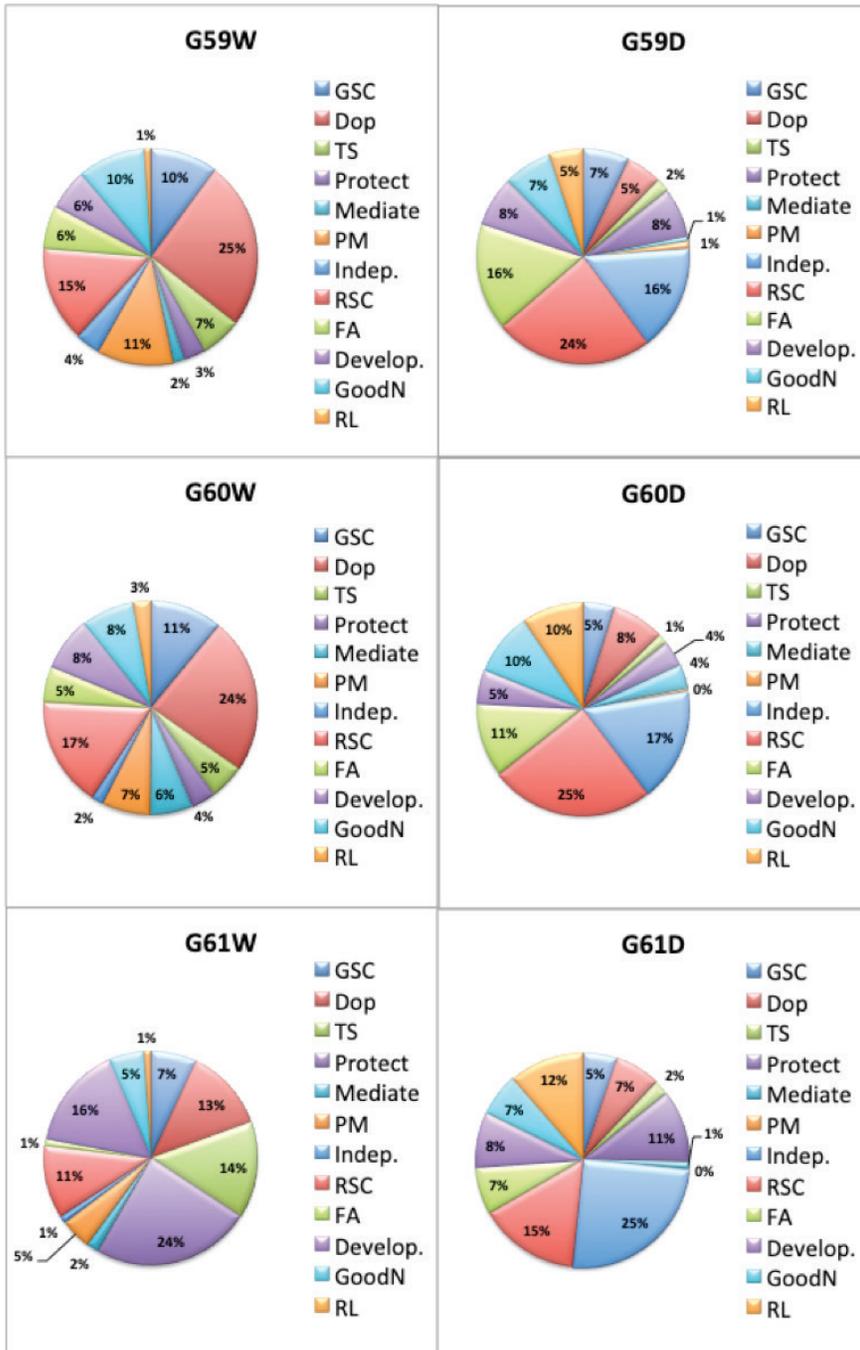


Figure 5: The government based percentage shares of compared role conceptions in TFP words and TFP deeds

Once the percentage shares were compared, I generated the following summary table:

Table 9- TFPRED Summary: Words and Deeds parallelism

ROLE CONCEPTION				ROLE PERFORMANCE			
ROLE	Rank Total	% Share	Type	Total	59th Gov	60th Gov	61st Gov
R1-GSC	4 <sup>th</sup>	7%	Ge	Performed	Performed	Underperformed	Performed
R2-Dop	1 <sup>st</sup>	15%	Type3	Highly underperformed	Highly underperformed	Highly underperformed	Underperformed
R3-TS	8 <sup>th</sup>	6%	Type3	Underperformed	Performed	Performed	Underperformed
R4-Protect	6 <sup>th</sup>	6%	Type2	Performed	Performed	Performed	Underperformed
R5-CC	11 <sup>th</sup>	5%	Ge	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable
R6-Mediate	14 <sup>th</sup>	2%	Type2	Performed	Performed	Performed	Performed
R7-PM	7 <sup>th</sup>	6%	Type2	Underperformed	Underperformed	Not performed	Not performed
R8-Indep.	17 <sup>th</sup>	2%	Ge	Highly over-performed	Over-performed	Highly over-performed	Highly over-performed
R9-AI	3 <sup>rd</sup>	10%	Type2	Performed	Performed	Performed	Performed
R10-Rise	15 <sup>th</sup>	2%	Ge	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable
R11-CivBrid.	22 <sup>nd</sup>	2%	Ge	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable
R12-RSC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	10%	Type3	Over-performed	Over-performed	Over-performed	Performed
R13-West	10 <sup>th</sup>	5%	Type1	Over-performed	D more than W	D more than W	D more than W
R14-East	20 <sup>th</sup>	1%	Type1	Performed	W/D parallel	W/D parallel	W/D parallel
R15-GeoBrid.	16 <sup>th</sup>	0%	Type2	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable
R16-FA	13 <sup>th</sup>	3%	Type1	Over-performed	Over-performed	Over-performed	Over-performed
R17-Model	21 <sup>st</sup>	1%	Type1	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable
R18-Develop.	5 <sup>th</sup>	7%	Type2	Performed	Performed	Underperformed	Performed
R19-ETC	18 <sup>th</sup>	2%	Type2	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable	Non-observable
R20-GoodN	9 <sup>th</sup>	6%	Type2	Performed	Performed	Performed	Performed
R21-RL	19 <sup>th</sup>	1%	Type2	Over-performed	Performed	Over-performed	Over-performed
R22-RP	12 <sup>th</sup>	4%	Type3	Underperformed	W/D not parallel Rg5	W/D not parallel Rg5	W/D not parallel Rg5

The table above illustrates that 11 roles are performed, five roles are underperformed and the parallelism of six roles could not be observed in the TFPRED.<sup>56</sup> From the words and deeds comparison I was able to make four overall observations. First, the TFPRED showed that all uttered roles are not performed in TFP practices. Second, there is a significant gap between W/D in peace-related roles. This indicates that TFP practices are not as peaceful as the decision-makers frame in their speeches. Certain peace related roles like Defender of Peace, Peacemaker, and Mediator are underperformed. Finally, both activism and cooperation are in decline in TFP. Turkey's foreign policy activism is in decline and a turn towards conflict from one government to the other can be observed through this methodology.

### 3. Conclusion

This article offers a new methodological approach to analyze state foreign policies. With this approach a researcher can analyze foreign policy words, deeds, and parallelism between the two. Indeed, there is a wide and rich set of tools in the FPA literature that can be fruitfully utilized. However, most of the existing studies look at only one aspect of foreign policy while –somehow- disregarding the other. Foreign policy is the combination of both vision and action and the analysis requires a methodological tool that can identify the relationship between the foreign policy vision and its actual conduct. Thus, the claim here is that the relationship between the state foreign policy vision identified in the words or speeches of decision-makers and the actual foreign policy practices of states is not always direct. Vision does not always turn into action. In this sense, a holistic analysis of foreign policy requires a holistic methodological approach that can observe and identify the link between the two.

I have worked on this topic and other relevant ones for eight years and presented my research in several conferences. In most of those academic meetings I could only get mixed and limited feedback from the people who were not so busy to listen to me. Indeed, it was

<sup>56</sup> The role-specific observations section of Sula 2017 (Chapter VI – Section 6.2) provides detailed explanations and interpretations on how I came up with these results for each role.

not always easy to get technical support to fine-tune the methodological approach that I was trying to develop. I could do the hard work by myself, hand-code and collect my own data, learn using new computer software by myself, yet for the methodological approach I needed support from experts. So it will be much easier if a beginner gets guidance and training from experts on the basics of data collection, use of software, and some tips and difficulties in the path. A qualified and encouraging supervision committee works perfectly in this case. Another way is to take part in research projects. During my graduate education, I took part in two different research projects where I assisted data collection. I strongly believe that experiencing teamwork and taking part in research projects is a perfect way to start data collection. At a certain point a young researcher wants to have more maneuvering capacity and to go beyond the limits that are pre-determined by another scholar's research project. That point becomes the starting point of her/his own data collection journey.

Utilizing the above-mentioned eclectic methodology, I collected and categorized data on TFP words and deeds between November 2002 and August 2014 in the TFPRED. I categorized and aggregated data in order to make leader-specific, region-specific and government-specific observations on TFP. The TFPRED makes the following contributions: (1) it builds up a novel methodological model to combine observed role conceptions (words) with observed event data (deeds); (2) it builds a large open-source dataset on observed role conceptions and foreign policy events; (3) it provides a structured, comprehensive, and falsifiable explanation of TFP in the JDP period based on observable and replicable data; (4) it establishes a new role conceptualization of performed, underperformed and over-performed role conceptions; and (5) it proposes a new role typology to cover the regional direction of role conceptions. However, while these present positive steps forward, the comparison summary table shown earlier also revealed that the performance of some roles could not be observed, indicating the need to acknowledge certain methodological limitations.

Some methodological limitations stem from the use of event data analysis. As I have summarized above there are some studies that use event data in FPA. Yet, most of these studies utilize event data for conflict analysis. These studies analyze domestic events, but not foreign policy events. Because of this, some of the event verb codes are only related to domestic conflict. The coding software TABARI or PETRARCH are continuously developed with an aim to observe domestic or international conflicts around the world. The coded data includes data on actors other than states and issue areas other than foreign policy. The current state of the literature indicates that event data analysis will continue to develop in the 'conflict analysis' path and will increasingly part from the FPA field. While building the TFPRED, I filtered relevant actors and excluded irrelevant verbs from the data. The filtering, excluding, and aggregating relevant data, which is the approach that I apply in this study, will still be applicable in the future. Yet, a better approach at the issue would be to further update event data software, and increase its capacity to observe a larger set of foreign policy events with more foreign policy related verb codes. To achieve this aim, the theoretical and methodological approach of this study can be a good starting point.

Indeed, the study of foreign policy will continue to remain incomplete without having a scale to measure performance. The procedures that I apply in building the TFPRED dataset and in making the words-deeds comparison in this study aim at developing such a scale. Yet, although it has a high potential, I should admit that the scale needs further development. Perhaps, acquiring and applying more advanced statistical skills could increase the validity

of the comparison.

Another and equally important point of assessment is about content analysis. I preferred to use hand-coding in content analysis in my research. There are quite advanced coding software programs that a researcher can use to analyze foreign policy speeches. Yet, I am not sure if I could rely on the capacity of these programs in analyzing Turkish speeches. Role conceptions are generally hidden in the context and the meaning attributed to words. For this reason, it is also necessary to fine-tune the definitions in the process of reading the speeches. Sometimes I even needed to add new role conceptions to the list while reading different leaders' speeches just because of the meanings hidden in the context. One of the most important steps here is to create exclusive and exhaustive definitions of each role conception. This step will most probably take longer than expected. Having public opinion polls, making interviews to check the definitions with other experts, looking at the existing definitions in the literature and checking the inter-coder reliability by asking other people to code speeches with the existing definitions might be useful measures to have better definitions.<sup>57</sup>

After coming up with definitions of role conceptions that work for the research, an important next step is to observe the parallelism. Yet, here the researcher faces another significant problem. Some role conceptions are basically non-observable. In my study, I could not observe the performance of six role conceptions because I could not measure them with event data. I think that one can develop alternative ways to observe these role conceptions. For instance, the performance of 'rising power' role conception requires having a detailed look at economic, and military figures indicating the increasing power of Turkey. A 'model country' role conception necessitates fieldwork in the regions towards which the role is directed at. In addition, the performance of 'energy transporting country (ETC)' role conception requires taking a look at Turkey's energy agreements with the countries of the regions. All these methods are currently beyond the scope of this study. Yet, these are fruitful directions for future research.

These limitations also determine the applicability of the methodological approach, which is, of course, always open for further development. The approach contains both advantages and disadvantages in its application. One of the important advantages is that the researcher can collect data. Data-collection is a burdensome yet very fruitful process. In addition to reviewing the existing literature a researcher needs to acquire certain skills to collect and code data. Learning the basics of data collection, obtaining the raw material (speeches or news reports) to analyze/process, taking necessary scientific measures, coding data, checking data validity, and convincing the scientific community/audience are difficult and time/energy consuming processes. Indeed, as indicated previously this is a journey where the researcher "tries again, fails again, and fails better." However, the process usually brings very concrete, observable and applicable results. For instance, my research produced the TFPRED. Collecting data and combining words and deeds of foreign policy came up with a potentially very productive research agenda. In its current state, beside its contributions to the academic literature, the study stands as a 'research questions generator.'

As a research questions generator, the TFPRED has shown the validity of my two main claims: 1) There are region-specific differences in Turkey's NRCs, and 2) All role conceptions (words) do not turn into practice (deeds) in foreign policy. The TFPRED gives descriptive/statistical data on foreign policy vision, on the foreign policy practices, on the roles attributed

<sup>57</sup> Indeed, we used all these measures in the TUBİTAK Project (Özdamar et al. 2014).

to the country, and on the foreign relations of the country. It also shows both performed and non-performed role conceptions. With each performed and non-performed role conception one can come up with new research questions: (1) Why are some role conceptions performed whereas others are not? (2) Why do leaders utter role conceptions that are not performed? (3) If non-performed role conceptions are not to be taken as determinants of future foreign policy actions then why do we find them? On the other hand, one can also come up with country-specific or empirical research questions. For Turkey, the country is generally referred to as a middle power, or regional great power. Such status potentially affects the country's role performance in the five neighboring regions (Balkans, MENA, Southern Caucasus/Central Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Euro-Atlantic). In addition to status, role prescriptions are those that are ascribed to the ego (the agent- in IR the state) by the 'alter' (other actors within the society- in IR the countries/allies and/or other international actors). For instance, Turkey has been prescribed a bridge role between the democratic/Christian West and authoritarian/Muslim Middle East. For a long time, Turkish leaders have been eager to perform such a role. But the understanding of bridge has been slightly changed in the JDP period, at least in rhetoric. For instance, JDP decision-makers, especially in their first term of government referred to a mediator role in establishing an alliance between civilizations. However, it is hardly possible to claim that together with Spain the two countries were able to materialize such a role, except for routine meetings between the heads of the two states. Was this role beyond Turkey's capabilities? Or was it due to Davutoğlu's vision of becoming a central country, which clashed with the bridge role prescribed by Turkey's Western allies? All these questions require separate in-depth research that builds on the data collected with the eclectic methodological approach.

It is always possible to update and upgrade this eclectic approach. One can increase the capabilities of this eclectic approach and/or the validity of the collected data by merging it with new research techniques. Just like content analysis and event-data analysis it is possible to bring in new research methods and combine it with the approach offered here. For instance, one can use semi-structured interviews to better understand the foreign policy vision of the decision-makers. In addition, other FPA approaches and tools like Leadership Trait Analysis (LTA) and Operational Code Analysis (Op-Code) can also be integrated with this approach to better understand how the decision makers' observe their foreign policy environment and what kind of foreign policy they envision for their states. The quality of the collected data and the validity of the claims can be increased with the application of new techniques to this approach.

This study started five years ago, drawing on Rosenau's call to develop a 'theory' of foreign policy.<sup>58</sup> After reading this call, I aimed at building a data-based and generalizable explanation of TFP and developing a *sui generis* framework to observe the parallelism in foreign policy words and deeds. This scheme is currently in a state of development and there is long way to go in this quest. After five years of work, I still agree with Hudson<sup>59</sup>: "It is a wonderful time to become engaged in FPA, a time of new horizons."

<sup>58</sup> James N. Rosenau, "Pre-theories and Theories of Foreign Policy," in *Approaches in Comparative and International Politics*, ed. R. Barry Farrell (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966), 27-92.

<sup>59</sup> Valerie M. Hudson, "FPA: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 1 (2005): 27.

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## Discourse Analysis: Strengths and Shortcomings\*

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### Abstract

*Discourse analysis is a much-favoured textual analysis method among constructivist and critically minded International Relations scholars interested in the impact of identity, meaning, and discourse on world politics. The aim of this article is to guide students of Turkish IR in their choice and use of this method. Written by two Turkish IR scholars who have employed discourse analysis in their past and present research, this article also includes a personal reflection on its strengths and shortcomings. The first section of the article presents an overview of the conceptual and epistemological underpinnings of discourse analysis, while charting the evolution of discourse analysis in IR since the late 1980s in three phases. The second section offers insight into the personal history of the researchers in employing discourse analysis in their previous and ongoing research, while the third section provides a how-to manual by performing discourse analysis of an actual text. The concluding section focuses on the challenges faced in the conduct of discourse analysis and the potential ways to overcome them, also drawing from the researchers' own experiences in the field.*

**Keywords:** Discourse analysis, international relations, qualitative methods, constructivism, critical discourse analysis

### 1. Introduction

Since the 1980s, discourse analysis has become a much-favoured method of empirical analysis, especially among constructivist and critical International Relations scholars. It is necessary to clarify at the outset that there is not a single method of discourse analysis. A wide range of scholars employ discourse-analytical tools in various ways—some more loosely and illustratively, others more systematically—and while doing so, operate from different theoretical vantage points. An even a wider set of scholars claim to be using discourse analysis while conducting in fact other forms of textual analysis. The purpose of the article at hand is not to impose a particular way of doing discourse analysis. Yet at the same time, we consider it important to situate discourse analysis as a distinct form of textual analysis, and clarify its key aspects so that not any reading of documents, speeches, and texts qualifies as discourse analysis.

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In the first section of the article, we chart the evolution of discourse analysis in IR in three phases, and while doing so, introduce its theoretical underpinnings as well as the diverse ways of doing discourse analysis. In the first phase, discourse analysis was introduced to the discipline through the works of poststructuralist scholars, starting in the late 1980s. In these works, the use of discourse analysis was closely linked to poststructuralist theory, its assumptions regarding absence of agency, historicity and contingency of discourse, and post-positivist epistemology. In the second phase, discourse analysis was carried from the margins to the mainstream of the IR discipline through the works of constructivist scholars, who sought to employ discourse analysis in a more systematic manner in order to engage in competitive hypothesis testing with their rationalist counterparts. More specific discourse analytical methodologies developed drawing on linguistic analysis, such as predicate analysis, metaphor analysis, and critical discourse analysis. Scholars took greater care to clarify and justify text selection and developed analytical templates to guide their research. Greater emphasis was placed on demonstrating the effects of discourse, which led scholars to employ discourse analysis as part of an interpretive epistemology, often in combination with other interpretive methodologies, and relax the strict poststructuralist assumptions regarding lack of agency and intentionality. In the third and current phase, discourse analysis is experiencing both consolidation and greater engagement with other methodologies. It is now employed by a broader range of scholars, in some cases in tandem with quantitative approaches to textual analysis, as part of a wider mixed-methodological toolkit.

In the second section of the article, we discuss our personal experiences with employing discourse analysis in our own research, followed in the third section by a how-to manual performing discourse analysis of an article entitled ‘Is Turkey Part of Europe?’ published in the *Times* in 1963. The analysis follows the methodological template of critical discourse analysis, by identifying the nomination, predication, and argumentation strategies employed in the text. In conclusion, we briefly reflect on the strengths and shortcomings of this methodology, also drawing from our own experiences in the field.

## 2. Discourse Analysis in IR: Evolution and Key Premises

Neither discourse nor discourse analysis has a standard definition. For example, Reisigl<sup>1</sup> has argued that Michel Foucault used the concept of discourse in twenty-three different meanings during his famous Collège de France speech on discourse. Broadly speaking, discourse refers to taken-for-granted structures of shared meaning. In the Foucauldian approach, discourse determines what can and cannot be said, constitutes subjects, ascribes identities, and defines the boundaries of rational/irrational, legitimate/illegitimate action. For example, the discourse on Europe determines what can and cannot be said about Europe (e.g., a continent, an organization, an order, but not a company), who is European and who is not, and who can speak on Europe. In order to identify structures of shared meaning, discourse analysis analyses discursive practices<sup>2</sup>—for example, the discourse on Europe is analysed through what is said on Europe.

<sup>1</sup> Martin Reisigl, “Wie man eine Nation herbeiredet. Eine diskursanalytische Untersuchung zur sprachlichen Konstruktion österreichischen Nation und österreichischen Identität in politischen Fest- und Gedenkreden” (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Vienna, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Mark Laffey and Jutta Weldes, “Beyond Belief: Ideas and Symbolic Technologies in the Study of International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations* 3, no. 2 (1997): 193–237.

There are important theoretical differences between scholars employing discourse analysis, in terms of whether and how much individual discursive practices can shape and alter discourse. Whereas in the Foucauldian tradition, actors ‘articulate’ elements of a discourse within the subject positions constituted by discourse, IR scholars drawing on Wittgenstein’s language games and Austin’s speech act theories assume a greater degree of discursive agency, and consider discourse a product of individual discursive practices in the context of social rules and norms.<sup>3</sup> There are also important theoretical differences among discourse analysts on the degree to which discourses are susceptible to change and contestation. Derridean-inspired discourse analysis emphasizes the contingency and inconsistency within discourse and the inability to fix meanings once and for all.<sup>4</sup> Habermasian-inspired discourse analysis, on the other hand, focuses on the consensual and consensus-generating aspects of discourse, and analyses discourse as a system of socially agreed justifications.<sup>5</sup>

The adoption of discourse analysis by IR scholars coincided with wide-ranging meta-theoretical debates in the discipline on ontology and epistemology at the end of the 1980s. During what is widely known as the Third Debate, a diverse group of scholars inspired by poststructuralist approaches challenged the widespread positivist assumptions in the discipline about objectivity, fact/value distinction, and the independent existence of truth.<sup>6</sup> Viewing the social world as constituted through language and discourse, poststructuralist IR theorists set out to analyse the traditional concepts of IR—such as anarchy, sovereignty, and foreign policy—as discourses of global politics; that is, as taken-for-granted structures of meaning that do not describe an independently existing state of global politics, but actually serve to constitute it as such.<sup>7</sup> In poststructuralist theory, discourse is closely interwoven with power.<sup>8</sup> Through their constitutive effects on reality, discourses exert power through rendering certain understandings as hegemonic and marginalizing others. For example, when anarchy is analyzed as a discourse of global politics, the pertinent question is no longer the validity of the anarchy assumption, i.e. whether or not the international system is indeed anarchical, but what the anarchy assumption does in terms of, for example, hiding various asymmetries in global politics. Thus, discourse analysis, for this earlier group of critical IR scholars, was not a methodological choice; it was embedded in their very conception of the IR discipline as a set of discourses and in their wholesale challenge to it. Hence, discourse analysis was employed to serve critical purposes, to de-naturalize dominant understandings by showing their historicity, to reveal relations of domination and power that are masked by the discipline, and to delegitimize claims to absolute truth.

One very well-known contribution to poststructuralist IR theory is David Campbell’s book *Writing Security*, which highlights the inextricable discursive link between foreign

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Diez, “Europe as a Discursive Battleground,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 36 (2001): 5–38; Ruth Wodak, “Introduction: Discourse Studies – Important Concepts and Terms,” in *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. Ruth Wodak and Michal Krzyzanowski (London: Palgrave, 2008), 5.

<sup>4</sup> Diez, “Europe as a Discursive Battleground.”

<sup>5</sup> Anna Holzscheiter, “Between Communicative Interaction and Structures of Signification: Discourse Theory and Analysis in International Relations,” *International Studies Perspectives* 15 (2014): 142–62.

<sup>6</sup> Yosef Lapid, “The Third Debate: On the Prospects of International Theory in a Post-Positivist Era,” *International Studies Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (1989): 235–54.

<sup>7</sup> Richard K. Ashley, “Foreign Policy as Political Performance,” *International Studies Notes* 13 (1987): 51–54; Richard K. Ashley, “Untying the Sovereign State: A Double Reading of the Anarchy Problematique,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 17, no. 2 (1988): 227–62; David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992); Rob B. J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

<sup>8</sup> Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, “Power in International Politics,” *International Organization* 59, no. 1 (2005): 39–75.

policy and the constitution of state as an actor with an identity. Against the conventional definition of foreign policy as the external behaviour of a pre-existing state with a pre-given identity, Campbell contends that state identity is constituted through foreign policy, which comprises both conventional foreign policy in the form of external behaviour as well as representations of Self and Other in state documents. Briefly put, according to Campbell, discourses on foreign policy constitute the state and its identity through constructing Others and representing these Others as antithetically different and threatening to Self. In order to show the prevalence and continuity of these representational practices, Campbell subjects a select number of key texts from different domains of US foreign policy across time to in-depth critical reading, such as the NSC-68, immigration forms and documents, etc.

In these critical endeavours, some poststructuralist IR theorists adopted the genealogical method of analysing the evolution of discourses in broader historical perspective. For example, Iver Neumann historically traced the representations of Russia in Europe, and pointed out the continued dominance of the representations of Russia as a threat.<sup>9</sup> Richard Ashley and Rob Walker showed how discourses on anarchy, geopolitical discourses, and inside/outside distinctions came to be constitutive features of the ways in which we conceive of International Relations.<sup>10</sup> Contemporary discourses acquire and maintain their hegemonic status through establishing artificial continuities with the past. Historicizing contemporary hegemonic discourses serves to reveal the specific socio-political contexts in which these discourses emerged and exposes their contingent evolution through challenges from and suppression of various alternatives. Thereby, the genealogical method serves to deconstruct the historical continuities that contemporary discourses rely on to maintain their hegemonic status.

Another important methodological tool employed by poststructural theorists is the juxtapositional method, which relies on the juxtaposition of a particular discursive construction with alternative narratives or with events and phenomena which cannot be accounted for by dominant narratives.<sup>11</sup> The juxtapositional method also serves to denaturalize dominant discourses and discredit their claims to absolute truth. For example, in his critical analysis of the American foreign policy discourse on the war on drugs, David Campbell juxtaposed the claims of the dominant discourse to statistical data in order to show that the same facts could equally well be used to advance competing claims.<sup>12</sup>

In general, this first wave of poststructuralist discourse analysts focused on identifying hegemonic discourses and demonstrating the historical continuities, rather than on potential for change and contestation. As noted earlier, in poststructuralist theory, discourse has a complicated relationship to agentic representational practices. On the one hand, by determining what can and cannot be said, 'discourse transcends the generative and critical capacities of any individual speaker or speech act'.<sup>13</sup> Discourses construct subject positions, and direct actors into speech acts and practices allowed by those subject positions. For example, the state is produced through discourses of insecurity, while nationalist discourses construct

<sup>9</sup> Iver B. Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of Europe: A Study in Identity and International Relations* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

<sup>10</sup> Ashley, "Untying the Sovereign State"; Walker, *Inside/Outside*.

<sup>11</sup> Jennifer Milliken, "The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A Critique of Research and Methods," *European Journal of International Relations* 5, no. 2 (1999): 242–43.

<sup>12</sup> Campbell, *Writing Security*.

<sup>13</sup> Karen Litfin, *Ozone Discourses: Science and Politics in Global Environmental Cooperation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 38.

imagined communities linked by ethnicity, language and culture. No representational practice can be outside of discourse and hence totally contest a discourse without at the same time reproducing it. Quite often, oppositions and struggles against hegemonic practices end up reproducing the categories and hierarchies that are implicit in the dominant discourses that justify these practices in the first place. On the other hand, discourses are not fixed, and are continuously and gradually transformed through agentic representational practices, as each articulation adds new linkages to fluid discursive structures while subtracting others.<sup>14</sup>

The rationalist mainstream of the IR discipline generally dismissed discourse analysis in this earlier form as lacking methodological rigor.<sup>15</sup> In particular, it was claimed that the analyses offered by poststructuralists relied on subjective interpretations of a limited range of texts, and hence are neither replicable nor generalizable. Poststructuralist discourse analysts were equally dismissive of these criticisms, claiming that discourse analysis does not aim at producing new truth claims, because doing so would merely replace one regime of truth with another, and thus be contrary to postmodern sensibilities.

Starting with the 1990s, discourse analysis slowly transitioned from the margins to the mainstream of the IR discipline via constructivist scholars. Unlike the pioneers of the third debate, constructivist scholars were more interested in mounting an ontological rather than an epistemological challenge to the discipline,<sup>16</sup> and thus focused on demonstrating the socially constructed nature of IR phenomena. Positioning themselves as *via media* between rationalist mainstream and its poststructuralist challengers,<sup>17</sup> constructivists' main interest lay with demonstrating that ideational factors such as ideas, norms, identity, culture, and other intersubjectively shared meanings matter in shaping outcomes in international relations. In order to identify these sets of shared meanings and to demonstrate their impact, constructivist scholars relied on a variety of methodologies, often combining discourse analysis of specific illustrative texts with interviews, process tracing, and counterfactual analysis.<sup>18</sup>

Apart from a group of critical constructivist scholars discussed below, it is fair to say that constructivist scholars employed discourse analysis as an interpretive rather than a critical methodology. In other words, discourse was analysed in order more to identify structures of shared meaning in a specific social context and less to reveal their historicity and complicity in domination. In crude terms, whereas Ashley was interested in what anarchy does, Wendt focused on identifying what states make of anarchy.<sup>19</sup> In addition, constructivist scholars aimed to address the criticism that poststructuralist discourse analysts of the earlier phase had faced from the rationalist mainstream, by clarifying and justifying their text selection, and outlining the steps of empirical analysis. They also devoted greater attention to outlining the methodology of discourse analysis in IR, and consciously adopted analytical methods from linguistics, such as predicate analysis, metaphor analysis, and critical discourse analysis.

<sup>14</sup> Diez, "Europe as a Discursive Battleground"; Bahar Rumelili, *Constructing Regional Community and Order in Europe and Southeast Asia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007).

<sup>15</sup> Robert Keohane, "International Institutions: Two Approaches," *International Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (1988): 83–105.

<sup>16</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>17</sup> Emanuela Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics," *European Journal of International Relations* 3, no. 3 (1997): 319–63.

<sup>18</sup> See for example Richard Price, "A Genealogy of the Chemical Weapons Taboo," *International Organization* 49, no. 1 (1995): 73–103.

<sup>19</sup> Ashley, "Untying the Sovereign State"; Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 391–425.

Good examples representing more systematic discourse analysis of this form include Ted Hopf's<sup>20</sup> study of Russian identity and foreign policy, which, in comparison to Campbell's analysis of US foreign policy, relied on the analysis of a wider range of Russian texts, including official documents, speeches, newspaper articles, and popular culture. In addition, Hopf studied dominant and competing discourses in order to show how different identity narratives compete over the construction of Russian foreign policy. Scholars also developed elaborate analytical frameworks to typologize different representational practices. Both Rumelili and Hansen built on Campbell's conception of IR as Self/Other relations, but argued that these relations take different forms, and developed typologies for representations of Self and Other in discourse.<sup>21</sup>

Simultaneously, in Europe, securitization theory, which concerned itself specifically with the question of how certain issues get to be represented as security issues, developed.<sup>22</sup> While also interested in linguistic construction of reality and the political effects of linguistic representations, securitization theory, like Wittgenstein's speech act theory it drew upon, focused more on the purposive act of representing an issue as a security issue rather than on the structuring effects of security discourses. Hence, in comparison to poststructuralist theory which inspired the first wave of discourse analysis in IR, securitization theory operated from more relaxed assumptions regarding agency and strategic action in and through discourse. This more relaxed approach is also visible in Iver Neumann's *Uses of the Other*, where he discusses how East European states in the 1990s employed identity strategies to position themselves in Central Europe while relegating their Eastern neighbours to the East, to strengthen their bid for membership in the EU.<sup>23</sup>

As discourse analysis transitioned from the margins to the mainstream of the IR discipline, it incorporated more detailed and systematic guidelines on textual analysis, mainly from linguistics. In particular, three specific and interrelated methodologies of discourse analysis developed in this period: predicate analysis, metaphor analysis, and critical discourse analysis.

In one of the earliest methods articles on discourse analysis, Jennifer Milliken had outlined various steps of a type of discourse analysis, referred to as 'predicate analysis', where discourses are treated as systems of signification, meaning that the relational differences and hierarchies that are established through discourse are displayed through an analysis of the linguistic practices in texts.<sup>24</sup> Predicate analysis with its empirical focus on the 'language practices of predication: the verbs, adverbs and adjectives that attach to nouns' quickly became one of the commonly used discourse analysis methods in the drive towards a more empirically rigorous discourse analysis in this second period.<sup>25</sup>

Doty also utilized this method of discourse analysis to demonstrate the continuity in representations of the South in colonial and contemporary discourses on modernization and

<sup>20</sup> Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of Foreign Policy: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955, 1999* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002).

<sup>21</sup> Bahar Rumelili, "Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding EU's Mode of Differentiation," *Review of International Studies* 30 (2004): 27–47; Rumelili, *Constructing Regional Community*; Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (London: Routledge, 2006).

<sup>22</sup> Ole Waever, "Securitisation and Desecuritisation," in *On Security*, ed. Ronnie D. Lipschutz (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

<sup>23</sup> Iver Neumann, *Uses of the Other: The East in European Identity Formation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).

<sup>24</sup> Milliken, "The Study of Discourse".

<sup>25</sup> Jennifer Milliken, "Discourse Study: Bringing Rigor to Critical Theory," in *Constructing International Relations: The Next Generation*, ed. Karin M. Fierke and Knud Erik Jørgensen (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2001), 141.

development, and while doing so, outlined different effects of discourse, such as negation and denial.<sup>26</sup> By taking the cases of the US discourse on the Philippines and Britain's discourse on Kenya, she demonstrated the ways in which binary dichotomies between the North/South such as modern/traditional, developed/less developed, and first world/third world have been naturalized through the use of predicates in discourse.

In addition to these classic works, predicate analysis has also been employed in more recent studies focusing on contemporary developments in international relations. Rumelili has subjected Turkish and Greek official and media discourse to predicate analysis to show how by situating Turkey and Greece in different and also liminal/precarious positions with respect to 'Europe', the community-building discourse of the European Union (EU) reinforced and legitimized the two states' representations of their identities as different from and also as threatening to each other.<sup>27</sup> Barnutz took on the larger question of how a 'logic of security' has been constructed in the EU through an analysis of the EU's discursive practices on security, by employing predicate analysis alongside other tools of discourse analysis.<sup>28</sup> In an influential study, Jackson has shown how the concept of 'Islamic terrorism' which became widespread in the West after September 11 was naturalized through certain predicates used in Western political and academic discourse.<sup>29</sup> In his later works, Jackson has utilized predicate analysis, in combination with other methods of discourse analysis, to show how academic discourse in the West has contributed to a certain 'knowledge' on 'terrorism' serving to reify particular power relations within and between states.<sup>30</sup>

Another discourse analysis method commonly used in the field of international relations and which also treats discourses as systems of signification is 'metaphor analysis'. In this method, metaphors are conceptualized as 'structuring possibilities for human reasoning and action' and are analysed to discover the various regular frames used to make sense of the world.<sup>31</sup> These works did not treat metaphors as 'objective mediators' between two pre-established subjects with pre-established similarities.<sup>32</sup> Instead, metaphors were taken to play a crucial role in constructing our knowledge of the world by becoming sedimented in discourse as 'common sense' and hence structuring the way we think and act by allowing us to focus more specifically on certain aspects of what is being referred to and excluding alternative ways of thinking and acting beyond the metaphorical constraints.<sup>33</sup>

In metaphor analysis, the international system is conceptualized as a discursive structure which rests on the use of certain metaphors. Language is hereby treated not as a mirror of reality, but as an instrument in its construction. In this sense, metaphor analyses that are

<sup>26</sup> Roxanne Doty, *Imperial Encounters* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

<sup>27</sup> Bahar Rumelili, "Liminality and Perpetuation of Conflicts: Turkish-Greek Relations in the Context of Community Building by the EU," *European Journal of International Relations* 9, no. 2 (2003): 213–48.

<sup>28</sup> Sebastian Barnutz, "The EU's Logic of Security: Politics through Institutionalised Discourses," *European Security* 19, no. 3 (2010): 377–94.

<sup>29</sup> Richard Jackson, "Constructing Enemies: 'Islamic Terrorism' in Political and Academic Discourse," *Government and Opposition* 42, no. 3 (2007): 394–426.

<sup>30</sup> Richard Jackson, "Knowledge, Power and Politics in the Study of Political Terrorism," in *Critical Terrorism Studies: A New Research Agenda*, ed. Richard Jackson et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).

<sup>31</sup> Milliken, "The Study of Discourse," 235; see also Paul Chilton, *Security Metaphors: Cold War Discourse from Containment to Common House* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996); Rainer Hülse, *Metaphern der EU-Erweiterung als Konstruktionen Europäischer Identität* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2003); Andreas Musolff, *Metaphor and Political Discourse: Analogical Reasoning in Debates about Europe* (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Petr Drulak, "Motion, Container and Equilibrium: Metaphors in the Discourse about European Integration," *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 4 (2006): 499–532.

<sup>32</sup> Drulak, "Motion, Container and Equilibrium," 503.

<sup>33</sup> Drulak, "Motion, Container and Equilibrium,"; see also, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1980).

employed in international relations studies conceptually overlap to a great extent with other forms of poststructuralist discourse analysis.

Various works of international relations which use metaphor analysis have shown that many of the widespread assumptions in international politics are in fact 'sedimented metaphors'.<sup>34</sup> For instance, Chilton and Lakoff have argued that international politics have traditionally been built on metaphoric expressions where states are treated as persons or as bounded containers, in turn serving to naturalise certain dominant practices between states and marginalizing others.<sup>35</sup> Others like Little have chosen to focus on a historical analysis of a central metaphor, the 'balance of power', which has shaped international relations thinking and scholarship over decades.<sup>36</sup> Milliken has put forward the argument that the reason realist analysts failed to propose alternative policies to the US policy in the Vietnam War, despite their criticism of US policy, was that they viewed international politics through the lens of the same metaphoric structures as the US administration of the time.<sup>37</sup> In a similar vein, Hülse has argued that the EU has discursively constructed a European identity through its enlargement policy, showing that in cases where the EU's metaphoric representation as a 'container' has been dominant in enlargement policy, the EU has been much less tolerant of identity-based differences situated in culture and religion.<sup>38</sup>

Responding to criticisms that the existing discourse analytical methodologies relying on linguistic tools did not sufficiently address the naturalizing/marginalizing effects of discourse, critical discourse analysis (CDA) brought together analysis of systems of signification with a focus on broader representational practices, and also began to be utilized in the study of international relations.<sup>39</sup> CDA offers linguistic methods that make it possible to empirically analyse the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains. CDA approaches in general view discursive practices as an important form of social practice which contributes to the constitution of the social world, including social identities and social relations. CDA broadly shares the concerns of poststructuralist discourse analysis regarding a critical approach to taken-for-granted knowledge, the historical and cultural specificity of discourse, and the role of social interaction in the construction of the world. Nonetheless, it differs from poststructuralist approaches by accounting for non-discursive practices in the construction of social reality. In doing this, it argues for the existence of social reality outside of discourse (such as institutions) in a constant dialectical relationship with discourses.

Although CDA has been widely used in studies of social change and nationalism in the past, its entry into international relations has been more recent. Kryzanowski and Kryzanowski and Oberhuber were among the first to employ CDA in showing how 'Europe' is being

<sup>34</sup> Chilton, *Security Metaphors*; Paul Chilton and George Lakoff, "Foreign Policy by Metaphor," in *Language and Peace*, ed. Christina Schaffner and Anita L. Wenden (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1995); Christina Schaffner, "The 'Balance' Metaphor in Relation to Peace," in *Language and Peace*, ed. Christina Schaffner and Anita L. Wenden (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1995).

<sup>35</sup> Chilton and Lakoff, "Foreign Policy by Metaphor".

<sup>36</sup> Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>37</sup> Jennifer Milliken, "Prestige and Reputation in American Foreign Policy and American Realism," in *Post-realism: The Rhetorical Turn in International Relations*, ed. Francis Beer and Robert Hariman (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1996).

<sup>38</sup> Hülse, *Metaphern der EU-Erweiterung*.

<sup>39</sup> Ole Waever, "Discursive Approaches," in *European Integration Theory*, ed. Thomas Diez and Antje Wiener (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 167; Senem Aydın-Düzgüt, *Constructions of European Identity: Debates and Discourses on Turkey and the EU* (London: Palgrave, 2012); Senem Aydın-Düzgüt, "Critical Discourse Analysis in Analysing European Foreign Policy: Prospects and Challenges," *Cooperation and Conflict* 49, no. 3 (2014): 354–67.

discursively constructed by EU institutions and EU member states.<sup>40</sup> Tekin employed CDA in displaying the representation of Turkey in French political discourse on EU enlargement.<sup>41</sup> Others, despite CDA's conceptual differences with poststructuralism, have used the linguistic and argumentative tools of CDA in poststructuralist analyses. Torfing for instance has argued that many of CDA's 'analytical notions and categories for analysing concrete discourse and distinguishing between different types and genres of discourse can be used in conjunction with concepts from poststructuralist discourse theories'.<sup>42</sup> Along these lines, Larsen has demonstrated how a specific linguistic tool of CDA (namely the use of the 'we' pronoun) could be employed in a poststructuralist study of nation-state foreign policies.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Aydın-Düzgüt has explored the utility of CDA's analytical tools in both mainstream social constructivist and poststructuralist study of EU foreign policy, while Cebeci and Schumacher have used CDA in showing how the EU represents the Mediterranean.<sup>44</sup>

Among the different strands of CDA, many of the empirical works in this field adhere to the discourse-historical approach (DHA). DHA is a type of CDA that is particularly distinguishable by its specific emphasis on identity construction, where the discursive construction of 'us' and 'them' is viewed as the basic fundament of discourses of identity and difference.<sup>45</sup> After presenting the historical background and the context of the analysed texts, DHA proceeds in three main steps. The first step involves outlining the main content of the themes and discourses, namely the *discourse topics* in the narrative on a given subject.<sup>46</sup> The second step explores *discursive strategies* deployed in the narrative to answer the selected empirical questions directed at the texts.<sup>47</sup> The third step of analysis looks at the *linguistic means* that are used to realize these discursive strategies.

Following this period of methodological development and diversification, discourse analytical methodologies in IR appear to be entering into a third phase, characterized by greater engagement with quantitative methodologies of textual analysis on the one hand, and internal consolidation on the other. In terms of consolidation, a significant number of textbooks and textbook chapters devoted to discourse analysis in IR have been published in recent years.<sup>48</sup> Consolidation has gone hand in hand with an acceptance of pluralism in discourse analysis. In that vein, Holzscheiter has provided a very useful typology of different types of discourse analysis in IR, distinguishing between interactionist, structural, deliberative, and

<sup>40</sup> Michal Krzyzanowski, "European Identity Wanted! On Discursive and Communicative Dimensions of the European Convention," in *A New Research Agenda in CDA: Theory and Multidisciplinarity*, ed. Ruth Wodak and Paul Chilton (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2005); Michal Krzyzanowski and Florian Oberhuber, *(Un)doing Europe: Discourse and Practices in Negotiating the EU Constitution* (Brussels: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2007).

<sup>41</sup> Beyza Ç. Tekin, *Representations and Othering in Discourse: The Construction of Turkey in the EU Context* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2010).

<sup>42</sup> David, Torfing, "Discourse Theory: Achievements, Arguments, and Challenges," in *Discourse Theory in European Politics: Identity, Policy and Governance*, eds. David Howarth and Jacob Torfing (London: Palgrave, 2005), 9.

<sup>43</sup> Henrik Larsen, "Discourses of State Identity and Post-Lisbon National Foreign Policy: The Case of Denmark," *Cooperation and Conflict* 49, no. 3 (2014): 368–85.

<sup>44</sup> Aydın-Düzgüt, *Constructions of European Identity*; Aydın-Düzgüt, "Critical Discourse Analysis"; Münevver Cebeci and Tobias Schumacher, "The EU's Constructions of the Mediterranean (2003–2017)," (MEDRESET Working Papers no. 3, April 2017), <http://www.medreset.eu/?p=13294>.

<sup>45</sup> Ruth Wodak, "The Discourse-Historical Approach," in *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, ed. Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (London: Sage, 2001), 73.

<sup>46</sup> Teun A. Van Dijk, *Prejudice in Discourse* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1984), 56.

<sup>47</sup> Martin Reisigl and Ruth Wodak, *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 44.

<sup>48</sup> Ted Hopf, "Identity Relations and the Sino-Soviet Split," in *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*, ed. Rawi Abdelal et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Kevin Dunn and Iver B. Neumann, *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2016).

productive approaches and situating the contemporary discourse analytical scholarship in IR within these types.<sup>49</sup> On the theoretical front, scholars have focused more on the link between discursive and non-discursive realms; practice theory has asserted the unity of the two.<sup>50</sup> The theoretical foundations of discourse analysis in IR have expanded beyond Foucault, Derrida, and Habermas toward more explicit engagement with Lacan, Wittgenstein's language games, and Laclau and Mouffe.<sup>51</sup>

Alongside these consolidation processes, a number of scholars are attempting to combine discourse analysis with quantitative methods of textual analysis, such as content analysis, while acknowledging the epistemological incompatibilities. In general, content analysts are more comfortable in the positivist assumption of a fixed and objective reality existing independently of the researcher; they seek replicable findings concerning patterns of meaning by measuring the frequency of certain key terms in a large volume of texts. On the other hand, both the more interpretivist and critical variants of discourse analysis question the possibility of objectivity and replicability because they claim that prior understandings of the researchers ultimately shape their interpretations of texts. In addition, they insist on the necessity of in-depth analysis of texts because the same words can denote different things in different social and temporal contexts. Despite these differences, Hardy et al. have argued that content analysis may be used within a discourse analytic approach, by making the social construction of reality and fluidity of meaning shared assumptions of both methodologies.<sup>52</sup> Andrew Bennett argues that computer-assisted content analysis can be a good complement to discourse analysis in identifying the relevant texts, the frequency of certain keywords in greater samples of texts, and patterns of change across different bodies of texts and across time.<sup>53</sup> Hopf and Allan have developed a systematic discourse analysis template which can be used by different researchers to analyse the construction of national identities in different national contexts and across time.<sup>54</sup>

### 3. Why Did We Choose Discourse Analysis?

Methodology is a critical choice to make in addressing a research topic. Although the authors of this article were trained in different universities in different time periods, they have both chosen discourse analysis as the best methodology to study the identity dimension of EU–Turkey relations and have employed different forms of discourse analysis in their previous and ongoing research.

Bahar Rumelili was introduced to constructivist IR theory during her PhD studies at University of Minnesota (1996–2002) and was immediately drawn to the study of identity in international relations upon first reading David Campbell's *Writing Security*. As she developed her dissertation<sup>55</sup>, EU–Turkey relations were at their nadir; the EU's decision not to

<sup>49</sup> Holzsheiter, "Between Communicative Interaction."

<sup>50</sup> Iver B. Neumann, "Returning Practice to the Linguistic Turn: The Case of Diplomacy," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 31, no. 3 (2002): 627–51.

<sup>51</sup> Charlotte Epstein, "Who Speaks? Discourse, the Subject, and the Study of Identity in International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 17, no. 2 (2011): 327–50; Einar Wigen, "Two-Level Language Games: International Relations as Interlingual Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 21, no. 2 (2015): 427–50.

<sup>52</sup> Cynthia Hardy, Bill Harley, and Nelson Phillips, "Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis: Two Solitudes?," *Newsletter of the American Political Science Association's Organized Section on Qualitative Methods* 2, no. 1 (2004): 19–22.

<sup>53</sup> Andrew Bennett, "Found in Translation: Combining Discourse Analysis with Computer Assisted Content Analysis," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 43, no. 3 (2015): 984–97.

<sup>54</sup> Ted Hopf and Bentley B. Allan, *Making Identity Count: Building a National Identity Database* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

<sup>55</sup> Bahar Rumelili, "Producing Collective Identity and Interacting with Difference: The Security Implications of Community-

consider Turkey as a candidate during its 1997 Luxembourg summit had caused widespread disappointment in Turkey and accusations levelled at the EU that it was excluding Turkey on identity grounds. In order to make this case theoretically relevant for a US academic audience, she built on Iver Neumann's work on Self and Other in international relations and framed EU/Turkey relations as a case of Self/Other relations. The methodological choice of discourse analysis was a product of her theoretical commitments and the theoretical contribution she sought to make. Alternative methodologies, such as surveys, would not do justice to her conception of identity as socially constructed, relational, and structured by existing structures of meaning. In the late 1990s, there were only a handful of method articles on discourse analysis, and specific methodologies of discourse analysis were yet to be developed. So for methodological guidance, she drew on other studies employing discourse analysis at the time, such as Roxanne Doty's *Imperial Encounters* and Karen Litfin's *Ozone Discourses*. She focused on identifying different predicates of Self and Other in European Parliament debates on Turkey (1995–2002) and coverage in European and Turkish media of critical developments in EU–Turkey relations. Out of these different predicates, she developed a typology of Self/Other relations that has been adopted by many scholars to make sense of identity relations in other contexts.

Aydın-Düzgüt has mainly used critical discourse analysis in her work on identity representations in EU–Turkey relations and European foreign policy<sup>56</sup>—and more recently, on the analysis of the relationship between foreign policy and identity change.<sup>57</sup> Her acquaintance with CDA came at a time when she was beginning to take interest in the role of identity in the EU–Turkey relationship, in the early years of this century when relations between Turkey and the EU intensified after Turkey's candidacy for membership and the opening of accession negotiations. As she decided to embark on the identification and analysis of the EU's identity representations in relation to Turkey in her PhD dissertation, the methodology to be utilized became a focal point from the early stages of the research onwards.

While her survey of the literature at the time presented her with different types of discourse analysis potentially suitable to use in her research, her choice of the discourse-historical strand of CDA largely stemmed from her concern with the discursive construction of the 'us' and 'them' dichotomy which is a central focus of this method, the rich analytical toolkit provided by CDA in studying identity representations, and the discourse-historical approach's emphasis on the historical context, which was highly relevant for the contemporary identity representations in the EU–Turkey relationship. Identity representations in the context of EU–Turkey relations rarely take explicit forms, thus requiring the use of linguistic tools to discern the patterns in representations. As a researcher who lacks specific training in linguistics, Aydın-Düzgüt was at first intimidated by the linguistics-inspired analytical toolkit which CDA offers. Thanks to the guidance of her PhD supervisor who was a historian and an expert on CDA, she was introduced at an early stage of her research to a vast array of empirical studies which employed CDA in various fields ranging from political science to history, sociology, media and cultural studies, which helped her overcome this concern. Furthermore, identities

Building in Europe and Southeast Asia," (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Minnesota, 2002).

<sup>56</sup> Aydın-Düzgüt, *Constructions of European Identity*; Senem Aydın-Düzgüt, "European Security and the Accession of Turkey: Identity and Foreign Policy in the European Commission," *Cooperation and Conflict* 48, no. 4 (2013): 522–41; Aydın-Düzgüt, "Critical Discourse Analysis".

<sup>57</sup> Senem Aydın-Düzgüt, "Foreign Policy and Identity Change: Analysing Perceptions of Europe among the Turkish Public," *Politics* 38, no. 1 (2018): 19–34.

can be (re)produced through different genres of texts, which, for the purposes of her research, increased the utility of CDA as a method that takes into account the concept of *intertextuality* (relations between texts) in the analysis of discourses as well as being applicable across a variety of genres, be it European Parliament and national parliament debates, in-depth interviews, or (as were used in her later work) focus group discussions.

#### 4. How Do We Employ Discourse Analysis Now?

More recently, the two scholars have embarked on a collaborative research project that builds on their shared interests and methodological approach. As part of an EU-funded Horizon 2020 project on the Future of EU–Turkey relations,<sup>58</sup> they examine the identity relations between Europe and Turkey, as these have evolved over two and a quarter centuries. In this section, a brief exemplary discourse analysis from this larger project will be presented.

The project studies cultural and identity interactions between Europe and Turkey from 1789 to 2016 in four key periods in the EU–Turkey relationship (1789–1922, 1923–1945, 1946–1998, 1999–2016). Conceptualizing identity as discursive and relational, it aims at analysing how representations of the European and the Turkish Other varied and evolved through cultural exchanges and political interactions in different historical periods. A number of political and cultural drivers, namely significant historical milestones that have influenced the relationship between Turkey and Europe and that have in turn shaped the mutual perceptions and representations in these given periods, are assigned to selected focal issues, defined as the issues with respect to which Europe (or Turkey) constitutes its identity by comparing itself with and/or differentiating itself from its significant Other. Both the drivers and the focal issues (namely nationalism, civilization, status in international society, and state–citizen relationship) are determined via expert consultation and an extensive literature review.

Concerning text selection, primary sources which encompass a combination of different genres such as memoirs, writings, and private letters of diplomats, other bureaucrats, and intellectuals; newspapers and editorials; literary texts; travel journals; and political speeches are first identified. The texts selected for analysis either explicitly or implicitly illustrate identity discussions on Turkey–EU relations, and reflect the peculiarities of the periods under scrutiny. Further, they are selected with reference to their temporal proximity and relevance to the chosen drivers. DHA, which is a type of CDA, is then employed in discerning the main characteristics of the discursive structures in these texts, and in analysing how they vary over time in terms of their association with the selected focal issues, and in relation to the different cultural and political drivers.<sup>59</sup>

Below we present the discourse analysis of a newspaper article entitled “Is Turkey Part of Europe?”<sup>60</sup> published in the *Times* in 1964. Here, as in our analysis of each of the texts in this project, we first provide an overview of the historical context, then identify the discourse topics, and finally discuss in detail the discursive strategies of nomination, predication, and argumentation.

<sup>58</sup> Senem Aydın-Düzgüt and Bahar Rumelili, “The FEUTURE of EU-Turkey Relations: Mapping Dynamics and Testing Scenarios” (Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme Grant Agreement No. 692976, Work Package no. 7: Culture and Identity Relations).

<sup>59</sup> For more on the methodology of the project and an extended empirical demonstration, see Senem Aydın-Düzgüt et al., “Turkish and European Identity Constructions in the 1815-1945 Period” (FEUTURE Online Paper No. 4, July 2017), [http://www.future.uni-koeln.de/sites/feuture/pdf/D7.3\\_Online\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.future.uni-koeln.de/sites/feuture/pdf/D7.3_Online_Paper.pdf).

<sup>60</sup> “Is Turkey Part of Europe?,” *Times* [London, England] December 1, 1964, 11, The Times Digital Archive, accessed December 8, 2016.

#### 4.1. Historical context of the selected text

CDA assumes that all discourses are historical and thus need to be analysed against their context. So the first step in the analysis of a particular text should be situating it in its historical context. The selected article "Is Turkey Part of Europe?" was published by the *Times* on 1 December 1964. The author of the text is the Ankara correspondent of the newspaper. The publication of the article corresponds with the entry into force of the Association Agreement (also known as the Ankara Agreement) between Turkey and the European Economic Community (EEC) on 1 December 1964. The Agreement aimed towards the establishment of a customs union which was supposed to pave the way for the accession of Turkey into the EEC.

Text 1: "Is Turkey Part of Europe?," *Times* [London, England] December 1, 1964, 11, The Times Digital Archive, accessed December 8, 2016.

## Is Turkey Part of Europe ?

From Our Ankara Correspondent

Mr. Erkin, the Turkish Foreign Minister, will represent his country today at a ceremony in Brussels to mark the association of Turkey with the European Economic Community. Within a period of up to 21 years from now the Turks hope and expect to become full members of a united Europe. Twenty-one years is not a long time in the history of nations, and the questions which now arise, and which it is natural for anybody, perhaps even the Turks themselves, to ask are: is Turkey geographically part of Europe, and are the Turks Europeans?

To take the first question first. In September, 1963, a solemn ceremony was performed in the Turkish capital of Ankara at which six Ministers from the Common Market countries signed the agreement associating Turkey with the European Community. One of the six Ministers later gave a press conference in which he was asked the question: "Does the signature of this agreement mean, among other things, that Ankara is now in Europe?" The Minister found it difficult to reply.

A Turkish Deputy Prime Minister in the present Government declared quite recently, without anybody contradicting him: "The frontiers of Europe pass to the south and east of Turkey. Even back in 1958 the former Turkish Prime Minister, Mr. Menderes, opening a new oil refinery at the port of Mersin on Turkey's south coast, announced majestically: "This is the largest oil refinery in Europe."

### HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

The geographical consequences of Turkey's membership of Europe should now be faced. If it is true, or becomes true in the next 21 years, that the frontiers of Europe really pass to the south and east of Turkey, then Mount Ararat, which is 12,000 ft. higher than Mont Blanc, would become the highest mountain in Europe. The Euphrates and Tigris would rise in Europe.

Turkey, of course, became a member of the Council in Europe in 1949 and Turks take a vigorous part in the debates at Strasbourg. Some objections were raised in 1949 by western voices on grounds that the Turks were not a European people; but they were over-ridden. The Turks today are extremely proud of their membership of this European institution.

There are economic reasons for Turkey wanting to be associated with the Common Market. She competes with Greece in tobacco, and with Italy in hardnuts. She will also receive \$175m. from the European Investment Bank over a five year "preparatory period", during which she will have no corresponding obligations.

### NO RACIAL OBJECTIONS

But among Turkey's westernized leaders the overwhelming motive for joining Europe is not economic but ideological. The Turks want to be, and feel able to be, Europeans. Two years ago a Turkish Minister declared: "Ever since they arrived from the steppes of Asia the Turks have felt the need to find themselves a permanent place in the west". The secretary-general of the Turkish Chamber of Commerce under the Menderes Government, asked why Turkey should join the Common Market, replied: "For 100 years we have been trying to become European. Can the Turks become Europeans?"

They are classified unquestionably by ethnologists as a white race (so far that matter are the Arabs). Admittedly the Turks come from Asia; but so did the Hungarians and Finns, who adopted Christianity, and are today considered definitely as part of Europe.

On the old maps Turkey used to be divided into "Turkey in Europe" and "Turkey in Asia". A distinguished Turkish writer of the older generation recently told me an amusing story of a certain exclusive club in British India, whose manager said to him: "If you can prove you are from European Turkey, you can become a member; but not if you are from Asiatic Turkey."

Racially, there seems no fundamental objection to the Turks being Europeans, because the inhabitants of modern Turkey, that is Anatolia or Asia Minor, have already ethnically so transmuted themselves over the centuries, by breeding with the indigenous races they encountered, that they are today quite different in almost every way from the mass of pure Turks who inhabit central Asia. It is arguable that the Anatolians, that is the modern Turks, are already a distinct ethnic group.

### SECULAR PRINCIPLE

Before the Turks arrived in Anatolia in the eleventh century A.D., the peninsula was inhabited by peoples, such as the Hittites and Armenians, who may well have been of Aryan stock. The conquering Turks were sufficiently assimilated by these races to cause their physical characteristics to change towards those of the peoples they overtook.

A British student of Turkey, referring recently to Atatürk's untenable and exploded theory that the Hittites were Turks, made the remark: "It is not that the Hittites were Turks; it is rather that the Turks are Hittites." What he meant was that the inhabitants of Anatolia today are much the same people as they have been for the past 4,000 years. Toynbee, in his *Study of History*, maintains that the modern Turks have no more than an "infinitesimal tincture" of the blood of the first Turks who entered Anatolia 1,000 years ago. He adds that, racially speaking, there is little to choose between Turks and Greeks.

### FINAL CONSECRATION

One can argue forever about race. Another important factor is religion. Turks are Muslims, and cannot now be converted to Christianity, as were the pagan Finns and Hungarians. Yet most modern educated Turks are deeply committed to Atatürk's principle of secularism, which they interpret more or less as the absence of any religion. There is probably no religious barrier to prevent these young non-Muslim intellectuals from being Europeans.

One of the most important of all Atatürk's reforms was the adoption of the Latin (i.e. European) alphabet in 1928, which opened the cultural windows of Turkey westwards. The younger generation of Turks are as familiar with Proust, Kafka, and the rest of it, as we are. Of course the mass of the Turkish peasantry, which still seems to escape into the mosque whenever possible, can hardly be regarded as European.

The sincerity of Turkish leaders on this whole question was expressed by Mr. Erkin, the Foreign Minister, in September, 1963, when he spoke of Turkey's association with the European Community as "the final consecration of Turkey's European vocation, the aims and ideals constantly pursued and repeatedly proclaimed for centuries"; and he added: "Turkey's future and Turkey's welfare are closely bound up with her union with Europe and the European civilisation." For these reasons, today is an important day for Turkey.

## 4.2. Contents and topics of the discourse

The second step is to identify the main topics of discourse in a particular text. In the context of the rapprochement between the EEC and Turkey and the possibility of Turkey's membership, the author of the article discusses two questions: 'Is Turkey geographically a part of Europe?' and 'Are the Turks Europeans?'. Hence the text is constituted by a discourse on Turkey's geographical affiliation, but also on Turkish identity in relation to Europe and Europeanness.

## 4.3. Discursive strategies

Following Reisigl and Wodak, in each text we identify the discursive strategies of nomination, predication, and argumentation.<sup>61</sup>

- Nomination: How are the actors (Turkey, Europe/EEC) named and referred to linguistically?
- Predication: What characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to them?
- Argumentation: By means of which arguments and argumentation schemes does the author justify and legitimize his/her positions concerning Turkey's relationship to Europe?

### 4.3.1. Referential/nomination strategies

With regard to the discursive construction of social actors, the author only uses a few proper names: s/he refers to 'the Turkish Foreign Minister Mr. Erkin', the 'former Turkish Prime Minister Mr. Menderes', and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as well as two writers, Marcel Proust and Franz Kafka.

However, the *Times* correspondent also makes use of many ethnic, national, and religious collectives: Turks, the younger generation of Turks, European people, Europeans, Greeks, Arabs, Hungarians, Finns, Hittites, Armenians, Muslims, young non-Muslim intellectuals, and Christianity. He also refers to the political actors of the European Economic Community and the Council of Europe. Similarly, there is a wide range of ideological anthroponyms such as Turkey's westernized leaders, inhabitants of modern Turkey, indigenous races, mass of pure Turks, Anatolians, modern Turks, Turkish peasantry, European civilization, and western voices.

In a similar vein, the nomination strategies in the text show a clear binary demarcation between 'us' and 'them', namely between Europe/Europeans and Turkey/Turks. Binary demarcations not only divide, they also entail an asymmetrical relationship in favour of one component of the divide, which in this context is Europe/EEC/Europeans.

In the context of a possible accession of Turkey to the EEC, the author equates the EEC with Europe and EEC membership with being European. For instance, s/he talks about the consequences of 'Turkey's membership to Europe'. Hence becoming a member of the EEC/EU implicates Europeanness on the part of the country in question. At the same time, Europe is constructed as a homogenous entity in relation to the Turkish Other, with no visible scope for diversity. Turkey, on the other hand, is presented as a more heterogeneous entity with a binary community existent within itself, between the European 'younger generations' and a 'mass peasantry' in Anatolia that cannot be considered European.

<sup>61</sup> Reisigl and Wodak, *Discourse and Discrimination*, 44.

### 4.3.2. Predication strategies

The discursive construction of in- and outgroups usually goes hand in hand with the attachment of positive attributes to the Self and negative ones to the Other. The *Times* correspondent does not write much about Europe itself, just describing it as ‘united’ in one instance. However, much is said about the outgroup which strives to become part of the European ingroup. The author generalizes that all Turks are Muslims ‘and cannot now be converted to Christianity’. Furthermore, the correspondent states that Turks belong to the ‘white race’. Hence in relation to Europe, Turks are essentialized and homogenized with respect to religion and ethnicity, where their Europeanness is more contested on religious rather than ethnic grounds, and are attributed an overarching wish, particularly on the part of the ruling elite, to become ‘European’.

Subsequently, the writer of the *Times* article divides Turkish citizens into two subgroups, predicating each differently. The so-called ‘modern Turks’ are considered capable of becoming European; they are described as young, non-Muslim, intellectual, secular, and familiar with Proust and Kafka. This subgroup is attached to positive values because the author considers them as possible members of the ingroup. However, the second subgroup is characterized negatively, even derogatorily. This group consists of a ‘mass of peasantry’ which is religious and ‘escape[s] into the mosques whenever possible’ and thus is not European. Taking identity as a relational concept where representations of the Other entail the conceptions of the Self, these stereotypical predicates provide insight into the imagined content of Europe and Europeanness which excludes practiced Islam and rests on the presence of a white race and a shared intellectual heritage.

### 4.3.3. Argumentation strategies

The *Times* correspondent follows two basic argumentation lines in discussing Turkey’s potential accession to the EEC and its Europeanness. One is related to the discourse about Turkey’s geographical affiliation, and the other to the discourse about Turkish identity in Europe.

Concerning Europe’s geographical borders, the author uses the *topos* of authority to justify the claim that Turkey can geographically be considered a European country. This is done via quoting from a Turkish politician that ‘the frontiers of Europe pass to the south and east of Turkey’, adding that no one was contradicting this statement, and from former prime minister Adnan Menderes, who referred to a newly opened oil refinery in Mersin as ‘the largest oil refinery in Europe’.

Below the subheading ‘No Racial Objections’, the author uses arguments based on essentialist racial discrimination to promote Turkey’s accession to the EEC. The correspondent once again resorts to the *topos* of authority, with reference to the racial classifications of ethnologists, to justify his/her conviction that Turks are ‘racially Europeans’. Through the *topos* of comparison, the author rebuts the argument that because Turks originated from the Asian regions they cannot be considered European, by claiming that Hungarians and Finns also originated from Asia.

However, the *Times* correspondent also distinguishes between two groups of Turks: ‘modern Turks’ and ‘pure Turks’. The former ‘have already ethnically so transmuted themselves over the centuries, by breeding with the indigenous races they conquered, that they are today quite different in almost every way from the mass of pure Turks who inhabit

central Asia'. The author uses 'modern Turks' and 'Anatolians' synonymously and describes them as a distinct ethnic group. By indigenous races, s/he means Armenians and Hittites 'who may well have been of Aryan stock' and who inhabited the region before the Turks came to Anatolia.

Following the racial reasoning examined above, religion is the second argumentation strategy used with regard to the identity question. Despite the assumption that 'Turks are Muslims', religion does not play an important role in the lives of those 'modern Turks' who are 'deeply committed to Atatürk's principle of secularism'. The author describes these young Turks as 'non-Muslim intellectuals' and regards them as Europeans. Just like 'us', this younger generation knows famous Western writers such as Kafka and Proust. However, the article makes clear that practicing Muslims cannot be regarded as Europeans: 'Of course the mass of the Turkish peasantry, which still seems to escape into the mosque whenever possible, can hardly be regarded as European'. In this sense, such argumentation allows for the discursive construction of 'Europeanness' as a trait to be acquired as long as there is no substantive contestation over race and geography, and as long as the essentially European intellectual heritage is adopted.

## 5. Conclusion

Discourse analytic methods with all their variants face certain similar challenges in displaying representational practices. Any form of discourse analysis requires the existence of texts. The texts selected for analysis differ depending on the research topics and questions adopted by the researcher. Discourse analyses in the field of international relations typically analyse official speeches, declarations, parliamentary debates, diplomatic documents, interviews, newspapers, and editorials as primary documents. In addition to these, other academic works, novels, and conceptual histories can also be analysed. Although less common in international relations, visual materials such as photos and television programmes<sup>62</sup> or ethnographic data<sup>63</sup> can also be put to analysis as forms of multi-modal discourse.

Whichever type of text is selected for analysis, the selection needs to be justified in line with the goals of the research, a key matter which brings us to the issue of sampling in discourse analysis.

Since discourse analysis is largely a qualitative method, the reliability and validity of the analyses cannot be ascertained in exactly the same way as in quantitative approaches. Sampling is usually a common area of criticism directed at discourse analysis. Although most studies analyse *typical texts*, the definition of *typical* remains ambiguous and can thus be contested. Sampling may also be based around certain key events and developments concerning the research question at hand. However, there are certain criteria that are offered to increase the reliability and validity of discourse analytic research. DHA, for instance, adopts the principle of *triangulation* in the analysis of texts. This principle refers to the endeavour to work interdisciplinarily, multimethodically, and on the basis of a variety of different empirical data as well as background information.<sup>64</sup> For instance, in a study on the discursive construction of national identity, the principle of triangulation requires that

<sup>62</sup> See Lillie Chouliaraki, "Spectacular Ethics: On the Television Footage of the Iraq War," *Journal of Language and Politics* 4, no. 1 (2005): 143–59.

<sup>63</sup> Iver B. Neumann, "To Be a Diplomat," *International Studies Perspectives* 6 (2005): 72–93.

<sup>64</sup> Reisigl and Wodak, *Discourse and Discrimination*, 35.

historical, sociopolitical, and linguistic perspectives on national identity be coupled with an analysis of a wide array of data including political speeches, newspaper articles, posters and brochures, interviews, and focus groups.<sup>65</sup>

It is also crucial that the researcher continues to gather new data until the data reach a saturation point where no new findings are revealed. The ideal analysis would thus require extensive reading from a variety of genres. In practice, it is not possible to read every relevant text on a given issue. What is usually done is to make sure that representations are constantly repeated in a wider textual network and that the analysis and texts are revised upon encountering a text which cannot be accounted for by the discursive positions identified in other analysed texts.<sup>66</sup> It makes the analysis much easier if the analyst already possesses a certain degree of prior knowledge of the general topic of the analysis. This facilitates the identification of meanings that are used in creating common reference points.<sup>67</sup>

Despite these efforts, discourse analytic approaches can still be criticized for not being objective and for engaging in political argumentation rather than rigorous academic research. Yet, the theoretical bases of these approaches generally deny the possibility of full objectivity in the first place. Especially in critical approaches such as CDA, the researcher is not assumed to be purely objective, but instead is entrusted with the task of revealing social mechanisms of oppression, domination, and exclusion through discourse from a critical perspective, provided that s/he is guided by theoretical premises, systematic analysis, and constant self-reflection during the course of the research. Hence the *critical* dimension in some of these approaches presupposes a certain political stance on the part of the researcher, which points to the crucial significance of self-reflexivity where the analyst does not exist independently of the discursive (and/or non-discursive) context within which society operates. In a similar vein, one other criticism directed at some of these approaches is that they state the obvious. This criticism has been countered by claims that even politically informed individuals may not be able to see through the complex dynamics behind the (re)production and effects of discourse.

Although not a criticism per se, one difficulty that is often voiced especially with reference to CDA is that it requires a certain level of linguistic expertise in the analysis of texts. Indeed, a fundamental difference between CDA and other forms of discourse analysis lies in the former's emphasis on the micro-level, thus linguistic, analysis of texts. This can be a challenge for scholars coming from different disciplines who would like to apply CDA in their fields of research, and thus in turn imposes an indirect limit on the fields where CDA is employed. Linguistic limitations often limit CDA to individual case studies, because researchers may lack linguistic capacity to study other comparable cases. Nonetheless, the recent successful applications of CDA in fields such as foreign policy and the study of international organizations like the EU demonstrate that this difficulty can be overcome, primarily by an extensive prior reading in empirical studies which employ this method in various different fields.

Our experience with the FEUTURE project has also introduced us to challenges that are more specific to historical forms of discourse analysis. One specific difficulty concerns the issue of

<sup>65</sup> Ruth Wodak et al., *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 9.

<sup>66</sup> Iver B. Neumann, "Discourse Analysis," in *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, ed. Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (Houndsmills: Palgrave, 2009), 70.

<sup>67</sup> Neumann, "Discourse Analysis," 64.

ensorship. For instance, during our research of the nineteenth-century representations, while we had no problem finding press sources in English, French, and German, press censorship in the Ottoman Empire suppressed evaluative discussion of all domestic and/or international politics in this period. To resolve this issue, we turned to alternative sources which included newspapers published by dissidents outside the Ottoman Empire in Ottoman Turkish as well as private letters, memoirs, and memoranda written by prominent bureaucrats. Historical discourse analysis, by definition, relies heavily on archival research. Besides the problem of censorship, we have sometimes encountered institutional obstacles to accessing the necessary documents. For instance, our universities lacked institutional access to some of the newspaper databases before a certain time, which necessitated collaboration with colleagues from other institutions in different countries. Another challenge was a linguistic one. Particularly in DHA, it is important that all texts are read and analysed in their original languages. In our case, this entailed proficiency in German, French, English, Turkish, and Ottoman Turkish. We managed to overcome this difficulty by working with a team of researchers possessing the necessary linguistic skills (hence also including a historian) for the project. This has shown us the importance of working with an international and interdisciplinary team when undertaking discourse analyses that are ambitious in terms of time and scope. In order to achieve the necessary coordination among members of the team, we developed a common textual analysis template, and conducted periodic meetings.

In sum, since its introduction to the IR discipline in the late 1980s, discourse analysis has developed into an established methodological approach. It is important for IR scholars attempting to analyse textual material, such as speeches and documents, to employ discourse analysis consciously and systematically, taking into account the full range of its theoretical premises and methodological tools.

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## Broadening the Horizons of the “International” by Historicizing it: Comparative Historical Analysis

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### Abstract

*This article intends to analyze the use of comparative historical analysis (CHA) in the discipline of International Relations (IR). After describing the historical evolution and fundamental premises of CHA, the article continues with the classification of CHA. Then the strengths and weaknesses of the method as well as its utilization by various theories of IR are discussed. The second part of the article deals with the employment of CHA by the author of this article in his own research design, in order to give an idea that how CHA might contribute to a better understanding of the “international”. In doing that, the advantages and disadvantages of the method are revisited in a way to show the contributions provided as well as the difficulties encountered in practice. The article concludes that CHA might contribute to the study of IR by enhancing interdisciplinary approaches and by adding a socio-historical depth to the ‘international’, which helps to overcome historicism and presentism at the same time.*

**Keywords:** Comparative historical analysis, international relations, history, method

### 1. Introduction

The nineteenth century positivist turn resulted in a strict departmentalization in social sciences, which led to the emergence of clear-cut but artificial boundaries among various disciplines. Although the discipline of International Relations (IR) was a latecomer considering the establishment of the first IR department in 1919, particularly after the World War II, it attempted to distinguish itself particularly from the disciplines of history and political science. The scholars of IR have claimed that this new discipline would examine ‘the present’ contrary to history and ‘the international’ contrary to political science, which has traditionally dealt with ‘domestic’ politics.<sup>1</sup> Drawing such boundaries by this ‘American social science’<sup>2</sup> was criticized by traditional European schools of IR to a great extent, which have argued that trapping international relations within these artificial boundaries would create an explanatory poverty that neglects historical background and domestic elements of foreign policy making.<sup>3</sup> These schools argued that in order to understand ‘the international’,

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<sup>1</sup> For a sample discussion, see Andrew J. Williams, Amelia Hadfield and J. Simon Rofe, *International History and International Relations* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), especially 7-32.

<sup>2</sup> Stanley Hoffmann, “An American Social Science: International Relations,” *Daedalus* 106, no. 3 Discoveries and Interpretations: Studies in Contemporary Scholarship, Volume I (1977): 41–60.

<sup>3</sup> The critique of the English School will be discussed below. However, it should be noted here that some scholars prefer to define that approach not as the English School, but as ‘international society approach’ in order to relieve it from a national boundary. For a discussion on English-ness of the English School, see Tim Dunne, “A British School of International Relations,” in *The British*

one should consider not only the domestic factors contributing to foreign policy making but also the historical evolution of the institutions and processes; hence they advocated an interdisciplinary approach.

A second defect of this new discipline of IR was its perception of the nation-state almost as the sole major actor in the international system. The critiques of IR underlined that the nation-state itself is a construct that should be contextualized in history. Moreover, according to them, there have been other actors at the sub-state and supra-state levels that should be taken into consideration as well.

Comparative historical analysis (CHA) can be perceived as a methodological cure for these two problems of IR namely its ahistoricism and the neglect of actors other than the nation-state. Indeed, CHA is also a criticism against traditional historiography, which has been organized as a ‘national’ field emphasizing the uniqueness of its subjects and explaining their development by presenting an evolutionary narrative of the institutions and processes.<sup>4</sup> Thus CHA attempted to broaden the horizons of IR by historicizing it and of history by undermining its claim to examine what is unique and unrepeatable.

Most basically defined, CHA “is concerned with similarities and differences; in explaining a given phenomenon, it asks which conditions, or factors, were broadly shared, and which were distinctive”.<sup>5</sup> Therefore it attempts to put forward a causal understanding of why certain cases in history have resemblances considering a certain social phenomena, whereas others have differences. Such a comparative account would increase the explanatory power of any analysis, since it allows the researcher to test his/her hypotheses on other cases.

In this introductory article on CHA, I attempt to describe this method briefly in a way to demonstrate its fundamental characteristics in two major parts. In the first part, after historicizing the method itself, in other words, introducing the evolution of CHA to the reader, I define the basic premises and the uses of this method as well as various types of comparative analysis. Then, I analyze the strengths and weaknesses of CHA and focus on the alternative approaches, which have been developed to overcome the shortcomings of this method. Finally, I evaluate the relationship between IR theory and CHA in a way to show how CHA has already been employed by some IR theories to overcome the deficiencies of the dominant realist paradigm. The second part of the article is devoted to my own employment of CHA in three of my recent studies. In this part, I try to show how I use comparative method, how I choose the cases that I compared and the practical difficulties that I encountered during my research.

## 2. CHA in a Nutshell

### 2.1. The historical background of CHA

Comparison has always been a significant part of social inquiry, because even the simplest definition of ‘the self’ vis-à-vis ‘the other’ require some degree of comparison. Therefore,

*Study of Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Jack Hayward, Brian Berry and Archie Brown (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 395–424.

<sup>4</sup> Peter Baldwin, “Comparing and Generalizing: Why All History is Comparative, Yet No History Is Sociology,” in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, ed. Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 1.

<sup>5</sup> Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor, “Introduction: Comparative History, Cross-National History, Transnational History – Definitions,” in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, ed. Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), xi.

it is not surprising that a comparative outlook has always been present in historiography. From Herodote's dichotomy between the Greeks and the barbarians to the classification of peoples in the writings of al-Tabari, from the comparative analysis of nomadic and settled communities by Ibn Khaldun to Vico's perception of philosophy of history as a "new science", comparative understanding of actors, cases and processes have been embedded in classical texts of history.<sup>6</sup> The inclination towards comparative methodology was enhanced with the positivist turn in the nineteenth century, which directed historians to seek for a more systematic understanding of history via employing comparison in their writings.<sup>7</sup> From Georg William Friedrich Hegel to Karl Marx, from Max Weber to Nikolay Danilevsky, all these philosophers and historians referred to comparative analogies to demonstrate the complexity of the social phenomena.<sup>8</sup> In the first decades of the twentieth century, eminent European historians, such as Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee and Fernand Braudel praised the virtues of comparison particularly in enriching the historical analysis and in overcoming the detriments of nationalist histories.<sup>9</sup>

Although comparative accounts have always been present in historiography, it was with the works of the French historian Marc Bloch that CHA emerged more or less as a well-defined method of historical inquiry. His famous article entitled "Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes" (Towards a comparative history of European societies) put forward the basic principles of comparative history, on which historians have built an efficient methodological toolkit.<sup>10</sup> He was inspired by John Stuart Mill's distinction between 'the method of agreement' and 'the method of difference'; the former underlining "a common cause among cases when the cases share the same outcome and have different scores for all of the independent variables but one"; whereas the latter highlighting "a cause of divergent outcomes among cases [...] when all of the independent variables but one are the same."<sup>11</sup> Based on this distinction, Bloch argued that the historian must first choose cross-cultural themes, recurring patterns, global processes or theoretical propositions that are worthy of studying. Then he/she has to decide on the case studies that best reflect the comparative approach and the hypotheses that are aimed to be proved. For Bloch, the selected societies should share historical connections and cultural commonalities in order to make comparison possible. Moreover, the historian must have an expert knowledge of archival research and a significant "proficiency in languages appropriate for the societies, periods and issues to be explored".<sup>12</sup>

<sup>6</sup> For a genealogy of comparative history in European historiography see George Steinmetz, "Comparative History and Its Critics: A Genealogy and a Possible Solution," in *A Companion to Global Historical Thought*, ed. Prasenjit Duara, Viren Murthy and Andrew Sartori (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2014), 414–16. For a genealogy of comparative history in Islamic historiography see Franz Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1952), particularly 88–91.

<sup>7</sup> Matthew Lange, *Comparative-Historical Methods* (London: Sage, 2013), 22.

<sup>8</sup> James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, "Comparative Historical Analysis: Achievements and Agendas," in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3.

<sup>9</sup> Rushton Coulborn, "A Paradigm for Comparative History?," *Current Anthropology* 10, no. 2–3 (1969): 176. For a detailed analysis of comparative historical methodology of Toynbee, Marx and Braudel, also see B. K. Gills, "International Relations Theory and the Processes of World History: Three Approaches," in *The Study of International Relations: The State of the Art*, ed. Hugh C. Dyer and Leon Mangasarian (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 103–54.

<sup>10</sup> Marc Bloch, "Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes" (paper delivered at the Sixth International Congress of Historical Sciences, Oslo, 1928). Printed in *Revue de synthèse historique* 46 (1928): 15–50.

<sup>11</sup> Lange, *Comparative-Historical Methods*, 115; Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, "Comparison and Beyond: Traditions, Scope and Perspectives of Comparative History," in *Transnational History: Central European Approaches and New Perspectives*, ed. Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 2.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Adas, "Comparative History and the Challenge of the Grand Narrative," in *A Companion to World History*, ed. Douglas Northrop (West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2012), 231.

Bloch's pioneering studies were followed after the end of the World War II by those of other historians, which also weakened the nationalist/historicist historiography vis-à-vis comparative history. As Steinmetz argues, the post-war scientific turn in social inquiry urged the historians "to adopt a comparative approach patterned on natural science experiments and rooted in positivist philosophies of science".<sup>13</sup> Even some historians like Rushton Coulborn, perceived the comparative method as one of the most important criteria for a study of history to be scientific. Coulborn once wrote that "[s]ince comparison is the most elementary theoretical process and is thereby distinguished from simple description, this study [in which a comparative method is employed] is a scientific study."<sup>14</sup> This emphasis on scientificity was epitomized by the foundation of a particular journal on comparative history in 1958, namely *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, by an American historian, Sylvia L. Thrupp, from the University of Chicago.<sup>15</sup> This journal, published by Cambridge University Press, is still a significant forum for comparative historians.

From the 1980s onwards, a promising as well as challenging period for CHA began. On the one hand, comparative history was very much popularized by the works of Charles Tilly and Theda Skocpol, who initiated a very fruitful collaboration between history and sociology, as well as by the works and long editorship of Raymond Grew over *Comparative Studies in Society and History* between 1973 and 1997.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, CHA was strongly criticized by two intellectual movements of the 1980s. First, the "cultural turn" in social sciences criticized comparative history for neglecting cultural peculiarities of cases in the name of comparison and emphasized "the specificity of the local focusing on differentiated functioning of societies and cultures within a relativist setting".<sup>17</sup> Second, the "post-modern turn" criticized CHA for its extreme emphasis on causality and its embrace of metahistorical categories which had been rejected by postmodernist historians as 'dangerous fictions'.<sup>18</sup> These criticisms forced the comparative historians to take into account these new trends in history and there emerged novel approaches such as transnational or entangled histories, which attempted to overcome the weaknesses of the comparative approach. Today, CHA is still widely used, although the culturalist and post-modernist critiques also continue to display the approach's shortcomings.

## 2.2. Defining CHA and its basic functions

Most simply defined, CHA is the systematic study of two or more historical phenomena to put forward similarities and differences in order to contribute to the description, explanation and interpretation of these phenomena.<sup>19</sup> It is not a single method, but rather a generic name for some methodological approaches of social sciences as well as history, which:

[...] inquires how cultural and social differences and similarities were constructed, institutionalized and represented in the past. It examines comparatively historical experiences,

<sup>13</sup> Steinmetz, "Comparative History," 419.

<sup>14</sup> Coulborn, "A Paradigm for Comparative History?," 176.

<sup>15</sup> Philippa Levine, "Is Comparative History Possible?," *History and Theory* 53 (2014): 332.

<sup>16</sup> See Charles Tilly, *As Sociology Meets History: Studies in Social Discontinuity* (New York: Academic Press, 1981); Charles Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons* (New York: Sage, 1984); Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Raymond Grew, "The Case for Comparing Histories," *The American Historical Review* 85, no. 4 (1980): 763–78.

<sup>17</sup> Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity," *History and Theory* 45 (2006): 30.

<sup>18</sup> Levine, "Is Comparative History Possible?," 333.

<sup>19</sup> Kocka and Haupt, "Comparison and Beyond," 2.

recollections, views of history, master narratives, paths of development and structural patterns, in order to comprehend, understand and explain past and present differences and similarities between different societies and cultures.<sup>20</sup>

However, not all comparative analogies can be considered as comparative history. According to Carl Degler, “it is only when the job of explaining differences is undertaken that comparative history begins”, meaning that the *study* of the phenomena should be comparative rather than simply using sporadic comparisons in a particular historiography.<sup>21</sup> This emphasis on systematic and scientific study of history brings us to the first significant use of comparative history, namely hypothesis testing. According to William Sewell, the historian should be able to check the hypothesis that he/she designed via the comparative method he/she employed:

If an historian attributes the appearance of phenomenon A in one society to the existence of condition B, he can check this hypothesis by trying to find other societies where A occurs without B or vice versa. If he finds no cases which contradict the hypothesis, his confidence in its validity will increase, the level of his confidence depending upon the number and variety of comparisons made. If he finds contradictory cases, he will either reject the hypothesis outright or reformulate and refine it so as to take into account the contradictory evidence and then subject it again to comparative testing. By such a process of testing, reformulating, and retesting, he will construct explanations which satisfy him as convincing and accurate.<sup>22</sup>

Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers also argue that the comparative method can be used to engage in macro-causal analysis, which is more quantitative than qualitative. For them, macro-causal analysis resembles statistical analysis, “which manipulates groups of cases to control sources of variation in order to make causal inferences when quantitative data are available about a large number of cases”. Moreover, comparative macro-causal analysis is a type of multivariate analysis with which scholars can validate their causal statements about macro-phenomena.<sup>23</sup>

The comparative historical understanding of the ‘scientific’ differs both from traditional theories of history and from sociology. As Hannes Siegrist writes, comparative history is located somewhere between the generalizing tendencies of sociology and individualizing tendencies of history and cultural studies, which is an important contribution of this approach:

[C]omparative historical science differs from those tendencies in the social and cultural sciences which are primarily aimed at checking universalistic statements and developing universally valid theories indifferent to space and time. Whereas genetically individualizing approaches in historical science focus on detecting and representing the particular and thus frequently nurture a cult of what is unique and special, systematic sociology frequently focuses on identifying institutions and regularities which are independent of space and time. Systematically comparative historical science rather stands between these two poles, examining, theoretically, the tension between the general and the particular, the interdependence of the local and the universal and the relation between identity and hybridity, by means of several comparative cases, using quantifying and qualitative methods.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Hannes Siegrist, “Comparative History of Cultures and Societies. From Cross-Societal Analysis to the Study of Intercultural Interdependencies,” in “Comparative Methodologies in the Social Sciences: Cross-Disciplinary Inspirations,” special issue, *Comparative Education* 42, no. 3 (2006): 379.

<sup>21</sup> Carl N. Degler, “Comparative History: An Essay Review,” *The Journal of Southern History* 34, no. 3 (1968): 426.

<sup>22</sup> William H. Sewell, Jr., “Marc Bloch and the Logic of Comparative History,” *History and Theory* 6, no. 2 (1967): 208.

<sup>23</sup> Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers, “The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22, no. 2 (1980): 182.

<sup>24</sup> Siegrist, “Comparative History,” 380.

In addition to hypothesis testing, the second use of comparative history is to discover the uniqueness of different societies via comparison. In other words, in order to understand what is peculiar to a particular culture or society, comparison with other cultures and societies is required. This sounds a bit confusing if not contradictory, because comparative history criticizes nationalist/historicist accounts, which prioritize a particular culture/society and neglects the interactions among different actors; but on the other hand, comparative historians are also aware that it is only through comparison that these peculiarities can be underlined. As Skocpol and Somers write, comparative historians “make use of comparative history to bring out the unique features of each particular case included in their discussions, and to show how these unique features affect the working-out of putatively general social processes”.<sup>25</sup>

The third use of comparative history is formulating further problems for research. By employing CHA, uncharted or under-researched themes can be discovered and analyzed thoroughly. Even historians agree that Marc Bloch himself discovered the enclosure movement in southern France—which had been underestimated by historians before him—via his familiarity with the research on the English enclosure system and through his comparative method.<sup>26</sup>

All in all, comparative historical analysis contributes to the different aspects of a researcher’s work. Heuristically, it allows the researcher to identify problems and questions that would otherwise be very difficult to pose. Descriptively, it helps to apply a clear profile to individual cases. Analytically, it serves to criticize pseudo-explanations and help to test hypotheses. Paradigmatically, it transforms one case into one among many possible cases and leads to de-provincialization of historical observation.<sup>27</sup> As Raymond Grew aptly summarized, “[d]eliberately used, comparison can aid historians at four stages of their work: (1) in asking questions, (2) in identifying historical problems, (3) in designing the appropriate research, and (4) in reaching and testing significant conclusions.”<sup>28</sup>

As mentioned above, CHA is not a single method; rather it is a generic name for a variety of methods that have the common characteristic of dealing with different cases via comparing and contrasting them. Based on the works of Skocpol/Somers and Charles Tilly, van den Braembussche classified these methods under five categories. The table below summarizes his classification by focusing on the mode of comparison as well as the advantages and the disadvantages of the method in concern. The examples that van den Braembussche provided are also shown in the table.

<sup>25</sup> Skocpol and Somers, “The Uses of Comparative History,” 178.

<sup>26</sup> Sewell, “Marc Bloch,” 212.

<sup>27</sup> Kocka and Haupt, “Comparison and Beyond,” 3–4.

<sup>28</sup> Grew, “The Case for Comparing Histories,” 769.

Table 1- Classification of CHA<sup>29</sup>

Type of Comparative History	How comparison is made	Advantages	Disadvantages	Example
<b>Contrasting Comparative History</b>	Unique characteristics of every particular case are focused upon. Attention is concentrated on contrasts among cases.	(1) Easier to classify the differences; (2) makes traditional history writing more systematic.	(1) It is quite descriptive; (2) it strictly relies upon chronology.	Reinhard Bendix, <i>Work and Authority in Industry</i> . <sup>30</sup>
<b>Generalizing Comparative History</b>	A principle of variation among cases is tried to be constructed by focusing on differences among cases.	Not simply contrasts but tries to understand why differences occur.	(1) It sometimes fails to understand specificities of particular cases; (2) it is too teleological to perceive that the events occurred are inevitable and unavoidable.	Jeffery M. Paige, <i>Agrarian Revolution</i> . <sup>31</sup>
<b>Macro-causal Comparative History</b>	It uses both the method of agreement and the method of difference in order to examine causal factors for explaining the observed phenomenon.	Since the historical explanation is unequivocal, it can be easily recognized and verified.	(1) Generally it fails into the trap of mono-causality; (2) it lacks sufficient criteria for falsification.	Robert Brenner, <i>Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe</i> . <sup>32</sup>
<b>Inclusive Comparative History</b>	The cases examined in this type are locating at varying points within one and the same system, in which the relationship among them is an overarching whole.	It provides a general picture surpassing a specific time period and ranges across different ages.	(1) It is generally very deterministic arguing that a unit behaves a certain way dictated by the system; (2) similarities are quite overemphasized.	Immanuel Wallerstein, <i>The Modern World System</i> . <sup>33</sup>
<b>Universalizing Comparative History</b>	Based on method of agreement, it tries to achieve universal generalizations to explain a particular phenomenon. It argues that all the particular cases are always related to universal phasing.	It creates law-like statements, which simply explains how and why a certain process takes place within history.	(1) Extreme overemphasis on similarities; (2) it is more descriptive than explanatory; (3) it fails to understand transitions within the universalizing logic.	W.W. Rostow, <i>The Stages of Economic Growth</i> . <sup>34</sup>

<sup>29</sup> A. A. Van Den Braembussche, "Historical Explanation and Comparative Method: Towards a Theory of the History of Society," *History and Theory* 28, no. 1 (1989): 13–21.

<sup>30</sup> In this book, Bendix contrasts British and German political cultures to show differences between political participation of British and German workers. Reinhard Bendix, *Work and Authority in Industry: Managerial Ideologies in the Course of Industrialization* (New York: Transaction Publishers, 1963).

<sup>31</sup> Examining 135 agricultural export sectors in 70 underdeveloped countries, Paige attempted to construct a theoretical model for understanding different types of rural class conflicts. Jeffery M. Paige, *Agrarian Revolution: Social Movements and Export Agriculture in the Underdeveloped World* (New York: Free Press, 1975).

<sup>32</sup> Brenner argues that the transition from pre-industrial to industrial economy in Europe cannot be explained by commercialization or demographic factors but by class relations. Robert Brenner, "Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe," *Past and Present* 70 (1976): 30–75. For a detailed analysis and critique of his macro-causal analysis, see T. H. Aston and C. H. E. Philpin, eds., *The Brenner Debate: Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>33</sup> This four volume opus magnum of Wallerstein defines a single world system present based on rise of capitalist mode of production and compartmentalized the world space into three spatial units, core, semiperiphery and periphery. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System, Vol. I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System, Vol. II: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600–1750* (New York: Academic Press, 1980); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System, Vol. III: The Second Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730–1840s* (San Diego: Academic Press, 1989); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System, Vol. IV: Centrist Liberalism Triumphant, 1789–1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

<sup>34</sup> In this work, Rostow argues that every industrialized nation has passed through the same stages. W.W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

In sum, the categorization of CHA is based on the mode and the aim of comparison. On the one hand, the comparative study might focus either on differences or similarities or both of them; on the other hand, its purpose might be creating a relatively specific comparison between a small number of cases or reaching at grand narratives and universal generalizations by reviewing a large number of cases at a particular period or across different temporal scales. Whatever method is chosen, what is central in CHA is to define the units of comparison and to set the similarities and/or differences among them.

### 2.3. Strengths and weaknesses of comparative historical analysis

CHA has some promising contributions in designing a systematic and analytic research project. First of all, the comparative method forces the researcher to seek for deeper contextualization, which could prevent him/her from confining himself/herself to dull and simple descriptions. In other words, undertaking such a complex method enhances the analytical premises of the research instead of limiting that research into a descriptive study. Secondly, CHA directs the researcher to underline causal connections among events and processes, and therefore makes him/her avoid strict adherence to story-telling or mere chronological accounts. Third, CHA makes the researcher focus not only on resemblances but also on differences; therefore, it not only leads him/her to refrain from historicism, but also allows him/her to reveal the peculiar conditions resulting in unique responses for some cases.<sup>35</sup> As Friberg [et. al.] argues, CHA compels the historian to engage with at least two separate historiographical traditions and by exposing assumptions about his/her national case to the questions posed by another, it leads to a reexamination of these assumptions, which would ultimately result in undermining the link between history-writing and nation building.<sup>36</sup> Finally, as Michael Adas writes, CHA might be a cure for Eurocentrism, because of the deep immersion of the researcher in diverse and multiple cases.<sup>37</sup>

Besides these advantages, there are several weaknesses of CHA as well. One weakness may be related with the cases chosen. Those, who criticize CHA underscore that the cases chosen by most of the historians employing this method are still more or less territorially-bound; in other words, most of the comparative historical studies tend to compare nation-states. On the one hand, this is not much surprising since the nation-state has been the dominant actor of international relations for at least some centuries. On the other hand, considering CHA's criticism towards the ahistoricism of a realist understanding of IR, which focuses on the failure to understand the historical evolution of nation-states as actors in the international system and their naturalization as eternal entities, the widespread choice of nation-states as units of comparison seems to be contradictory.<sup>38</sup>

To overcome this weakness, some historians have offered 'transnational history' as the solution. Unlike CHA, which is based on the selection of cases to be compared, transnational history seeks to understand the historicization of contacts between communities, politics and societies as a way to understand global trends, instead of digging for specific cases. Therefore, As Glenda Sluga argues, it helps to conceptualize an alternative spatial framework to the nation. She writes that "[h]istories that focus on border regions, historical studies of travel

<sup>35</sup> Adas, "Comparative History," 238.

<sup>36</sup> Katarina Friberg, Mary Hilson and Natasha Vall, "Reflections on Trans-national Comparative History from an Anglo-Swedish Perspective," *Historisk Tidskrift* 127, no. 4 (2007): 731.

<sup>37</sup> Adas, "Comparative History," 235.

<sup>38</sup> Levine, "Is Comparative History Possible?," 333.

and empire, or of international movements, are all potentially transnational”.<sup>39</sup> Secondly, transnational history might contribute to a focus on actors other than nation-states, including religious communities, regions, civilizations, cities, etc. Finally, transnational history allows the researcher to understand trends, patterns, organizations and individuals, since it has a broader perspective than the comparative approaches.<sup>40</sup>

The second criticism directed against CHA has been a relatively novel approach to historical analysis known as the *histoire croisée* (entangled history).<sup>41</sup> According to those defending *histoire croisée* vis-à-vis CHA, the latter has to separate between the units of comparison in order to bring them together under the viewpoints of similarity and difference, which may result in generalizations that might be misleading. Contrarily, instead of categorizing the actors as distinct units, *histoire croisée* stresses the connections, continuities and hybridities among them; therefore, it rejects distinguishing them clearly.<sup>42</sup> According to Werner and Zimmermann, *histoire croisée* is not a single theory but an approach “associated with the idea of an unspecified crossing or interaction”.<sup>43</sup> It is a ‘relational’ approach meaning that it examines the links, the transfers and cross-cultural exchanges between various historically constituted formations. It criticizes CHA for its perception of the historian as a detached observer to the cases that he/she examines, which is, according to *histoire croisée* impossible. It also perceives that CHA suffers from the problem of accepting the actors, institutions or concepts as given and thereby neglecting their historical constitution and evolution. Instead, what *histoire croisée* offers is diverting from:

[...] one-dimensional perspective that simplifies and homogenizes, in favor of a multidimensional approach that acknowledges plurality and the complex configurations that result from it. Accordingly, entities and objects of research are not merely considered in relation to one another but also through one another, in terms of relationships, interactions, and circulation.<sup>44</sup>

Although comparative historical analysis and *histoire croisée* were generally perceived as rivals to each other, Kocka and Haupt argue that this is not necessarily the case. According to them, these two approaches may and should feed each other, since without comparison it is difficult to find out the connections and without connections it is difficult to compare and contrast different cases.<sup>45</sup>

All in all, CHA can be considered as a fruitful method allowing interdisciplinary studies among history, sociology, economics, anthropology, etc. Its wide applicability over social phenomena contributes to a deeper contextualization of cases and overcoming historicism. However, at the same time CHA has been criticized for being state-centric and for underestimating the cross-cultural exchanges among cases. These criticisms have given way to the emergence of alternative methods including transnational history and *histoire croisée*.

<sup>39</sup> Glenda Sluga, “The Nation and the Comparative Imagination,” in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, ed. Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 109.

<sup>40</sup> Pierre-Yves Saunier, *Transnational History* (London and New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013), 4–5. For a detailed account of transnational and global history see Akira Iriye, *Global and Transnational History: The Past, Present and Future* (London and New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013), 1–18.

<sup>41</sup> According to Cohen and O’Connor, *histoire croisée* is a part of a larger group of methodological approaches known as cross-national history. This is the third category they discussed in their edited volume other than comparative history and transnational history. For a comparison of these three approaches see, Cohen and O’Connor, “Introduction,” ix–xxiv.

<sup>42</sup> Kocka and Haupt, “Comparison and Beyond,” 20.

<sup>43</sup> Werner and Zimmermann, “Beyond Comparison,” 31.

<sup>44</sup> Werner and Zimmermann, “Beyond Comparison,” 38.

<sup>45</sup> Kocka and Haupt, “Comparison and Beyond,” 20.

## 2.4. CHA and IR theory

The disciplines of History and IR are so interrelated that it is very difficult to simplify them as history deals with the past and international relations deals with the present. Rather, these two disciplines should be considered as interrelated fields feeding each other. As Thomas Smith argues, when international theory is constructed from the bottom up, history provides the building blocks and when it is built from the top down, history serves to test or falsify theoretical concepts.<sup>46</sup>

The distance between the disciplines of History and IR has generally been represented as if there are dichotomical differences between them. Colin Elman and Miriam F. Elman summarize these dichotomical differences in a way to show how the students of these two disciplines develop prejudices against each other. Accordingly, the first illusionary difference between History and IR is that historians deal with narrative-based explanations, whereas IR scholars deal with theory-based explanations. Secondly, their teleology is assumed to be different; while the historians seek to ‘understand’ the past, the scholars of IR tend to ‘comment’ on the present to ‘predict’ the future. Third, IR scholars criticize the historians for explaining single unique events, while their own works, focusing on classes of events and multiple cases, are claimed to be more explanatory. Finally, it is argued that IR scholars tend to focus on mono-causality for the sake of simplicity by ruling out weaker causal factors, whereas historians accept the plausibility of complex multi-causal explanations underlining different factors leading to a process or event. As Elman and Elman argue, these distinctions, which have been embedded in these two disciplines, are stereotyped fallacies that draw an artificial boundary between them that should be crossed via interdisciplinary approaches.<sup>47</sup>

The dominant paradigm of IR theory, namely realism, has generally been criticized for being ahistorical; in other words, concepts and premises of realist IR theory have been regarded as if they have been always present as they were throughout history. As Smith mentions, “in international relations [...] the historical problem is often glossed over or ignored.”<sup>48</sup> He argues that the reason for this neglect is that IR has evolved along positivist lines, which makes the students of this discipline question the validity of the use of historiography.<sup>49</sup> Despite this, some IR theories criticized the ahistoricity problem and argue that history should be brought back into international relations for a better understanding of the contemporary international affairs, structures and processes.

One of the earliest reactions to the ahistorical nature of IR theory came from the English School, which has criticized the behaviouralist methodology dominating the American school of IR, and by extension, the lack of historical depth in the construction of the IR theory.<sup>50</sup> Two studies of the English School are of great significance in terms of employing CHA. The first one is Martin Wight’s *Systems of States*<sup>51</sup>, in which, according to Barry Buzan, he put forward “the theoretical and empirical beginnings of a comparative historical project”. What Wight attempted in this work was constructing “an analytical scheme with a taxonomy of types and then to pursue a comparative analysis via case studies.”<sup>52</sup> The second

<sup>46</sup> Thomas W. Smith, *History and International Relations* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 7.

<sup>47</sup> Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, “Diplomatic History and International Relations Theory: Respecting Difference and Crossing Boundaries,” *International Security* 22, no. 1 (1997): 6–11.

<sup>48</sup> Smith, *History and International Relations*, 11.

<sup>49</sup> Smith, *History and International Relations*, 11.

<sup>50</sup> For a brief account of the English School and its critique of American IR theory, see Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık, “İngiliz Okulu,” in *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri*, ed. Ramazan Gözen (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2014), 217–56.

<sup>51</sup> Martin Wight, *Systems of States* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977).

<sup>52</sup> Barry Buzan, *An Introduction to the English School of International Relations: The Societal Approach* (Cambridge: Polity

major work employing a comparative historical method was Adam Watson's *The Evolution of International Society*.<sup>53</sup> It is a huge project sketching international societies from ancient Mesopotamian polities to ancient Greek, Roman, Indian and Chinese civilizations, from the Byzantine Empire to the Islamic system and ending with the emergence and evolution of the European international society. The comparative method, although much downgraded in the evolutionary/chronological path of the study, was still visible in Watson's discussions of various civilizations based on their similarities and differences.

The second major theoretical approach to IR using CHA as a methodological tool, namely historical sociology, is not originally an IR theory. However, John M. Hobson and Stephen Hobden attempted to define a 'historical sociology of IR' in order to add a socio-historical dimension to the IR theory that is very much absent in realist understanding.<sup>54</sup> According to Hobson, realism is defected by two forms of ahistoricism, named as chronofetishism and tempocentrism. Chronofetishism is based on "the assumption that the present can adequately be explained only by examining the present (thereby bracketing or ignoring the past)" and it leads to three illusions defined as the reification illusion (making the present appear as a static, self-constituting, autonomous and reified entity), the naturalization illusion (arguing for the emergence of the present spontaneously in line with natural human imperatives), and the immutability illusion (the eternalization of the present in a way to prevent an understanding of change).<sup>55</sup> In order to overcome these illusions, Hobson offered the employment of historical sociology in IR theory in order to (1) reveal the present as a construct embedded in a historical context; (2) denaturalize the present in a way to show that the present is emerged through processes of power, identity and norms; (3) and underline that the present is continuously reconstituted and transformed.<sup>56</sup>

The second form of ahistoricism is tempocentrism, which is described as a "methodology, in which theorists look at *history* through a 'chronofetishist lens'".<sup>57</sup> This methodological concept resulted in a fourth illusion added to the three illusions of chronofetishism, the isomorphic illusion, in which the naturalized and reified present is extrapolated backwards in time to present all historical systems as the same. To overcome this illusion, historical sociology might offer tracing the differences between the past and present international systems, which also require a comparative historical analysis.<sup>58</sup>

In sum, history is an indispensable part of international relations not only in terms of providing data for understanding contemporary world affairs but also in terms of enriching the methodological toolkit for studies of the 'international'. Through employing methods of history, such as CHA, one can overcome the illusions that emerge out of the chronofetishist and tempocentrist accounts developed by the realist paradigm. Moreover adding historical depth to the 'contemporary' can contextualize international relations in a way to provide a better explanatory style.

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Press, 2014), 48.

<sup>53</sup> Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society* (London: Routledge, 1992).

<sup>54</sup> Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson, eds., *Historical Sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>55</sup> John M. Hobson, "What's at Stake in 'Bringing Historical Sociology Back into International Relations'? Transcending 'Chronofetishism' and 'Tempocentrism' in International Relations," in *Historical Sociology of International Relations*, ed. Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 6–7.

<sup>56</sup> Hobson, "What's at Stake," 6–7.

<sup>57</sup> Hobson, "What's at Stake," 9.

<sup>58</sup> Hobson, "What's at Stake," 7.

### 3. Employing CHA: A Personal Experience

My personal encounter with CHA started when I was writing my dissertation entitled “Travel, Civilization and the East: The Ottoman Travelers’ Perception of the ‘East’ in the Late Ottoman Empire”.<sup>59</sup> In this dissertation, I criticized what is called the ‘Ottoman Orientalism’ and argued that the Ottoman perception of ‘the East’<sup>60</sup> cannot be generalized and simplified in a way to claim that the Ottomans perceived ‘the East’ in an Orientalist fashion as the Westerners had done. In order to substantiate this criticism, I utilized CHA at various levels, in comparing (1) the Western and Ottoman perceptions of civilization as well as ‘the East’; (2) the perception of Ottoman intellectuals, who had never been to ‘the East’, with those of the Ottoman travelers, who had visited parts of ‘the East’; and (3) different perceptions of Ottoman travelers with regard to the region that they had travelled. Indeed, before this decision of employing CHA as my research design, I had not taken any formal methodological education specifically on this particular method. Although in my graduate level IR courses on research methods different methods of social inquiry had been taught, comparative historical analysis was not included in the curriculum, probably because it was perceived as a method of historical inquiry. Therefore, using a comparative method emerged in my mind out of necessity for organizing the geographical, temporal as well as actor-based categories properly. I decided that a comparative approach would not only facilitate criticizing the generalizations and simplifications made by the proponents of the argument of Ottoman Orientalism, but also allow me to clarify my hypotheses and how to tackle them. Therefore, first I noticed and determined the methodological problem and then I chose comparative historical analysis as a method to solve this problem better.

The first level of comparison in my dissertation was on the Ottoman and European conceptualization of civilization. As an ‘Eastern’ people, the Ottomans approached the concept of civilization in an eclectic way by arguing for a synthesis of material elements of ‘Western culture’ and moral elements of ‘Eastern culture’. Such a perception was different from the European perception of civilization, which had generally distinguished between Western civilization and Eastern lack of civilization. Secondly, there are significant differences between the narratives of ‘the East’ by those Ottoman intellectuals who had learned about ‘the East’ from Western resources without actually experiencing any presence there, and the writings of the Ottoman travelers who had visited several parts of ‘the East’. While the former group had more Orientalist credentials, the latter group had perceived ‘the East’ as a space where they also belonged. Finally, a comparative account of Ottoman narratives about different regions of the East, including Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, South/South East Asia, and the Far East demonstrated that for the Ottoman travelers, there was no single and monolithic entity that could be defined as the ‘East’. The Orientalist tone of the travelers might be stronger in some regions than others depending on the personal background of the traveler, the time of travel, and the nature of the region travelled. I noticed during my research that the most Orientalist travelogues were written on Iran, whereas the travelogues on Central Asia had the least Orientalist tone. In sum, CHA allowed me to contextualize the literary genre of travel writing, the conceptualization of civilization and the perception of ‘the

<sup>59</sup> Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık, “Travel, Civilization and the East: The Ottoman Travelers’ Perception of the “East” in the Late Ottoman Empire” (PhD diss., Middle East Technical University, Ankara, 2010).

<sup>60</sup> ‘The East’ written in single quotation marks refers to my awareness that ‘the East’ as a singular entity is an Orientalist construct in itself.

East' in a more explanatory mood by criticizing stereotyping and generalizing attitudes of the advocates of Ottoman Orientalism. Of course, comparative historical analysis is not the sole method that I employed in my dissertation. Indeed I also employed both content analysis for evaluating the secondary sources and discourse analysis for a deeper contextualization of the travelogues. However, it was CHA that I employed the most to 'construct' the dissertation; in other words, CHA allowed me to establish a comparative structure to show the similarities and differences between the categories that I had already constructed by utilizing this very method.

Following my dissertation, my research agenda has split into two methodologically. The first track I studied, namely the Ottoman perception of international law, required not a comparative but an entangled approach, since I was attempting to demonstrate the interactions between the Ottoman Empire and the European state system in a way to shape the Ottoman perception of international law. The *histoire croisée* approach that I utilized in my two articles on the Ottoman recognition of European international law principles and on the education of international law in the Ottoman higher education facilities focused more on cross-cultural interactions, conceptual and perceptual transfers, exchange of ideas, etc. What I claimed in the first article was that the Ottoman 'entry' to the European international law system cannot be confined to the Treaty of Paris (1856); the process of Ottoman recognition of European international law and European recognition of the Ottoman Empire as a part of the European state system had occurred much earlier, even as early as the late seventeenth century.<sup>61</sup> The second article, on the other hand, focused on Ottoman intellectuals' interest in international law starting from the early nineteenth century onwards. It analyzed how the ideas of European international law infiltrated into the Ottoman intellectual circles, first through translations and then via the manuscripts written by Ottoman bureaucrats, who later became scholars of international law in the emerging imperial higher education institutions.<sup>62</sup> These two articles underlined the transfer of concepts and ideas instead of their comparative analysis.

The second track of my research agenda, in which I utilized CHA, includes three recent articles published in various books and journals. The first article entitled "Comparative Narratives of "Catastrophe": Ottoman Perception of the Balkan Wars and Greek Perception of the Asia Minor Campaign" once again allowed me to engage in an interdisciplinary endeavor, in which I benefitted from the conceptual/methodological toolkit of the disciplines of history, anthropology, literature and international relations.<sup>63</sup> This article emerged out of my interest in the memoirs of statesmen and soldiers written before, during and after World War I. When I was reading the memoirs of Ottoman and Greek statesmen/soldiers, I noticed that there are significant similarities between their narratives. What I needed was a concept that could be utilized to compare and contrast similar historical processes experienced by the Ottoman Empire and Greece in that particular time period. The concept I borrowed from anthropology was 'catastrophe', since there are some incidents in Ottoman and Greek histories defined as catastrophe, namely the Balkan Wars described in the literature as 'the great catastrophe'

<sup>61</sup> Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık, "The Emergence of the Idea of 'International Law' in the Ottoman Empire before the Treaty of Paris (1856)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 50, no. 2 (2014): 233–51.

<sup>62</sup> Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık, "International Law for Survival: Teaching International Law in the Late Ottoman Empire (1859–1922)," *Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies* 78, no. 2 (2015): 271–92.

<sup>63</sup> Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık, "Comparative Narratives of "Catastrophe": Ottoman Perception of Balkan Wars and Greek Perception of Asia Minor Campaign," in *100. Yılında Balkan Savaşları (1912–1913): İhtilaflı Duruşlar*, ed. Mustafa Türkeş, Vol I (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2014), 477–92.

(*büyük felaket* in Turkish) and the Asia Minor campaign of the Greek Army between 1919 and 1922 defined as the ‘Asia Minor catastrophe’ (Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή in Greek). Then I focused on how this concept was utilized by the authors of these memoirs and how the divine and man-made reasons for these two catastrophes were narrated. The similarities that I have found were quite conspicuous, because despite religious differences, some Ottoman and Greek accounts defined similar divine reasons (punishment by God and fate) for the emergence of these catastrophes. The man-made reasons (inability of commanders, political division of the army, lack of preparation, etc.) described particularly by soldier accounts, were also more or less the same. Therefore, the comparative method I employed demonstrated that regardless of political, religious or ethnic differences, the statesmen/soldiers’ narratives of catastrophe were very much similar considering the Ottoman and Greek cases.

In the second article for which I utilized CHA, I returned to the concept of civilization. This time, I decided to compare and contrast the Ottoman and Japanese conceptualization of civilization in the late nineteenth century.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, these two cases were very distant not only concerning the geographical distance that resulted in different modes of relationship with the West, but also with regard to political, social and cultural differences. Therefore, I had some doubts whether there were similarities with regard to the concept of civilization. The starting point of my research was Selçuk Esenbel’s and Rene Worringer’s books<sup>65</sup>, in which the Ottoman and Japanese modernization processes were compared. From these I became convinced that these two cases could be compared via the conceptual tool I employed, namely the concept of civilization. The reason I chose this concept was that while writing my dissertation I had already reviewed the literature on civilization as well as the literature on Ottoman-Japanese relations and the Ottoman travelers’ accounts on Japan. On top of this, I wanted to test whether there were similarities and differences between Ottoman and Japanese perceptions of civilization and to what extent these similarities and differences resulted in different outcomes in the Ottoman Empire and Japan. When I compared the Ottoman and Japanese perceptions of civilization, I found out that this concept was perceived as an ideal by the Ottoman and Japanese intellectuals and it was thought that without achieving that ideal, it would be impossible to survive the European encroachment. Both empires suffered from unequal treaty systems and they were aware that unless they adopted the European civilization, they could not get rid of the capitulations imposed by the European powers. Therefore, the issue was not whether Ottoman and Japanese civilizations should be civilized, the intellectuals had already accepted that importing European civilization was inevitable. The question was to what extent the European civilization should be imported. In answering this question, the Westernist intellectuals in these two empires argued for total adoption of the European civilization, whereas most of the conservative intellectuals opted for a partial adoption synthesizing material/technological elements of the European civilization and moral elements of Islamic/Confucian tradition. Although the Westernist and conservative intellectuals had diverse opinions, the general tendency that was adopted by the state was the conservative understanding. This comparative study showed that despite different political,

<sup>64</sup> Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık, “Osmanlı ve Japon Entelektüellerinin Modernleşme ve Medeniyet Algılarının Mukayesesi,” in *Ortadoğu Barışı İçin Türk-Japon İşbirliği*, ed. Masanori Naito, İdris Danişmaz, Bahadır Pehlivanlı, M. Serdar Palabıyık (Kyoto: Doshisha University Press, 2015), 3–18.

<sup>65</sup> Selçuk Esenbel, *Japon Modernleşmesi ve Osmanlı: Japonya’nın Türk Dünyası ve İslam Politikaları*, 2nd ed. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2015); René Worringer, *Ottomans Imagining Japan: East, Middle East and Non-Western Modernity at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave-MacMillan, Transnational History Series, 2014).

historical and religious backgrounds, when being encountered with a similar threat, the responses developed by Ottoman and Japanese intellectuals were similar, because both of them employed Western concepts to resist against European penetration such as civilization and international law. However, despite the similar conceptualization of civilization, the Ottoman and Japanese Empires followed a very divergent path. While the perception of civilization acquired a more total adoptionist tone via incorporation of Turkish nationalism with the establishment of the Turkish Republic in the Turkish case, in the Japanese case the perception of civilization led to an imperialist expansionism with the pretext of bringing civilization to the un-civilized regions of East Asia.

The most recent article in which I employed CHA was a kind of synthesis of the literature that I produced since my dissertation. It not only combined travel literature and the search by non-European societies for being part of the European state system via the concepts of civilization and international law, but also added another conceptual tool, namely ‘the fraternity of monarchs’, to demonstrate how different non-European monarchs responded similarly to European colonial penetration attempts. In this article, entitled “The Sultan, the Shah and the King in Europe: The Practice of Ottoman, Persian and Siamese Royal Travel and Travel Writing”, I examined the travels of Sultan Abdülaziz of the Ottoman Empire, Shah Nasser al-Din of Iran, and King Chulalongkorn of Siam towards Europe undertaken in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>66</sup> These travels were compared and contrasted both in terms of the motives and practice of travel and in terms of the travelogues that emerged out of them. The result was that these travels fulfilled three significant purposes: political; educational; and representational. These travels not only allowed the Ottoman, Persian and Siamese monarchs to engage in alliance formation vis-à-vis their rivals and enemies politically but also contributed to their perception of European civilization in general and the European countries that they visited in particular, thus serving an educational purpose. However, the most significant outcome of these travels was representational, formulated with the concept of the ‘fraternity of monarchs’.<sup>67</sup> These Eastern monarchs perceived themselves and made the European monarchs perceive them as equally sovereign. This was a very significant achievement not only blurring the artificial boundary between the East and the West, but also contributing to the preservation of sovereignty of their respective states.

Considering all these experiences, I can speak to both advantages and practical difficulties encountered while making these researches. The first advantage is that CHA allows me to open up new questions in relatively under-researched fields of Ottoman political and diplomatic history. Rather than simply narrating or explaining a particular process or event, through CHA the Ottoman case can be contextualized within a broader spectrum via comparison with neighboring or distant countries. This brings us to the second advantage; through CHA, I have been able to avoid historicist accounts that make the Ottoman Empire a specific case without locating it in the European, Middle Eastern or Asian regional systems. Ottoman political/diplomatic history cannot be understood properly if such a comparative approach is not employed. Finally, CHA was useful for testing the hypotheses of my research. My claims of similarity between the Ottoman and Greek approaches towards the reasons for national catastrophes, between the Ottoman and Japanese approaches towards the concept of

<sup>66</sup> Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık, “The Sultan, the Shah and the King in Europe: The Practice of Ottoman, Persian and Siamese Royal Travel and Travel Writing,” *Journal of Asian History* 50, no. 2 (2016): 201–34.

<sup>67</sup> For a brief analysis of this concept, see Johannes Paulmann, “Searching for a ‘Royal International’: The Mechanics of Monarchical Relations in Nineteenth Century Europe,” in *The Mechanics of Internationalism: Culture, Society and Politics from the 1840s to the First World War*, ed. Martin H. Geyer and Johannes Paulmann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 145–76.

civilization, and between the Ottoman, Persian and Siamese approaches towards royal travel and travel writing, could to a great extent be tested by CHA. Moreover, the use of conceptual tools to link these cases was a novel approach; instead of simply comparing and contrasting the cases, the concepts such as catastrophe, civilization or fraternity of monarchs served well for demonstrating that even distant units might have developed similar conceptual understandings when exposed to similar conditions.

Besides these advantages there are several practical problems that should be resolved during such comparative studies. One such problem is choosing the units of analysis. In all my comparative studies, I choose units from different political entities; in other words, I did not employ CHA for comparing units under the same political entity. However, the units I chose for comparing were not nation-states; rather politicians/soldiers, intellectuals or monarchs. Since these units are not monolithic a degree of generalization is required. Here the balance between making generalizations and focusing on the peculiarities is very important. If one considers the peculiarities too much, then comparison might not be possible. On the other hand, if one makes too many generalizations for the sake of comparison, crucial peculiarities might be neglected. The second practical problem is the difficulty of managing a vast literature. The more cases one chooses, the more languages he/she has to command to search for the literature, if there is not enough translations or secondary literature to make accurate comparison. In my case, I have no knowledge of Greek, Japanese, Persian or Siamese languages; however, there was a vast secondary literature in European languages. Moreover, a sufficient amount of the state documents, memoirs of statesmen, or the writings of the intellectuals on the questions I was asking and hypotheses I was attempting to test had been translated into European languages that I can master. Of course, the 'sufficient amount' depends of the capability of putting forward a substantiatable argument, and this requires a careful selection of the literature. Since comparative studies have a tendency to generalize in order to find out matters of comparison, not all peculiarities can be dealt with; therefore, the literature must be analyzed and chosen in a way to substantiate the arguments in concern.

#### 4. Conclusion

CHA is a promising methodological tool for students of IR for several reasons. First of all, it allows a great deal of interdisciplinarity, which is essential in the discipline of IR. With CHA, disciplines like history, political science, sociology, anthropology, literature, etc. can be collaborated with to broaden the horizons of international relations. Secondly, CHA can reconcile between the qualitative vs. quantitative methods debate in IR. As discussed above, despite its qualitative background CHA employs also datasets, statistical methods and even multi-variate analysis. Therefore, those who are searching for an inter- or multi-methodological approach, may also utilize CHA for testing their hypotheses. Third, CHA helps to overcome the ahistoricist deficiencies of the realist paradigm by adding a socio-historical dimension. It not only eliminates the presentist accounts that perceive current actors and structures of international relations as eternally given, but also cures the problems that emerge out of state-centrism by adding sub- and supra-state actors as units of comparison.

Despite these advantages, researchers should also be careful about some sensitive aspects with regard to CHA. To start with, if not used properly, the method might be so eclectic as to lead to a lack of a clear method in a particular study. In other words, researchers should use CHA not simply for making comparative analogies; rather they should employ the method systematically to test their hypotheses. Secondly, CHA requires a sufficient command

of the languages of the literatures in concern as well as the knowledge of how to make proper archival studies. Both primary and secondary resources, written and published in the languages required to make comparative studies, are essential. This means a tiresome research project compared to many of the other methods of social science. Third, the researcher should take into consideration the degree of generalization and specification. The balance between these two is very important in making comparative studies. A comparison should be specific enough to enlighten the peculiarities of the cases in concern and general enough to make comparison possible.

Students of international relations have the tendency to see history as irrelevant to understanding contemporary world affairs, whereas students of history perceive international relations as being outside the focus of their own research agenda, since IR, according to them, deals with the present. This reciprocal prejudice and illusion impoverishes both disciplines. Therefore, CHA might undermine these illusionary prejudices by creating an interdisciplinary toolkit that can allow the students of both disciplines to widen the fields of research as well as to strengthen their explanatory capacity. The outcome of this interdisciplinary approach is a historicized international relations and an internationalized history, which makes the studies of both disciplines better-formulated and well-contextualized.

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## Secrecy and the Study of International History: Missing Dimension in Turkish Foreign Policy

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### Abstract

*The study of international history largely depends on an exploitation of hitherto unexplored data. The sources of these data could vary from national archives to private papers to semi-structured interviews and so on. An examination of the historiography of Turkish Foreign Policy requires the employing of a rigorous methodology to unearth novel data to feed into current academic debates. Students of international history should be advised of possible logistic and methodological flaws and obstacles in the process. This article examines these logistical and methodological obstacles to conducting archival research for historiographical studies.*

**Keywords:** Historiography, secrecy, diplomacy, international history, intelligence, Turkish foreign policy

### 1. Introduction

A historiography of a country's foreign relations is generally employed to demonstrate the contesting views on the empirical events of the past, and a historiographical analysis of foreign relations is most often—and inaccurately—referred to as diplomatic history. To understand the limitations of the term diplomatic history we should initially define what diplomacy is. Doyen scholar Geoffrey Berridge defines diplomacy as “a form of artful communication between states, or through their designated agents, to conduct foreign policy without resorting to force, law or propaganda”.<sup>1</sup> Thus, any study of diplomatic history puts the state and its agents as the center of the research while sidelining other anthropogenic factors shaping global politics.

Diplomatic history, thus examines the relations between states through their agents. Such a methodology to explain global affairs ultimately limits the empirical data and critical approaches to the study of international affairs. Therefore, international history is a more accurate and comprehensive term for an historical inquiry into global affairs. An international history approach to research extends the limitations of diplomatic history by bringing in a large spectrum of empirical data ranging from environmental history to history of medicine. Such a wide interaction among related disciplines enriches the methodological strength of international history, and deconstructs diplomatic history as the main historical tool for mainstream international relations. A competent methodology for conducting international

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<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey Berridge, *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice* (Basington: Palgrave, 2010).

history research deals with obtaining data from primary sources such as official archives and interviews. This method of historiographical study can be applied into the study of sub-disciplines pertaining to international history, such as intelligence studies, security studies and international relations.

If one considers international relations as the observable communications between anthropogenic and/or naturogenic networks of powers relations, one needs to employ an equally wide-ranging tool in order not to neglect wider casual variables for the sake of analysis. It is also important to note that the neglect of wider casual variables does not always happen due to the sake of the analysis but rather is a mere reflection of the scholar's *weltanschauung* (World View). This is especially true for scholars examining the history of international relations. One's *weltanschauung* can easily dominate the methodological rigor since there are not any established scientific ways to re-create the exact historical events to test the accuracy of any interpretation. Any interpretation of global affairs, in a Popperian sense, does not help to predict the future but endeavors to explain the past to stimulate our learning process.<sup>2</sup>

This learning process has been rather productive between the disciplines of international history and political science. Both international history and political science experienced a cross-fertilization to answer the causes and consequences of the global historical phenomenon, and further helping to develop stronger theories, including sociological geographical studies of global affairs.<sup>3</sup> Scholars such as John Young, Richard Aldrich, Rory Cormac, Dina Rezk has already produced sound and influential research benefitting from the strengths of both disciplines.<sup>4</sup> This multi-disciplinary method on international affairs requires collaborating various primary and secondary sources, including interviews, and archive exploitation at various sites. There are already two valuable methodological guides and contextual companions in the discipline.<sup>5</sup> There are also ongoing reputable programmes mainly employing this methodology to investigate various conceptual questions regarding the international politics. Harvard University's Cold War Studies Project based in the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, and the London School of Economics' Cold War Studies are the two eminent examples. Both research groups host prominent journals, respectively the *Journal of Cold War Studies* and *Cold War History Journal*.

Although there have been valuable advancements in methodological and empirical endeavors in the discipline, two flag-ship international relations departments in Turkey, namely those of Koc and Bilkent Universities, have not reflected this cutting-edge research in

<sup>2</sup> Karl Popper, *The Poverty Of Historicism* (London: Routledge, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, "The Role Of History In International Relations," *Millennium* 37, no. 2 (2008): 357–64; Kim Salamon, "What is the Use of International History?," *Journal of Peace Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (1993): 375–89; Colin Elman, and Miriam Fendius Elman, "Diplomatic History and International Relations Theory: Respecting Difference and Crossing Boundaries," *International Security* 22, no. 1 (1997): 5–21; Paul W. Schroeder, "History and International Relations Theory: Not Use or Abuse, But Fit or Misfit," *International Security* 22, no. 1 (1997): 64–74; Stephen Hobden, and John M. Hobson, eds., *Historical Sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Stephen H. Haber, David M. Kennedy, and Stephen D. Krasner, "Brothers under the Skin: Diplomatic History and International Relations," *International Security* 22, no. 1 (1997): 34–43; Geoffrey Roberts, "History, Theory and the Narrative Turn in IR," *Review of International Studies* 32, no. 4 (2006): 703–14.

<sup>4</sup> Richard J. Aldrich, *The Hidden Hand: Britain, America and the Cold War Secret Intelligence* (London: Overlook Books, 2001); Young, John W., and John Kent, *International Relations since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Rory Cormac, *Confronting the Colonies: British Intelligence and Counterinsurgency* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Dina Rezk, "Orientalism and Intelligence Analysis: Deconstructing Anglo–American Notions of the 'Arab'," *Intelligence and National Security* 31, no. 2 (2016): 224–45.

<sup>5</sup> Gordon Martel, ed. *A Companion to International History 1900–2001* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008); Marc Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History: A Guide To Method* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

their curriculum and training. In Bilkent, core diplomatic history courses, entitled Diplomatic History I & II, present a rather state-centric, indeed Euro-centric, and out-dated approach. The same is also true for Koc University's core course, History of Modern Diplomacy, where fundamental training lacks a comprehensive encompassing of the methods and concepts.

## 2. A Know- How of International History

I initially used a cross-bordering methodology between political science and history to examine the effect of the state of emergency on the civil-military relations in Turkey following the 1980 coup d'état.<sup>6</sup> There were already existing theories on civil-military relations driven from sociology and/or organizational studies, however I was looking for a historical method in order to deconstruct the contesting historical views to obtain empirically useful data. As Walter Benjamin elaborates on Angelus Novus, "where *we* see the appearance of a chain of events, *he* [*Angel of History*] sees one single catastrophe, which unceasingly piles rubble on top of rubble and hurls it before his feet."<sup>7</sup> Thus, my task was to deconstruct the witness accounts, which are either from the oppressed or the policy-making elite. A mere structuralist methodology such as looking at the national-security decision making would not yield a productive research.

In order to examine the power relations pertaining to the options and tools of the various political actors on their respective relation to the law preserving and law-making violence, I had to exploit various primary sources. These sources ranged from the minutes of the National Security Council to internal documentation of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, and to semi-structured interviews with parties to the emergency state. My first attempt to employ the international history methodology to examine the Turkish emergency state was rather an early effort, and did not accomplish a fair task of drawing lessons from other disciplines.

However, my initial examination of the country's security apparatus brought another important question for me to answer. What was the role and impact of the Turkish intelligence service on the country's domestic/global affairs? The existing literature on the international history of Turkey or literature on Turkish security studies had not examined the country's secret intelligence apparatus, thus yielding the existing scholarship incomplete. Therefore, a lack of necessary empirical data limited my methodology where I could not comfortably employ IR or sociological methodologies.<sup>8</sup> I had to unearth the empirical data myself. This was rather a challenge for me since there was very little, if any, giants on whose shoulders to stand. Thus, I conducted my initial methodological training with my PhD supervisor, Professor John W. Young from the University of Nottingham. Professor Young, as the veteran scholar of international history and the chairman of the British International History Group, advised me on how to access and analyze the primary sources. Moreover, my doctoral training at the University of Nottingham had formal methodology workshops on analyzing archival material, and conducting semi-structured interviews to obtain data for research purposes.

It is an imperative for scholars to use cutting-edge technology for their research as well. A DLSR camera and tape-recorder are standard items for this research methodology. It is also important to use an Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software that allows converting

<sup>6</sup> Egemen B. Bezci and Güven Gürkan Öztan, "Anatomy of the Turkish Emergency State: A Continuous Reflection of Turkish Raison d'état between 1980 and 2002," *Middle East Critique* 25, no. 2 (2016): 163–79.

<sup>7</sup> Walter Benjamin, *On the Concept of History* (Createspace Independent, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> See, Philip Davies and Kristian C. Gustafson, eds., *Intelligence Elsewhere: Spies and Espionage Outside the Anglosphere* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013).

images from the archives into a machine editable text file. The OCR software enables researchers of international history to directly work on the archive files rather than spending a considerable amount of time to re-type the archives from the image copies. Moreover, OCR enables the use of additional translation software to read the archives written in other languages. Also, for transcription of the interview records, it is important to use computer tools such as *Transcriber* to save the tremendous time of manually transcribing the records.

However, new technology cannot help overcome fundamental issues with methodology. First, a fundamental problem may lay with the issue of logistics. An examination on the international history of Turkey requires ambitious scholars to conduct research in at least five countries, namely US, UK, Belgium (NATO), Turkey and Bulgaria. Bulgaria is a peculiar case, however, since it entails the vast number of declassified archives from the former Socialist bloc, it helps to draw sources from a large spectrum to demonstrate a comprehensive analysis. This list can be quite exhaustive depending on the temporal and spatial scope of the research question. When dealing with a country like Turkey, which traditionally employs a balance of power game to prevent being a stooge in global affairs, it is important to cover as wide a variety of primary sources as possible to unveil this multifaceted foreign policy. However, conducting research in various countries requires extensive resources. Considering that the grants for social science are extremely competitive, it is imperative that one should draft a realistic budget for one's research, and be aware of its practical flaws.

The second issue is interviews. Most former practitioners and diplomats will naturally like to place themselves at the center of historical events when they recall the incidents. This is rather an important challenge since it is crucial for one to keep the record straight and not mix facts and myths. However, it is also extremely important to not challenge or correct your interviewee's recollections. The data obtained from the interviews can be later verified by collaborating with other sources. Also, it is imperative to conduct the interviews in the last stage of data collection after exhausting other primary and secondary sources, and then identifying the people pertaining to the research question.

Verification is also necessary with archive documents. The declassification process of archives varies from country to country according to their transparency and accountability policies. There is no clear declassification process in Turkey. Piles of documents pertaining to the country's contemporary history have not been released even in a redacted way. On the other hand, those countries who routinely declassify their state archives and open them to public scrutiny also suffer from a methodological flaw. The records of sensitive matters such as spying on friendly nations, conducting covert operations and domestic counter-subversion efforts are either not saved in the archives or are destroyed afterwards. Researchers should be aware that declassification does not necessarily mean that some of the archives are not destroyed or kept out of the declassification process. However, these flaws and gaps in the data collection can be overcome by using the archives in various countries. This method is called as the multi-archive study. Countries exchange information through liaison process and diplomatic communication. Moreover, the diplomatic records of any country possess countless incoming cables flowing from their diplomatic missions around the globe. These cables contain useful data with traces, and if one is lucky, the information can be substantial, to complete the missing information in other department records. Also, countries may not show the same sensitivity to each other's secrets and may thereby declassify *other* country's secrets obtained through liaison or diplomatic communication. For instance, the British National

Archives declassified the bulk of Turkish material from the Second World War obtained through intelligence liaison, even though these Turkish documents are not still declassified by the Turkish archives. This neglect among countries fuels distrust between them, but it helps students and scholars of international history to obtain more data by collaborating different sources. Finally, it is important to identify legal opportunities in different national contexts to file Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to the pertinent departments. FOIA requests can take years to conclude therefore it is important to adjust one's research schedule accordingly. It is useful to contact with and follow the George Washington University's Digital National Security Archive Project.<sup>9</sup> They have been working with freedom of information requests for three decades and can be helpful for legal/technical aspects of the FOIAs.

However, still the issue of secrecy veils data and creates obstacles for archival methodology. This is particularly true in countries such as Turkey where national security has been mythicized and politicians throughout the country's history have not been welcoming to the notions of transparency and public scrutiny. Richard Aldrich points out that in circumventing the methodological hurdles due to the ongoing secrecy surrounding archives (which is particularly tighter in the Turkish case), students of international history have to "invest some time [and money] in the organic process of growing [their] own records."<sup>10</sup> To grow your own records, one may need to chase down auction houses, antique shops, families of deceased diplomats/officers, and even sometimes garage sales to obtain private papers of former practitioners. Since there was a tendency among Turkish officials to take a copy of the documents home (they did not perceive it as public property but rather as a report they wrote), ample numbers of official reports can appear among these papers.

However, the private papers and memoirs of the former practitioners should be handled with caution. The very issue of secrecy, as Joshua Rovner points out, may lead to a politicization by decision-makers, knitting a layer of secrecy in the formulation of foreign and national security policy.<sup>11</sup> This politicization behind closed doors creates what Rovner calls a 'pathologic relation' between the policy-making and intelligence communities. Due to the secrecy and lack of public scrutiny of national security and foreign policy matters, these realms are open to more politicization. Thus, the politicization and pathological relationship could result in manipulation of these private papers to reflect the policy preferences. These policy preferences are not necessarily based on a consensus on national security matters but could as well reflect the political leader's domestic concerns. It is imperative for students of Turkish foreign policy to employ rigorous multi-archival methods to unearth the causations and correlations leading to and diverging from the point of critical junctures, rather than building upon the 'fixed facts' in the literature or taking for granted whatever is given in the private papers or archives. Just as the best carpenters are not necessarily the best art historians, the practitioners in a country's foreign and security policy are not the best scholars of the discipline. The students of international history should handle the primary material with caution and put a safe distance between themselves and the policy-making to keep their scholarly critique uncontaminated. Otherwise, as many scholars of Turkish foreign and security policy do, one may fall into the trap of 'constricting one's historical purview

<sup>9</sup> See, National Security Archive, accessed March 5, 2017, <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/digital-national-security-archive>.

<sup>10</sup> Richard J. Aldrich, "Grow your own": Cold War Intelligence and History Supermarkets," *Intelligence and National Security* 17, no. 1 (2002): 149.

<sup>11</sup> Joshua Rovner, *Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).

excluding potential causal variables'.<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, as Philip Davies argues, 'arbitrarily mixing and matching the versions of events emerging from reported evidence is simply not a viable approach' to producing a reliable conclusion in research based on multi-archive method.<sup>13</sup> As Davies suggests, in order to have a reliable source of data for the research, one needs to employ a triangulation method, using multiple primary and published secondary sources, corroborating the information within and between these various sources.<sup>14</sup> In doing so, students and scholars of international history can also integrate information from previously unexplored archives, not least in Turkey, to complement or challenge conclusions from previous research.

### 3. Results, Flaws and Application of the Methodology

I employed the international history methodology for my book entitled *Turkish Intelligence and the Cold War: Espionage, Security and International Relations*.<sup>15</sup> This book examines the hitherto unexplored history of secret intelligence cooperation between three asymmetric partners – specifically the UK, US and Turkey – from the end of the Second World War until modern Turkey's first military coup d'état on 27 May 1960. The book shows that our understanding of the Cold War as a binary rivalry between the two blocs is too simple an approach and obscures important characteristics of cooperation among allies. To reveal a more comprehensive analysis of intelligence cooperation, the book develops a model called 'intelligence diplomacy'. Intelligence diplomacy fills the gap between conventional diplomacy and intelligence cooperation. This model explores a vital, if little understood, aspect of contemporary international relations given the prevalence of transnational threats today. Intelligence diplomacy involves negotiations and the exploitation of different aspects of joint intelligence activities, synchronized between diplomats and specialized intelligence officers. Much more than this, it also makes a new contribution to the literature of what might be called the general phenomenon of intelligence alliance and liaison as a general subject, which was important in the Cold War, but which we have also seen over decades all the way to the recent wars in Syria and Iraq. The book also shows that a pragmatic approach offers states new opportunities to protect national interests, by conducting intelligence diplomacy to influence crucial areas such as nuclear weapons and to exploit cooperation in support of their own strategic imperatives. By doing so the book not only reveals previously-unexplored origins of secret intelligence cooperation between Turkey and West, but also contributes to wider academic debates on the nature of the Cold War and also by highlighting the potential agency of weaker states in the Western Alliance. Therefore, the book shows that the strategic direction of secret intelligence was not always congruent with the Cold War.

Although there are methodological difficulties for a historical study of secret intelligence, time-consuming and patient archival research can give fruitful results. For my book I did not solely employ a strong Turkish or Western voice in my sources, but rather drew on a wide range of archives. Thus, archival sources from Turkey, the UK, US, Poland and NATO were the primary basis for the research. In particular, the Turkish State Archive's Republic

<sup>12</sup> Dan Slater and Erica Simmons, "Informative Regress: Critical Antecedents in Comparative Politics," *Comparative Political Studies* 43, no. 7 (2010): 886–917.

<sup>13</sup> Philip Davies, "Spies as Informants: Triangulation and the Interpretation of Elite Interview Data in the Study of the Intelligence and Security Services," *Politics* 21, no. 1 (2001): 78.

<sup>14</sup> Davies, "Spies as Informants".

<sup>15</sup> Egemen Bezci, *Turkish Intelligence and the Cold War: Espionage, Security and International Relations* (London: IB Tauris, 2018).

period Council of Ministers and Prime Minister's Office series includes detailed documents on the period. Turkish parliament records, the Turkish military archives' (ATASE), were also of help. Several of these archives are open to investigation but subject to permission by the authorities. The primary contribution of these archives based in Turkey is that they demonstrate both the inner workings of the security establishment and the attitude of the political leadership concerning intelligence and foreign policy. Both of these archives are going through an ongoing cataloguing process which results in restricted access to the documents especially covering the late 1950s. However, I was able to gain access to a considerable number of intelligence estimates, memorandums, and correspondence by several private collections and papers.

In addition to the Turkish archives, declassified CIA records are open to research through the CIA Records Search Tool (CREST). The US National Archives and Records Administration's State Department Central Decimal Files and the Records of the National Security Agency/Central Security Service also held relevant documents for my research. Recently the NSA began working closely with the National Archives, thus making available for researching documents dealing with the early Cold War era. Besides the National Archives, the personal papers and official papers in the Truman and Eisenhower Libraries, and the Library of Congress include valuable materials.

The NATO archives are also going through a declassification process. The released materials particularly include relevant documents on the standardization of secret intelligence, intelligence sharing under the NATO structure and the intelligence capacity building in the member countries. NATO's Military and the Defence Committee series contain particularly useful documents pertaining to this study. However, NATO's intelligence documents go through a rather slower pace of declassification vis-à-vis other relevant archives. Therefore, the NATO archives best serve as a complementary source for that era. The Joint Intelligence Committee records, Ministry of Defence Records, Foreign Office Records and the records of the Security Service in the British National Archives also include primary documents that pertained to my research, as did some materials in the Churchill Archive Centre in Cambridge. The archives in the UK, US and NATO not only complemented the Turkish sources by providing an insight into the Western intelligence attitude, they were also essential to reflect the asymmetrical nature of the Turkish-Western intelligence diplomacy. Also, a comparative assessment of the national archives in relation to the NATO archives demonstrates the prevalence of distrust among Allies in a multilateral setting.

In addition to the Western and Turkish archives, Poland's Institute of National Remembrance recently released the Polish archives on Soviet secret intelligence operations in Turkey during the Cold War, and this has helped researchers to provide a Soviet perspective on Turkish-Western intelligence cooperation.

The CENTO archives, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs archives and the Turkish Intelligence archives, however, remain mostly closed to public access. Similarly, the NATO, CIA and the British Security Service archives offer only a limited access to their intelligence operations in cooperation with the Turkish intelligence service. As a substitute for the limited archival material on particular dimensions of secret intelligence cooperation, the private collections of, published memoirs of and interviews with ministers, officers and diplomats have been exploited to shed light on events. However, the lack of existing literature on the topic created for me a methodological obstacle for the verification and collaboration of

primary sources.

There has been a very limited amount of scholarly work analysing the origins, content and success of the Turkish-Western intelligence alliance. The essential reason for this scarcity is the dominant attitude of scholars of Turkish international history. They tend to cover the foreign Ministry and the cabinet, seldom referring to the role of the security and intelligence machinery.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, most studies tend to neglect the intelligence dimension of Turkish foreign policy, although it was at the core of Turkish-Western relations on issues ranging from U-2 spy planes to the covert operations in the Middle East. A small number of studies have focused on Turkish-Allied intelligence cooperation, especially activities in Turkey against the Axis forces during the Second World War.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, my book aimed at re-shaping our understanding of contemporary history of the relationship between intelligence, foreign policy and covert action more generally, upgrading our estimation of human intelligence in the region.

The missing piece in the literature has been the role of secret intelligence in the actions of Turkey in the Western Alliance during the course of the Cold War. Although, countries such as Turkey played a crucial role in the both tactical and strategic intelligence efforts of the Western alliance, the role of secret intelligence both in the alliance structure and the general course of the Cold War in these countries has been an under-researched area. Therefore, it was essential to investigate the Turkey's secret intelligence activities in the origins and development of the Cold War to reveal how the minor powers in the Western Alliance, in this case Turkey, conducted its foreign and security policy in the pretext of the Cold War. It is also important to address how the weaker states used intelligence diplomacy to complement their lack of material capabilities to secure greater leverage in the Alliance and also greater political influence in the regions in which they are located.

Lack of previous historical or organizational research on the intelligence services outside of the Anglosphere makes the study of the Turkish case of particular interest to the field, but a problem exists in the literature dealing with the Turkish secret services. Even in the academic literature examining the topic, this literature has a tendency to blend its conclusions with a conspiracy theory of a long existing and brutal Turkish 'Deep State', which was claimed to be a clandestine informal network designed by the Turkish security services for their military patrons to shape politics and the judicial process.<sup>18</sup> The historical evidence examined in my book suggests that the politicization of the Turkish intelligence community, in addition to the pressing international issues during the Cold War, rendered the country's intelligence apparatus as an often maverick tactical tool for the various political players in the domestic and foreign power struggles in the country. Therefore, any study of Turkish secret

<sup>16</sup> David Alvarez, *Bureaucracy and Cold War Diplomacy: The United States and Turkey 1943–1946* (Thessaloniki: Institute of Balkan Studies, 1980); Ekavi Athanassopoulou, *Turkey–Anglo–American Security Interests, 1945–1952: The First Enlargement of NATO* (London: Routledge, 1999); Bruce Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); Saban Halis Calis, *Turkey's Cold War: Foreign Policy and Western Alignment in the Modern Republic* (London: IB Tauris, 2017); Şuhnaz Yılmaz, *Turkish–American Relations, 1800–1952: Between the Stars, Stripes and the Crescent* (London: Routledge, 2015); Geoffrey Berridge, *British Diplomacy in Turkey, 1583 to the Present: A Study in the Evolution of the Resident Embassy* (Leiden: Brill, 2009); William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774* (London: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>17</sup> Barry Rubin, *Istanbul Intrigues* (New York: Pharaoh Books, 1992); Nicholas Tamkin, *Britain, Turkey, and the Soviet Union, 1940–45: Strategy, Diplomacy, and Intelligence in the Eastern Mediterranean* (London: Palgrave, 2009).

<sup>18</sup> Michael Gunter, "Turkey, Kemalism, and the 'Deep State'," in *Conflict, Democratization, and the Kurds in the Middle East*, ed. Mehmet Gürses and David Romano (New York: Palgrave, 2014), 17–39; Mehtap Söyler, *The Turkish Deep State: State Consolidation, Civil–military Relations and Democracy* (London: Routledge, 2015); Ryan Gingeras, *Heroin, Organized Crime, and the Making of Modern Turkey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

intelligence, independent from the domestic and international context surrounding it, cannot provide an adequate analytical framework for the topic. Moreover, Damien Van Puyvelde and Sean Curtis' recent quantitative study on the intelligence literature, conducted by analyzing the field's two flagship journals, *Intelligence and National Security* and the *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, revealed that intelligence studies indeed are not diverse.<sup>19</sup> Their findings suggest that the field is dominated by Anglo-American male researchers who work on Western-centric topics.<sup>20</sup> Due to the lack of accumulated knowledge on the Turkish secret intelligence, which is outside of Europe but part of the Western Alliance, needs a detailed understanding of the differences and cultures of secret intelligence.

My book reveals that secret intelligence cooperation has been the backbone of the Turkish engagement with the Western Alliance. However, it does not necessarily mean that Turkish security and foreign policy solely pursued the Western alignment due to the shared threat perception with the West, namely the Soviet Union. Turkish security and foreign policy has been conducted in accordance with a blended mix of threat perceptions, meeting the domestic needs of the incumbent regime, and seeking a security commitment from the West to pursue Turkey's national imperatives, which were not necessarily the product of the Cold War bipolar world. An application of international history methodology for this book project opened up the path for future students rather than contributing to an existing school within Turkish foreign policy. Therefore, possible methodological flaws, and empirical inaccuracies in my research makes the book an initial step for future students to challenge.

#### 4. Final Remarks

It is not easy to conduct a research study in an area of secrecy and historical sensitivity. Particularly in Turkey, it may be seen as almost impossible to conduct a scholarly inquiry into the country's modern secret intelligence machinery, due to the political sensitivity, lack of archives, and other pressures stemming from the political environment. However, students and scholars of international history should always keep in mind, as the veteran scholar Richard Aldrich affirms, 'there are no secrets, only lazy researchers.'<sup>21</sup> This statement is exactly true when considering the fact that Christopher Andrew of Cambridge University pioneered the field back in 1985 by publishing the authoritative account of the British Intelligence Community when both primary and secondary sources were not as abundant as today.<sup>22</sup> However, particularly in the Turkish case, one should be extra cautious given the fact that academic freedom of expression is not as guaranteed as it is in a consolidated democracy, and dealing with sensitive topics such as the country's security and defense policy, including the issue of secret intelligence, may have other legal or political consequences for scholars.

My research on the Cold War history of Turkey's secret intelligence community is far from an authoritative account. It is just an initial step to open up a path for future scholars, and to contribute to wider historiographical debates by unearthing original empirical data. While my research tries to explain the character and origins of the Turkish intelligence diplomacy during the early Cold War, there are limitations that it cannot yet overcome.

<sup>19</sup> Damien Van Puyvelde and Sean Curtis, "Standing on the Shoulders of Giants": Diversity and Scholarship in Intelligence Studies," *Intelligence and National Security* 31, no. 7 (2016): 1040–54.

<sup>20</sup> Puyvelde and Curtis, "Standing on the Shoulders of Giants".

<sup>21</sup> Richard J. Aldrich, *GCHQ: The Uncensored Story of Britain's Most Secret Intelligence Agency* (London: Harper Press, 2010).

<sup>22</sup> Christopher M. Andrew, *Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (London, Heinemann, 1985).

First, some of the British Prime Minister's files dealing with Turkey remain closed to the public.<sup>23</sup> This lack of access limits our understanding as to the degree of Turkish endeavours to manipulate to their own advantage frictions between the Americans and the British after the Suez Crisis. Furthermore, it is also not known what kind of policies, if any, the British developed to keep Ankara in their orbit to prevent increasing Turkish dependence on America during the early Cold War. It would be also interesting to reveal whether the British used any methods of intelligence diplomacy against Turkey to limit the loss of British leverage on the country, including the use of GCHQ SIGINT bases on Turkey, and psychological warfare to counter-balance rising American influence. Another limitation of this research concerns access to Turkish archives. The limited and disorganized public disclosure of the Turkish archives limits this research to assess to what extent the politicization of the Turkish security community hampered its relations with the West, and fragmented the Turkish security community in general.<sup>24</sup> Access to the relevant archives would reveal the domestic dimension of Turkish intelligence diplomacy to a much greater extent.

In a related manner, but not necessarily depending on access to primary sources, my research has only limited insight into how domestic politics and leadership in Turkey, the US, and the UK affected intelligence diplomacy. There are valuable studies focusing on how security and intelligence policies related to decision makers on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>25</sup> Yet the scope of my research is limited in a way to provide an in-depth investigation of the effect of the domestic politics and the character of the political leadership on the conduct of Turkish secret intelligence. Moreover, in this way my research does not set out to provide a comprehensive contribution to theories concerning international relations, such as the Alliance theory. These are some examples of prominent flaws in my research that I hope the future students of international history may contribute to with a more solid methodological and empirical approach.

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<sup>23</sup> For instance, numerous Freedom of Information Requests and the Appeals to the Public Records Office to release, "PREM 11/279: Prime Minister's Office: Correspondence and Papers, 1951-1964 - TURKEY" have been rejected by the authorities.

<sup>24</sup> Freedom of Information Requests to reveal the minutes of the Turkish National Security High Council by the Turkish State Archives, and also to the National Security Council has been rejected.

<sup>25</sup> See, R. Aldrich and R. Cormac, *The Black Door: Spies, Secret Intelligence, and British Prime Ministers* (London, 2016); D. C. Unger, *The Emergency State: America's Pursuit of Absolute Security At All Costs* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2012).

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## Reflecting on the Reflectivist Approach to Qualitative Interviewing

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### Abstract

*This study aims to reflect on qualitative interviewing with a particular emphasis on semi-structured interviewing (SSI), with the purpose of guiding students and young scholars of International Relations and Political Science who will use this method in their research. This study begs to differ from both radical post-positivist's deep scepticism which makes any scientific inquiry almost impossible as well as from positivism's unreflective, unproblematized, instrumental approach to interviewing. It proposes a reflectivist approach to qualitative interviewing that emphasizes the political nature of the interviewing process with various political, ethical and even social consequences. The reflectivist approach requires researchers to be self-critical at all times, in particular concerning their role and influence on the interview setting and the interviewee. This article proceeds as follows: It first addresses my own research on the nexus between civil society and the Kurdish question in Turkey, where SSI has been operationalized as the main research method. It then addresses the positivist and post-positivist debates on qualitative interviewing as well as the reflectivist approach that this study promotes. The article then engages in SSI in three distinct stages: pre-interview, interview and post-interview phases. Finally, the concluding part introduces some works utilising interviewing in Turkish IR and wraps up the theoretical/ methodological arguments disseminated throughout the study at hand.*

**Keywords:** Semi-structured interviewing, qualitative interviewing, reflexive approach to qualitative interviewing, qualitative research

### 1. Introduction

This study aims to reflect on qualitative interviewing as a frequently used method for data gathering in different disciplines of social and human sciences. It particularly focuses on semi-structured interviewing (SSI) with the purpose of guiding students of International Relations and Political Science who would like to use this method in their qualitative research. Interviewing with its particular forms has long been popular among social science researchers to obtain up-to-date and first-hand data. To Rapley, qualitative interviewing has even become 'the central' research tool for social scientists.<sup>1</sup> The rising interest in qualitative interviewing has triggered scholarly discussions concerning its strengths and limitations as well as concerning whether it is useful on its own or should only be employed as complementary to other methods.

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy John Rapley, "The Art(fulness) of Open-ended Interviewing: Some Considerations on Analysing Interviews," *Qualitative Research* 1 (2001), cited in Svend Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1.

I have widely benefited from SSI in my research particularly to comprehend the ways in which a protracted conflict or long-lasting public debates are understood and discursively framed by civil society groups vocal on these debates. I first employed SSI throughout my post-doctoral research (from 2006 to 2008) on securitization of different aspects of the Cyprus question by the conflicting parties. Using the multi-sectoral approach to security introduced by Buzan *et. al.*, this research aimed to map out different discourses of (in)security articulated by different social and political actors in both parts of the island of Cyprus. Yet, as will be clear below, I have also adopted SSI in a more conscious and systematic manner in my research projects concerning civil society organisations (CSOs) in Turkey involved in public debates on the Kurdish question.

For almost two centuries positivism is known to have had great faith in empirical/observational research. To this approach, data collected through an ideal, objective interviewing process will reflect the reality and can be used to testify or falsify hypotheses and theories. Yet, this claim to objectivity is challenged by a multitude of post-positivist approaches that ‘deny science any privileged access to the objective truth about the social world’.<sup>2</sup> Post-structuralists argue that language and discourse and thus the conversational material collected through interviews construct rather than reveal phenomena. However, the radical post-structuralist critique, which is deeply sceptical of any conventional scientific inquiry, is often viewed as ‘categorical’ and even ‘destructive’<sup>3</sup> and hence, is largely overlooked by the scholarly literature on the issue.

In this study I beg to differ from both radical post-positivist’s deep scepticism which makes any scientific inquiry almost impossible as well as from positivism’s unreflective, unproblematized, instrumental approach to interviewing. Following Alvesson,<sup>4</sup> I propose a reflectivist approach to qualitative interviewing in general and to SSI in particular, problematizing and challenging the dominant positivist or neo-positivist assumptions, but without entirely negating them as some post-structuralists do. The reflectivist approach emphasizes the political nature of the interviewing process with various political, ethical and even social consequences. Every research may serve to the interests of distinct social groups and may serve to the reproduction or transformation of certain power relations from micro to macro levels. Hence, researchers need to reflect on potential beneficiaries of their project as well as question whether their project can ‘improve the lives of human beings in any way’.<sup>5</sup> Thus, in the reflectivist approach, the role and impact of the researcher goes well beyond asking questions and reporting answers. The reflectivist approach requires the researcher to be self-critical at all times, in particular concerning his/her role and influence on the interview situation and the interviewee. It suggests that both the researcher and the participant are social/political actors acting with different identities, motivations and expectations.

Against this background, this article proceeds as follows: It first addresses my research on the nexus between civil society and the Kurdish question in Turkey, in which SSI has been operationalized as the main research method. It then addresses the positivist and post-positivist debates on qualitative interviewing as well as the reflectivist approach that this study presents. The article then explores the three distinct stages of SSI: pre-interview,

<sup>2</sup> Mats Alvesson, “Beyond Neopositivists, Romantics, and Localists: A Reflexive Approach to Interviews in Organizational Research,” *Academy of Management Review* 28, no. 1 (2003): 13.

<sup>3</sup> Alvesson, “Beyond Neopositivists,” 13.

<sup>4</sup> Alvesson, “Beyond Neopositivists”.

<sup>5</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 51.

interview and post-interview. The discussion about each of these phases includes my personal reflections and refers to concrete examples from my previous research. The ethical issues that researchers need to tackle will be addressed as well. Finally, the concluding part introduces some works utilising interviewing in Turkish IR and wraps up the theoretical/methodological arguments disseminated throughout the study at hand.

## 2. My Research on Civil Society and the Kurdish Question

I first employed semi-structured interviewing as a systematic research tool while I was part of the SHUR project ('Human Rights in Conflicts: The Role of Civil Society') funded by the European Commission within the context of the Sixth Framework programme. When I was invited to the project it was already at its fieldwork stage and I was expected to organize the envisaged interviews including specifying interviewees, preparing the questionnaire, and doing other organizational issues. I already had some limited experience of interviewing, yet I had to learn the nitty gritty of each stage of SSI throughout the fieldwork process. One may certainly gain insightful data from methodology books and articles concerning different kinds of qualitative interviewing, yet I found, unlike with various other methods, a researcher is best trained for qualitative interviewing while practicing it. That being said, training may be most useful for the post-interview phase, in which the conversational data are transcribed, analysed and reported. The transcribed data may be analysed through either relatively conventional methods (content analysis, discourse analysis) or through more recent computerised methods of coding utilising such software as Nvivo or SPSS.<sup>6</sup>

There are a number of 'universal' rules and tricks for conducting interviews, most of which are covered in this article. However, this is also a very subjective process of learning for each researcher that may change depending on his/her expectations, ways of doing things, and the specific characteristics of the interviewees. Qualitative interviewing is unique as a research method in the sense that interaction with human beings is the main determinant at every step. Subjective experiences, perceptions, political/social motivations, formulation of questions and the narrative used by interviewees and some other incalculable factors all make interviewing a unique and context-bound experience for the researcher. Therefore, the researcher needs to be open to learning in each case of interviewing as an attentive observer. Hence, self-reflexivity at all times is a key principle for the researcher while learning and practicing this method of inquiry.

The main task of the SHUR project was to understand the role and impact of civil society organizations in ethno-political conflicts through the comprehensive and cross comparative analyses of four different cases: Israel-Palestine; Bosnia-Herzegovina; Turkey-Kurds; and the Cyprus dispute. I was part of the team working on the Kurdish question, and I co-authored a publicly accessible report and an article with Nathalie Tocci on the role of civil society in Turkey's Kurdish question.<sup>7</sup> In this report and in the subsequent journal article we examined the multi-faceted roles and impacts of Turkish and Kurdish civil society organizations (CSOs) in Turkey's Kurdish question, i.e. fuelling the conflict, easing the subjective incompatibilities, constructing dialogue.

<sup>6</sup> For different methods of coding in qualitative research, see Johnny Saldana, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 3rd ed. (London: Sage, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> Nathalie Tocci and Alper Kaliber, "Conflict Society and the Transformation of Turkey's Kurdish Question" (SHUR Working Paper Series, 2008), accessed August 7, 2017, <http://www.luiss.it/shur/wp-content/uploads/2008/06/shurwp01-08.pdf>; Alper Kaliber and Nathalie Tocci, "Conflict Society and the Transformation of Turkey's Kurdish Question," *Security Dialogue* 41, no. 2 (2010): 191-215.

To fully grasp the different manifestations of the impact of civil societal actors, we proceeded through a four-phased methodology. Having critically engaged in the academic and non-academic writing on the Kurdish question and Turkish civil society and having set the theoretical/conceptual framework of the research, we specified CSOs which were vocal on the Kurdish question and came from different socio-political, ideological and social backgrounds. For analytical clarity, the CSOs were also classified mainly according to the political stance and position they held throughout the debates on the Kurdish question, i.e. anti-establishment/nationalist Kurdish CSOs and establishment/Turkish nationalist organisations. As I will mention below, this necessitated in the pre-interview phase a detailed examination of the CSOs and their discursive/deliberative positions in the conflict. In the third stage our fieldwork mainly relied on semi-structured and in-depth interviews with the representatives of the CSOs and other relevant activists specified in the previous stage. The questions about the impact, strategies and deliberative positions of the CSOs were also cross-checked both with other CSO representatives (involved in similar fields) as well as with academics and officials. In the fourth and final phase, the empirical data gathered through a detailed discourse analysis of the transcriptions of these in-depth and cross-checking interviews were assessed in the light of our main research question. This question was whether particular actions and discourses of the CSOs involved in public debates on the Kurdish question contributed to securitization, de-securitization or non-securitization of the conflict.

In a more recent study elsewhere, I extensively used SSI with the aim of exploring the impact of Europe/Europeanization on the politically mobilised civil society vocal on Turkey's Kurdish question. In this study the impact of Europe was conceptualised as a complex constellation of top-down and bottom-up processes. The EU-induced legislative reforms (EU-ization) on the development of civic/political rights and fundamental freedoms were defined as the top-down impact of Europe on CSOs. The bottom-up impact emerged through the usage of European norms, policies and institutions (Europeanization) by CSOs to frame and justify their deliberative positions and to increase their mobilising power and visibility. Thereby, Europeanization rather than being a mere *process* of adaptation to the EU, referred to a wider normative/political *context*; a context where European norms, policies and institutions are (re)-negotiated by different European societies and institutions, and have an impact on them.<sup>8</sup> This context exists to the extent that European norms, values and institutions are incorporated into public narratives by domestic actors, e.g., political parties, media and CSOs.<sup>9</sup>

Later in this study I tried to understand how the CSOs react to and make use of the European context (Europeanization) to increase their influence and to promote their political agenda. The aim was to grasp whether and/or how CSOs that are actively involved in large public debates formulated their political demands and deliberative positions by making reference to specific European norms, policies and institutions. The study also examined the views of CSOs on the potential roles and limitations of the EU in the Kurdish question and the crippled peace process which lasted between March 2013 and July 2015. It also revealed the historically changing meanings of the EU/Europe for Kurdish CSOs from the 1990s up

<sup>8</sup> Alper Kaliber, "De-Europeanisation of Civil Society and Public Debates in Turkey: The Kurdish Question Revisited," in special issue (co-editor with Senem Aydın-Düzgüt) "Is Turkey De-Europeanising? Encounters with Europe in a Candidate Country," *South European Society and Politics* 21, no. 1 (2016): 59–74.

<sup>9</sup> Kaliber, "De-Europeanisation".

to the present time. Hence, another empirical goal of the research was to map out the variety of discourses concerning the EU and Turkey's integration into Europe disseminated by the politically mobilised civil societal actors in Turkey.

Those two research projects heavily drew on several interviews that I conducted in Diyarbakır, Ankara and Istanbul with the participation of CSO representatives, activists and academics. The interviews were organized as semi-structured and open-ended and they were all tape-recorded with the consent of the interviewees beforehand. Interviews for the first research on different impacts of civil society on the Kurdish question, were made in February 2008 in Istanbul and Ankara and included individuals from both Turkish and Kurdish CSOs as well as human rights organizations. The fieldwork for the second research on the Europeanization of civil society vocal on the Kurdish question mainly covered people from Kurdish civil society with diverse social and political backgrounds as well as from several human rights organizations. Some Istanbul-based Turkish CSOs and activists, though limited, were also interviewed. Interviews for this research were mainly conducted between February and June 2014 in Istanbul, Ankara and Diyarbakır. Since SSI allows maximum interaction between the researcher and the interviewee, the two research processes became very instructive for me concerning the nature of the Kurdish question as well as the civil society involvement in the issue.

### 3. The Reflectivist Approach to Qualitative Interviewing

Interviewing has long been a popular method for qualitative research in social science as it provides a direct link between the researcher and 'the very object he/she is investigating'.<sup>10</sup> If, as suggested by Brinkmann, 'the human reality is a conversational reality'<sup>11</sup> interviewing seems a very advantageous method of data gathering for researchers. One needs to make a distinction between a more optimistic positivist and more cautious and at times even pessimistic post-positivist approach to interviewing. The positivist approach tends to see interviewing as a very useful instrument of empirical research that provides insightful and first-hand data that may not be gained otherwise. In this approach, 'a rich set of accounts of the interviewees' experiences, knowledge, ideas and impressions may be produced and documented' through interviewing.<sup>12</sup>

By drawing on interviews, the researcher can gain insightful data into such things as people's subjective experiences, perceptions, group attitudes, which may be less or entirely inaccessible through other methods. As observed by Alvesson, for the positivist approaches, interviewing is an effective research tool or human encounter in which a knowledge transmitting logic prevails, and language is a transparent medium for communication of insights, experiences and facts. Moreover, it assumes the interviewee is motivated by a desire to assist science and is called upon in a sufficiently well-structured or secure and personal way so that pretence and role play do not matter much, therefore true and authentic answers are provided, and the interviewee can be mobilised as an integrated source of meaning, knowledge and intentionality and so on.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Annie Irvine, Paul Drew, and Roy Sainsbury, "Am I Not Answering your Questions Properly? Clarification, Adequacy and Responsiveness in Semi-Structured Telephone and Face-to-Face Interviews," *Qualitative Research* 13, no. 1 (2012): 316.

<sup>11</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 42.

<sup>12</sup> Mats Alvesson, "Methodology for Close Up Studies– Struggling with Closeness and Closure," *Higher Education* 46 (2003):168.

<sup>13</sup> Alvesson, "Beyond Neopositivists," 26.

The researcher takes every step ‘in order that the respondent speaks openly, authentically or truthfully to produce valid reporting on some interior or exterior state of affairs’.<sup>14</sup> Positivists conceive language as a neutral transmitter that mirrors the reality told by the interviewee who often tells the truth in an objective manner. The researcher, who is viewed as a neutral transmitter of that truth, should do everything to minimize his/her role and other sources of bias.

On the other hand, as Alvesson suggests, an interview is a ‘social situation and that which is said is far too context-dependent to be seen as a mirror of what goes on outside this specific situation’.<sup>15</sup> As post-positivists argue, the interview situation is not independent from power relations and interest calculations. Therefore, it must be viewed as a political act with non-trivial consequences. The interviewee or the participant may ‘act in his or her interests and or the interests of the social group with which he/she identifies’. Unlike positivist or neo-positivist approaches, interviewees are not seen solely as honest, moral story tellers or neutral information givers, but seen as politically conscious and ‘politically motivated actors’.<sup>16</sup> Interviewees may exploit interviews for self-promoting or ‘for their own political purposes, they may cheat or lie or they may very well tell the (partial) truth as they know it but in, for them, selective and favorable ways’.<sup>17</sup>

Post-structuralists argue that language and discourse and thus the conversational material collected through interviews construct rather than reveal phenomena. While positivists tend to see the interview as an effective research instrument, post-positivists are quite sceptical about the idea of using interview data. I would argue that the extreme arguments of both sides are flawed, rather, following Alvesson,<sup>18</sup> I prefer a reflectivist approach to qualitative interviewing, one which problematizes and challenges the dominant positivist or neo-positivist assumptions, but without entirely negating them as some post-structuralists do. A reflectivist approach emphasizes the political nature of the interviewing process ‘as a socially and linguistically complex social situation’<sup>19</sup> with seminal political, ethical and even social consequences. By the reflectivist approach I refer to thinking carefully and persistently at all stages of interviewing, i.e. the persons and institutions to be interviewed, the questions to be posed, the conditions of the interview situation, the materials to be included and/or excluded in the analysis, and the potential beneficiaries of the research outcomes. Thus, to the reflectivist approach, the role and impact of the researcher goes well beyond asking questions and reporting answers. Rather than being an objective and neutral reporter, the researcher acts as a political subject with a capacity to intervene and configure every stage of interview situation including the post-interview process. Therefore, the researcher has to be self-critical at all times, in particular concerning his/her role and influence as a social-political actor both during and after the interviews. This reflexivity should be at its maximum when interviews are conducted with the disadvantaged sectors of society, i.e. the children, the elderly, the disabled and others who are discriminated against, silenced and marginalised in one way or another.

<sup>14</sup> Carolyn Baker, “Membership Categorizations and Interview Accounts,” in *Qualitative Research*, ed. David Silverman (London: Sage, 1997), 30, cited in Alvesson, “Beyond Neopositivists”, 19.

<sup>15</sup> Alvesson, “Methodology,” 169.

<sup>16</sup> Alvesson, “Beyond Neopositivists,” 22.

<sup>17</sup> Alvesson, “Beyond Neopositivists,” 22.

<sup>18</sup> Alvesson, “Beyond Neopositivists”.

<sup>19</sup> Alvesson, “Beyond Neopositivists,” 14.

The reflectivist approach also suggests that interviewees or participants may not always be motivated purely by a scientific reason nor presenting always the most accurate account of what is asked to them. They are ‘frequently political, conscious actors’<sup>20</sup> who may tend to give misleading or partially accurate information. The participants’ social status, economic and political expectations, ‘job related tasks and duties, personal objectives and plans, worldviews and ideologies’ may all influence their accounts throughout the interviewing process.<sup>21</sup> These and other similar subjective factors influence in varying degrees what is or what is not told, what is highlighted or what is omitted/hidden, what is prioritised and what is trivialised by participants. It is not possible for the researcher to isolate the conversational material from those factors and to attain pure, objective data. Yet, it is possible to explore certain argumentative threads, typologies of representations and perceptions, self/other conceptions, policy formulations, deliberative positions, strategies and actions adopted by different actors, in different political-social contexts and time periods.

### 3.1 Discussing semi-structured interviewing

Qualitative interviews may be differentiated in terms of their ‘structure, the number of participants in each interview, different media and also different interviewer styles’.<sup>22</sup> These can be formal, informal, structured, semi or unstructured, focus group and telephone interviews. The researcher may either rely on one distinct form of interviewing or in some cases may exploit different kinds of interviews simultaneously in a way as to complement each other. Each has different strengths and weaknesses. This article, rather than presenting an exhaustive discussion of these, limits itself to semi-structured interviewing as probably the most frequently used form of qualitative interviewing in social science research.<sup>23</sup>

Nevertheless, it is worth elaborating on the notion of structuring interviews to comprehend better the distinctive characteristics of SSI. Apart from the standardised, questionnaire/survey kind of interviews that are generally associated with quantitative interviewing, there is no completely structured qualitative interviewing. Completely unstructured interviews where, for instance, only one question is prepared in advance are also seen in very exceptional cases. Thereby, we can rather speak of a ‘continuum ranging from relatively structured to relatively unstructured formats’.<sup>24</sup>

SSI is structured around data that the researcher wants to obtain and may well be reconfigured in accordance with the statements of the interviewee. Far from being a passive recording of what is told or experienced, it takes place as a social interaction between the researcher and the participant. Drawing on the dialogue between these two, SSI recognizes enough space to the interviewee to emphasize the issues that she deems important. It also gives the interviewer ‘a greater chance of becoming visible as a knowledge producing participant in the process itself rather than hiding behind a preset interview guide’.<sup>25</sup> The researcher comes up with a list of questions. Yet, this is not an exhaustive list and depending on the course of the interview, new questions may be added, some others may be removed or the formulation of others may be modified.

<sup>20</sup> Alvesson, “Methodology,” 170.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Diefenbach, “Are Case Studies More Than Sophisticated Storytelling?: Methodological Problems of Qualitative Empirical Research Mainly Based on Semi-structured Interviews,” *Quality & Quantity* 43 (2009): 881.

<sup>22</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 18.

<sup>23</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 21.

<sup>24</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 18.

<sup>25</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 21.

As mentioned before, this study will examine SSI in three stages: these are the pre-interview or preparatory stage; the fieldwork or interview stage; and the post-interview or analysing and reporting stage. While delineating each of these phases, the emphasis will be placed on realising the full potentials of SSI and overcoming some of its limitations. Yet, it should be noted that these stages need not be conceived as necessarily sequential steps of research. On the contrary, these are often ‘overlapping and cycling’ stages,<sup>26</sup> as researchers may, for instance, need to conduct new interviews after having completed and analysed a previous set of interviews. The conducted and analysed interviews may necessitate new ones or the researcher might be compelled to renew his/her pre-interview preparatory work. Thus, unlike what the three-stage conceptualization implies, SSI should not be imagined as a linear process of research necessarily advancing stage by stage.

### 3.2. The pre-interview phase

Before embarking on the fieldwork, meticulous research on potential interviewees is needed. The researcher needs to attach due importance to familiarise him/herself with the relevant actors, since the selection of the correct interviewees is of significance for time saving and accessing relevant data. The relevant participants may be identified through a detailed scanning of online and printed sources on the research topic. Yet, the researcher should not hope to have an exhaustive list of interviewees at this early point. As will be discussed below, new interviewees are likely to be added to the list by recommendations throughout the interviews.

However, designation of interviewees is not only an issue of time saving or accessing relevant data. It has normative and political implications as well, since only selected interviewees or organizations will have the chance to make themselves heard and to influence the research outcomes. The selection of participants will determine ‘whose worldviews, opinions and interests will be taken into account and whose will be ignored and excluded’.<sup>27</sup> The feeble civil society literature in Turkey has long remained confined to the usual suspects, i.e. business associations, and mostly Istanbul-based CSOs and organizations with international experience and networks. The CSOs which have been pushed to the margins of the political system due to their social/political activism or the CSOs which operate outside the three major cities, e.g. Istanbul, Ankara or Izmir, and operate with inadequate personnel and financial facilities have often been overlooked by this literature. This has resulted in the over-representation of the usual suspects at the expense of others. To avoid this, Caputo suggests interviewers need to do everything to make sure that ‘the debate is fair’, ‘no one’s voice excluded or demeaned’, and ‘the vested interest of the powerful who usually end up having their way are restrained’.<sup>28</sup> Caputo certainly defines an ideal situation which probably can never be fulfilled in practice. Yet, it is still important for ethically and politically engaged researchers who wish to represent the voice of the unheard, the silenced or the marginalized rather than contribute to the reproduction of the existing power relations within the civil society sector.

Researchers who have already contacted potential interviewees due to previous research, will be in an advantageous position to access relevant organizations and persons. For

<sup>26</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 46.

<sup>27</sup> Diefenbach, “Case Studies,” 880.

<sup>28</sup> John D. Caputo, *Radical Hermeneutics: Repetition, Deconstruction, and the Hermeneutic Project* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), 60 cited in Diefenbach, “Case Studies,” 880.

instance, when I started my research on Europeanization and Kurdish civil society, I had already established an extensive web of contacts with relevant actors due to my previous research in the SHUR project. This enabled me to access relevant organisations and persons more conveniently. When potential interviewees know you as a researcher developing a real interest in their issues and motivated by purely scientific ambitions, they often agree to arrange an interview more easily. Building a relationship of trust is bound to impact the content of the interviews as well. In such cases, conversations often develop more fluently and participants tend to speak in a more sincere manner. Mutual acquaintances between the interviewer and the interviewee or approaching the latter via a reliable reference bears particular importance while conducting research in cases as delicate as the Kurdish issue in Turkey.

Meticulous research at the pre-interview stage may also provide the researcher some insightful information on the actions, discourses and identities of the relevant actors as well as on the web of relations among them. If there are activists, NGOs, journalists, political leaders among potential interviewees, it would be very useful to read and examine what they have written and what they have publically told in relevant topics for the research at hand. A careful analysis of academic and non-academic publications, news analyses and commentaries in newspapers, reports and press releases by civil society groups, research centres, as well as public declarations and official documents in this particular area would provide necessary and useful data to the researcher to determine both who is to be interviewed and how interviews can be structured. If the researcher is expected to interview a large number of interviewees and if the aim of the research is to understand how a particular issue or debate is framed by different groups of actors, a meaningful classification of these actors would be needed at this stage. This helps the research to understand common and differentiated argumentative threads among these actors. For example, in my first research, which aimed at assessing the impact of CSOs with different identities, strategies and actions in the Kurdish question, we classified CSOs mainly according to their political stance and the positions they held throughout the debates on the issue, i.e., Turkish nationalist/establishment or Kurdish anti-establishment CSOs.<sup>29</sup>

Yet, it should be noted that this kind of classification is in fact a subjective intervention on the part of the researcher and may always be deficient or misleading due to different reasons. First, assessing the agendas and declared or undeclared intentions of potential interviewees or organizations that would be covered in the research may not be possible. Second, different actions and discourses of the same organization or interviewee could fall into different categories or may dovetail with different group of actors. To illustrate, in the same research on civil societal involvement in the Kurdish question, we observed that while the Human Rights Association has often made a non-securitizing impact, 'some of its actions and discourses had a securitizing impact even if the organization did not aim to do so'.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, instead of taking a CSO as a homogeneous actor, we rather focused on the ways in which particular actions of particular CSOs have moulded the Kurdish question.

### 3.2.1. Ethical issues and taking consent of participants

The researcher needs to engage in all ethical issues in the pre-interviewing stage that may arise throughout the research. It has increasingly become a common practice that institutions

<sup>29</sup> Kaliber and Tocci, "Conflict Society".

<sup>30</sup> Kaliber and Tocci, "Conflict Society".

funding research projects demand researchers to present a report addressing potential ethical issues which in turn must be approved by an ethics committee at the local (e.g. the host university) or at the national level. As qualitative interviewing is conducted through human to human interactions, addressing ethical issues is an essential part of the process. As a first step, the researcher may send an information sheet to interviewees via email or by post covering the necessary information on the details of the research, e.g. what the aims and objectives of the investigation are, what kinds of information will be asked from them, how and in what ways the data provided will be used, protected and destroyed when the research cycle has ended. The information sheet should clearly explain to participants the measures taken to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the data provided in their native language. Should the participants agree with these terms, they may be asked to give their oral or written consent prior to the interviews. Through this procedure, the participants will understand the issues at stake in the research project before giving their consent.

Informed consent could be either in oral (e.g. by phone) or written form. Although the latter is much easier to document for the researcher, the preference could be left to the interviewee to minimize any discomfort. In case of an oral consent, it needs to be witnessed by someone such as another colleague or participant or the research assistant of the project if there is any. The written consent may be provided either via email from the interviewee stating his/her consent to participate in the research or via a written statement by the interviewee. The participants, however, will be free to withdraw their consent for being interviewed any time without liability if they deem it necessary. They have also every right to withdraw from the interview whenever and for whatever reason they wish. The questions posed in interviews should not invoke political or legal sensitivities and the participants will be free to avoid any question they do not wish to answer.

The researcher may fail to envisage and prevent all risks the participants may face due to the content of their answers and the opinions they express. Yet, s/he can make every effort to minimise these risks such as stigmatisation or discrimination of interviewees due to their participation in the research. The most effective way of doing this is to obtain their approval before using the data they have provided in the publications. Under certain circumstances it may not be possible to know how the data obtained during interviews will be used in outcomes/publications and it would not be sufficient to inform the participants at the very beginning of the research. In order to minimize this risk, the researcher needs to maintain ongoing communication (oral and written) with the participants. Particularly, in the cases where direct quotations from an interviewee will be used, the researcher has to ensure in writing that they agree with these quotations as they will appear in publications.

In cases where the participants require anonymity, it is again the responsibility of the researcher to make sure that no link can be established between the identity of the participant and the data obtained. Anonymity is the key principle in addressing the privacy issues. The researcher guarantees that s/he will not register elements that could permit the identification of the individuals' identity by a third party external to the relationship between researcher and interviewees when anonymity is requested. Any potential risks should be minimized by treating the data collected through interviews as confidential and, if required by the participant, as anonymous. It is the researcher's responsibility and duty to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of the data.

Moreover, the ways in which interview questions are formulated could be helpful to deal with potential ethical issues in a pre-emptive manner. For instance, throughout my research drawing on interviews I have:

- focused on the CSOs as entities rather than on the personal data or information of the individual research participants;
- examined the activities, public statements and publications of the CSOs rather than trying to understand the intentions, individual convictions or initiatives of their individual members;
- avoided contentious questions during interviews which may lead the participants to reveal their personal religious or political convictions;
- avoided questions that may reveal some personal information about participants, e.g. political conviction or political party affiliation, ethnicity, religion.

When interviews are conducted with such vulnerable groups as children, elderly, disabled or irregular migrants, additional measures may be required not to give any damage to interviewees. Under no circumstances should the interviewees be forced to give any confidential data regarding their institutions or themselves.

Interviews may be recorded or the researcher may take notes during the interview depending on the preference of the interviewee. In any case, the data obtained throughout interviews should only be accessed by the researcher and should be stored on a password protected hard disk to avoid the risk of access by third parties. The data obtained throughout the research should not be used in any context other than the stated purposes of the project. The collected data should only be accessed until the end of the research project and should be destroyed irreversibly by the researcher. Particular emphasis needs to be placed on any personal data and information which will exclusively be available to the researcher. Any printed or electronic material including the personal data and information should be destroyed by the researcher following the end of the project.

### 3.3. The interview phase

The fieldwork constitutes the core of the semi-structured interviewing and it is this stage that the role of the researcher as a subject becomes more evident. The interview situation should be viewed as a social interaction between the researcher and the participant rather than a mere case of asking questions and recording answers. As an intersubjective process, qualitative interviewing is deeply influenced by personal characteristics, i.e. internalised norms, cultural scripts, biases or worldviews of both the interviewer and the interviewee. Thereby, unlike what positivists often suggest, there is ‘no such thing like a neutral, non-intervening and non-existent’ or objective researcher/interviewer.<sup>31</sup> Face-to-face interviewing enables and even is more extensively shaped by the interpersonal contact between the researcher and the participant. Even if this is largely accepted as an asset of SSI, this could also be its Achilles heel as it highly increases the likelihood of the researcher and the participant influencing each other.

The researcher is always an active part of qualitative interviewing, and his/her role goes well beyond asking questions and noting the answers. The ways in which s/he formulates the content, language and even the order of questions have incalculable effects on the reactions of

<sup>31</sup> Diefenbach, “Case Studies,” 880.

the interviewee. The interviewer often makes conscious or unconscious interventions so that the interviewee ‘makes statements he or she would not make otherwise’.<sup>32</sup> In 2007 I conducted research focusing on the discourses of (in)security devised by different socio-political actors who are vocal in the Cyprus conflict. Drawing on the Copenhagen School’s multi-sectoral approach to international security,<sup>33</sup> I aimed to explore which issues are securitized in what ways and by whom in both parts of the island of Cyprus. When I asked such questions to my interviewees as ‘do you think threats to security are limited to military issues on the island? Which issues are of urgency for the security of your community and for the whole island? Do environmental, economic or identity related problems constitute threats to security?’ I noticed that interviewees frequently tended to formulate their answers in security terms. They were more inclined to inject a security quality to issues political, economic or cultural in nature. As observed by many, interviewees tend to say what interviewers want to hear.

However, when I formulated my questions in more neutral terms, the participants became less inclined to securitize issues. They expressed their views in much more differentiated ways, which eventually convinced me to alter the language of my questions. To elucidate, I avoided using such terms as security, securitization, threat, danger/dangerous in my questions which were reframed as follows: “Do you think which issues or problems should be on the priority list of political parties and governments on both sides of the island? How do you define impacts of environmental, economic or identity related issues on the Cyprus conflict? What kinds of instruments should be used to minimise negative impacts of these issues while enhancing their potential to make positive contributions to any prospect of settlement?” This reframing allowed interviewees to mention the security-ness of an issue (if they think so) or to discuss it in entirely different ways free from any influence of the interviewer.

To Brinkmann, research drawing on qualitative interviewing is more suitable for ‘how’ questions rather than for ‘why’, ‘how much,’ or comparison questions necessitating large number of interviews for any statistically meaningful result.

A question like “How do people cope with the loss of a loved one?” is in general better for qualitative projects than questions that seek to find causal effects, such as “Does psychotherapy reduce the risk of depression of the loss?” The latter question is interesting and relevant. But, it is also extremely difficult to answer with qualitative interviewing. Instead, one would need to enlist a large number of research participants, administrate standardised tests and compare the effects statistically in order to assess whether the findings are statistically significant, i.e., not just a chance result.<sup>34</sup>

SSI is very useful to explore how particular issues, concepts, political developments or cultural phenomena are experienced, perceived and discursively framed by actors in the public or private spheres. It may also be relevant to know what kinds of actions and strategies these actors develop in relation to particular issues and problems. Even if SSI does not allow for statistical work, it allows researcher to ‘construct a typology of experiencing, reasoning or acting’ among the actors covered in the research.<sup>35</sup> For instance, when we searched for how the civil society in Turkey impacts on the Kurdish question, it became very useful to categorize CSOs in a way as to understand if there exist similarities and meaningful differences regarding the impacts, actions and strategies of different CSOs in particular stages of the conflict.

<sup>32</sup> Diefenbach, “Case Studies” 880.

<sup>33</sup> Barry Buzan et al. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1998).

<sup>34</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 49.

<sup>35</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 49.

The CSOs demanding the recognition of a separate Kurdish identity and collective cultural rights, and denouncing the Turkish state's violations of human rights were categorized as the 'anti-establishment' CSOs. The CSOs which, to a greater or lesser degree, adopted the official state line and blamed anti-establishment CSOs of being pawns in the hands of the PKK [The Kurdistan Workers' Party] were defined as 'establishment' organizations. In between these two extremes, we placed the CSOs whose identities and actions did not entirely distance them from the Turkish state, but nonetheless challenged the hegemony of the state's secularist and ethno-nationalist policies'.<sup>36</sup>

This categorization helped us to understand if there exist common patterns of actions, discourses and impacts among the CSOs belonging to the same or different categories.

Unlike quantitative or questionnaire type interviewing where questions are structured in a specific order, in qualitative interviews there is more space and freedom for the researcher to conduct fully or semi or even unstructured interviews. The interviewer may prefer to remain loyal to the already prepared list of questions in a specific order. Others may prefer less structured interviewing where they can intervene in the language and order of questions. Throughout this semi-structured interviewing, new questions can be added while others may be dropped. What I prefer is to first prepare a list of questions and organize them as sets or groups of questions. Not specific questions per se, but these groupings largely guide my interviews in a way as to ensure that all research themes are covered. To illustrate, in my research on Europeanization and Kurdish civil society I classified questions as follows:

1. questions on the history, current structure, aims and activities of the CSO which the interviewee is affiliated with,
2. questions on the nature of the Kurdish issue,
3. questions on the peace process,
4. questions concerning potentials and limitations of the European and particularly the European Union's involvement in the peace process,
5. questions about the interviewed CSO's approach to European and other sources of funding.

I specified the questions in each of these groupings constructed in accordance with the research's themes, aims and objectives. Even if there are some questions which are impossible to skip, it is much more important to ensure that each research theme or group of questions have been asked. Hence, rather than asking each and every question with the same wording, language and order it was much more important for me to gain enough data to address each theme of my research. It is always possible and is often needed to remove some questions while adding others throughout interviews. The researcher is also likely to discover new perspectives of the issue under research or may be given information by the interviewee entirely unknown to her. Subsequently, s/he may want to use or cross-check this information in the forthcoming interviews.

As discussed above, SSI enables a wide range of actors including those who have a limited access to the public to express their views freely and in a detailed manner. Yet, cross-checking the data provided by any interviewee with the data provided by others substantially increases the reliability and quality of data gathered through SSI. It may also be very useful to interview more than one person from the same institution, as in some cases personal views of the interviewees overshadow the institutional stance on a particular issue. Even if there is

<sup>36</sup> Kaliber and Tocci, "Conflict Society," 192.

not an ultimate solution to this puzzle, cross-checking via multiple interviews from the same organization can remedy it to a certain degree.

### 3.4. The post-interview stage

This stage comprises transcription, analysis and reporting of the interview material. Judging from my experience, I may suggest that only a very small part of what has been said by interviewees can be included in publications and even in the analysis. ‘To accomplish a text that gives a good account in the sense of mirroring a reality, represented in all this empirical material is very difficult, if not impossible’.<sup>37</sup> The researcher needs to make arduous decisions about which data should be used and which will be omitted. Researchers (from then on authors) often find it more conducive to include in the final production the statements by interviewees that support their arguments. Alternatively, authors may give priority to some data over others that they classify more important. These are very subjective decisions with various implications on the research outcomes.

For the analysis of transcriptions of interview materials, different ways of coding, i.e. concept or theme-driven coding and/or of content analysis may be used.<sup>38</sup> Whatever the method, the process of transcription is an integral part of the analysis since at this stage the researcher makes decisions concerning which material s/he would consider examining and integrating into the analysis. Transcribing the whole material is an option. Yet, if the researcher is not involved in a kind of critical discourse analysis, this could be time and energy wasting. An efficient way could be first, to clarify what s/he is particularly looking for in accordance with the aims and objectives of the research; second, to transcribe solely this material; and third, to mark overlaps and differences among the interviewees on particular issues of concern. While listening to hundreds of hours of recorded conversations, it is advisable to know what is more and what is less important or what is ignorable during the transcription process.

As Brinkmann points out, ‘there is no golden standard of transcription, everything depends on the purpose of one’s investigation and on what is possible in practice’.<sup>39</sup> In some cases, the researcher may notice that a part of conversation that is not transcribed may turn out to be an important text as it marks a point or points of convergence or divergence among interviewees. Or it might draw attention to an unexpectedly significant or unknown perspective of the research problem. Hence, it is prudent not to be so conservative in selecting the material to be transcribed. This is also related to the anticipated outcome of the research. If the outcome will be in the form of a short report or a journal article or a book will certainly affect the size of transcribed conversational material. As Brinkmann observes for qualitative research, writing does not solely mean to document what you have heard. It means also ‘to experiment with analysis, compare different perspectives on the empirical material and try out a number of alternative ways of presenting readings of the material. Writing should therefore be treated as an intrinsic part of the methodology of interview research and not as a final post-script added on at the end’.<sup>40</sup>

As mentioned before, SSI is very useful to explore how particular issues, concepts, political developments or conflicts are experienced, perceived and discursively framed by

<sup>37</sup> Alvesson, “Methodology,” 173.

<sup>38</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 62.

<sup>39</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 61.

<sup>40</sup> Brinkmann, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 67.

actors in the public or private realms. In such a case, an efficient way of analysing huge conversational data coming out of interviews could be to focus on convergences and divergences among interviewees in seminal issues or points for the research, instead of comprising all their utterances. These crucially important issues or points may be considered as separate paragraphs or even distinct subheadings. For each point of reference, similar and diverging argumentative threads could be specified and classified. Each group of arguments need to be represented in final texts (e.g. reports, journal articles or book chapters) by making references to their advocates. Yet, the researcher does not have to give the name of the interviewee or his/her institution directly in the text. Each interviewee can be enumerated and the in-text references could be given to these numbers. As such, it will be possible to reveal which group of arguments is articulated by whom or by which group of actors. This method also demonstrates the changing popularity of different arguments among the actors interviewed. To illustrate, some sentences are quoted from my article on de-Europeanization of Kurdish civil society:

The bulk of the interviewed CSOs converge on the notion that EU-required legal and constitutional reforms have widened the political space in favour of the civil society in Turkey (Interviewees 7, 15, 19 and 22). ‘Mainly two views stand out: Kurdish question as a ‘fundamentally human rights question’ (Interviewees 24, 4, 13, 5, 7, 29) and as a ‘national/political issue’ (Interviewees 17, 18, 23)’.

This method, however, will not prevent the researcher from including distinctive views by a specific interviewee. The following is a pertinent example from the same research as above: ‘The interviewee from Keskesor LGBT opines that the settlement process has already served to open up more space for civil society (Interviewee 15)’.

For the readers’ convenience, the list of interviewees should be provided in the appendix right after the bibliography. This list should comprise the position of the interviewee in a stated institution as well as the date and the place of the interview.

Interviewee 4: Director, Human Rights Association (IHD), Ankara, 14 February 2014.

Interviewee 12: Coordinator, Southeastern Industrialists and Businessmen Association (GUNSIAD), Diyarbakir, 19 February 2014.

If the required consent has been taken and if the interviewee is talking on behalf of herself rather than representing any institution, her name can be revealed:

Interviewee 3: Büşra Ersanlı, academic and activist, Istanbul, 13 February 2014.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this paper, benefiting from my experience, I examined qualitative research interviewing with a particular emphasis on the potentials and limitations of semi-structured interviews. In writing this article an important motivation has been to come up with a guide for students of International Relations and Political Science who would like to use this method in their qualitative research. To further achieve this aim, it would be very useful to mention some works utilising qualitative interview as a method of inquiry in Turkish IR scholarship. It is fair to suggest that qualitative interviewing has not been among the most frequently used methods of inquiry in the scholarship on Turkish IR. Nevertheless, there are a few, notable examples that may inspire any researcher who would like to utilise this method in their research. While some of these scholarly works draw on interviews as the principle

source,<sup>41</sup> some others benefit from interviewing as complementary to other methods of data gathering.<sup>42</sup> It may be suggested that there is a welcome upsurge of interest in interviewing among scholars of Turkish politics in recent years, yet the scholarly works employing this method in a systematic manner and detailing their ways of choosing interviewees, framing questions and transcribing and analysing the interview data are still rare and direly needed.

Following Alvesson, this article recommends a reflectivist approach to qualitative interviewing, problematizing and challenging the dominant positivist or neo-positivist assumptions, but without entirely negating them. This approach also disagrees with the deep mistrust and scepticism of some post-structuralists concerning interviewing as a credible method for qualitative research. The reflectivist approach is aware of the fact that the interview situation is political in nature and is not immune from power relations and interest calculations.

As post-positivists suggest, the researcher is far from being a neutral transmitter of what is said by the interviewee. The researcher's role and impact go well beyond asking questions and reporting answers in an objective manner. Thus, the reflectivist approach requires the researcher to be self-critical throughout all stages of the research in particular concerning his/her role and influence during and after interviews. It is often overlooked that it is in the post-interview phase where the researcher makes arduous decisions concerning the data included and excluded in the analysis that the political and subjective role of the researcher becomes most visible.

This article examined the qualitative interviewing process over three stages: pre-interview or preparatory; fieldwork or interview; and the post-interview or analysing and reporting stage. However, rather than being a necessarily linear process of research, SSI needs to be considered as constituted by overlapping and cycling stages. SSI is flexible compared to more structured or survey type interviewing in the sense that it allows more space to interviewees to express themselves freely and in a detailed manner. It also gives more opportunity to researchers to participate in the interviewing process as active subjects

<sup>41</sup> As an example to the former, Lauren M. McLaren and Meltem Müftüler Baç, "Turkish Parliamentarians' Perspectives on Turkey's Relations with the European Union," *Turkish Studies* 4, no.1 (2003): 195–218 analyse the views of 61 Turkish parliamentarians on Turkey–EU Relations and includes a detailed methodological section particularly on how to choose sampling. Similarly, Özge Zihnioğlu, *European Union Civil Society Policy and Turkey: A Bridge Too Far?* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Ahmet Erdi Öztürk and Semiha Sözeri, "Diyabet As A Foreign Policy Tool: Evidence from the Netherlands and Bulgaria," *Politics and Religion*, accessed March 8, 2018, doi: 10.1017/S175504831700075X; Büke Boşnak, "Europeanisation and De-Europeanisation Dynamics in Turkey: The Case of Environmental Organisations," *South European Society and Politics* 21, no. 1 (2016): 75–90; Alexander Bürgin, "Why the EU Still Matters in Turkish Domestic Politics: Insights from Recent Reforms in Migration Policy," *South European Society and Politics* 21, no.1 (2016): 105–18; Zeki Sarıgil and Ömer Fazlıoğlu, "Religion and Ethno-nationalism: Turkey's Kurdish Issue," *Nations and Nationalism* 19, no. 3 (2003): 551–71; Bahar Rumelili and Didem Çakmaklı, "Civic Participation and Citizenship in Turkey: A Comparative Study of Five Cities," *South European Society and Politics* 22, no. 3 (2017) draw mostly on interviews conducted with political/bureaucratic elites as well as NGO representatives, community leaders and intellectuals. Senem Aydın Düzgüt, "Legitimizing Europe in Contested Settings: Europe as a Normative Power in Turkey?," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, accessed March 8, 2018, doi: 10.1111/jcms.12647 explores if the European Union is still perceived as a 'normative power' by different segments of Turkish society and draws heavily on focus group interviewing, a method rarely used by the students of Turkish politics.

<sup>42</sup> The works utilising interviewing as a complimentary method to other methods of inquiry are also observed in the scholarly reflection on Turkish foreign and domestic policy. Recent examples to this category of studies include Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, "Turkey and Russia in a Shifting Global Order: Cooperation, Conflict and Asymmetric Interdependence in a Turbulent Region," *Third World Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (2016): 71–95; Zeki Sarıgil, *Ethnic Boundaries in Turkish Politics: The Secular Kurdish Movement and Islam* (New York: New York University Press, 2018); Özge Onursal-Besğül, "Policy Transfer and Discursive De-Europeanisation: Higher Education from Bologna to Turkey," *South European Society and Politics* 21, no. 1 (2016): 91–103; Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, *Trials of Europeanization: Turkish Political Culture and the European Union* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Bahar Rumelili and E. Fuat Keyman, "Enacting Multi-Layered Citizenship: Turkey's Armenians' Struggle for Justice and Equality," *Citizenship Studies* 20, no. 1 (2016): 67–83; E. Fuat Keyman, "Turkish Foreign Policy in the post-Arab Spring Era: From Proactive to Buffer State," *Third World Quarterly* 37, no. 12 (2016): 2274–87.

that may guide the interview towards new directions when they think that this serves best to their research interests. SSI is particularly useful for identifying common and divergent argumentative threads of societal and political actors involved in large public debates. It is a complex methodological tool which can yield reliable and comparable insights when used in conjunction with other qualitative methods, i.e. discourse analysis and content analysis. Even if it is argued that SSI may be employed both at the early and later stages of the research, it best serves those researchers who have already developed a keen and historical understanding of the relevant topic of interest.

To materialize its full potential, SSI needs to be preceded by detailed research on the topic of interest, on the actions, discourses and identities of the relevant actors as well as on the web of relations among them. SSI enables a wide range of actors including those who have a limited access to the public to express their views in a free and elaborate manner. Yet, cross-checking the data provided by any interviewee with the data provided by others would substantially increase the reliability and quality of data gathered through interviews. SSI develops as a social interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee rather than as a mere case of data gathering between the subject and the object. As an intersubjective process, qualitative interviewing is deeply shaped by personal characteristics of both the researcher and the participant, i.e. internalised norms, cultural scripts, biases or worldviews. The ways in which the interviewer formulates the content, language and even the order of questions may affect the language and the attitudes of the interviewee. Likewise, the interviewee may influence the researcher so that s/he can drop some questions, while adding some others. It is this dialogical potential of the SSI that renders it a unique and invaluable method of knowledge production in qualitative research.

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**Mobilization Follies in International Relations:  
*A Multimethod Exploration of Why Some Decision Makers Fail to Avoid War When  
Public Mobilization as a Bargaining Tool Fails***

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**Abstract**

*This paper is intended to serve as a show and tell model for graduate students. Sections in parentheses and italics provide a running commentary by the author on the decisions taken throughout the paper. The goal is to permit students to follow the thinking of the researcher and see how it guided the theoretical, methodological and other decisions on content that finally made it into the paper. The paper in question explores how “public” military mobilization can be an attempt by weak actors to trigger intervention by third parties in a dispute with a stronger actor; in the hopes that the third parties will force the stronger actor to accommodate the weaker actor. This attempt is called “compellence via proxy”. In this research I explore why in reaction to failure, some weak actors are able to avoid escalation to war, while others are not. I posit that the flexibility of the decision makers of the weak actors is influenced by their ability to overhaul their winning coalition. A large-n evaluation of 68 cases of “public” mobilization, and an evaluation of six Balkan state mobilizations in the 1878-1909 era, do not support the idea that the size of the winning coalition, a part of the factors determining overhaul, has an association with war onset or its avoidance.*

**Keywords:** Military mobilization, war, winning coalition, rationalist theory of war, crisis

**1. Introduction**

The following article has a dual role. In it I present a research project focusing on how the interaction of military mobilization and the ability of decision makers to overhaul their winning coalition, impact the onset of war when attempts to trigger “compellence via proxy” fail. At the same time there is a paper within the paper, in which I try to explain and comment on the decisions that led me to pursue this topic, and how to evaluate it. Those sections will be enclosed in parentheses (*and will be in italics*). The goal is for the interplay of the main text and the (*commentary*) to provide students with a glimpse into the actual process of paper construction. This paper was built on purpose for the wider education project. Some readers might find it helpful to first read the paper without looking at the (*commentary*), and then re-read the two texts combined in order to explore their interplay and the construction of the research.

One of the main areas of focus of the rationalist theory of war is on the signaling role of military mobilization concerning intentions during conflict bargaining.<sup>1</sup> In a world of incomplete information and uncertainty about intentions, costly military mobilizations are the most costly signaling tool available to decision makers outside of war itself. Indeed, mobilization can be more financially costly than engagement in some of the less deadly forms of militarized disputes. At the same time mobilization is also a war-preparation measure the goal of which is to give an early military advantage to the first mobilizer. This dual nature of mobilization has led to the consideration of mobilizations under two separate categories; “public” and “private” mobilization.

*(One of the most interesting characteristics of mobilization is that it can be more financially costly for a state than even a low intensity war or a militarized dispute. It is also a rare event. Finally, it is hard to clarify between motivations that see mobilization as an attempt to negotiate a better peaceful bargain, and those that see it as war preparation. Rare events that are also characterized by indeterminacy about motives tend to be explored by scholars using rational choice methods. The issue is two-fold. The lack of a big number of event occurrences precludes the use of large-n studies since the non-event observations will overwhelm the event observations. Furthermore, the number of observations might also be too few for resulting in stable large-n models. A discussion of these issues can be found by those interested in King and Zheng.<sup>2</sup>*

*The other reason is that in events where motives are indeterminate the only way to get a handle on the possible motivations is by making a number of assumptions and following them to their logical consequences. This is the case with events like deterrence or mobilization, where the same observed behavior might be the result of any number of motivations, and the behavior itself cannot provide indicators of motives. For example, the case of an actor making an accommodative move in a crisis might be ascribed to deterrence, but also could simply be the result of the lack of any aggressive motive. The event itself cannot help us understand the motives. But a rational choice framework can lead us to compare the actualized behavior to the expected behavior under certain assumptions. It can also hopefully point to empirical implications that can be explored in case studies.*

*My first exposure to rare events was during a study of war initiation using politically relevant directed dyads in my PhD studies. These events are dyads where you have a separate observation for Year X State A-State B, and Year X State B-State A. It is the usual modeling technique for when you care about who is doing something to whom (war initiation), rather than what is happening (war onset). The usual number of observations in such evaluations can run in the hundreds of thousands, while the positives, war initiation, will usually be less than a thousand. As a result, getting statistical significant results is extremely hard for the reasons noted by King and Zheng. Instead one must either use modified large-n models or prefer qualitative studies of a smaller number of cases.)*

The goal of “private” mobilizations is to maximize the ability of a state to win a war. It thus eschews the declarative character of mobilization as a pre-war bargaining tool. Instead the effect comes during the war, where it can lead to either early capitulation by the target,

<sup>1</sup> See James Fearon, “Signaling versus the Balance Of Power and Interests: An Empirical Test of a Crisis Bargaining Model,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 38, no. 2 (1994): 236–69 and James Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War,” *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (1995): 379–414.

<sup>2</sup> Gary King and Langche Zheng, “Explaining Rare Events in International Relations,” *International Organization* 55, no. 3 (2001): 693–715.

or extremely long wars due to initiator unwillingness to give terms. “Public” mobilizations on the other hand are mainly aimed at the pre-war bargaining, with the goal of signaling the “strength” of the position of a state on an issue with the hope that this will trigger negotiations. If war happens, “public” mobilization is likely to produce short duration wars, where the initiator is more likely to offer terms. War in the case of “public” mobilization is the result of the power shifts associated with mobilization leading to commitment problems that can lead to war. These commitment problems result from the possibility of re-covering the sunk costs of mobilization, which are given, through the variable military advantages it gives during a war.<sup>3</sup>

*(Writers can be divided into two categories. Those who first think and then write and those who write as they think. The first category tends to have a much more pleasant time in writing, than the second. For the second case, to which I belong, the drafting process is much longer. When planning projects, bear in mind the type of writer you are. Part of this is “natural” dispositions and temperaments, and can be ameliorated by training, but I have found that there is a limit to that. A major issue is how much of the information of your paper will you put in the introduction. Put too little and readers will be unhappy. Put too much, and you are repeating information. This partly depends on the audience also. For example, scholars working in the quantitative peace science tradition tend to prefer short introductions, scholars working in more classical paradigms, prefer longer)*

Some “public” mobilizers might be willing to risk the war gamble thanks to the hand-tying effect of mobilization. This effect is the sunk costs of mobilization, which can only be recouped by either gains in bargaining, or by the potential military advantage of mobilization in war. But some of the “public” mobilizers are true “pacifists” in that the potential benefits of war are always outpaced by the sunk costs. Let us call them “weak mobilizers” to differentiate them from “strong” states that prepare for war. For “weak mobilizers” mobilization has only a declarative purpose. It is a negotiation tool, and perhaps a desperate one. In many cases “weak mobilizers” might be seeking “compellence via proxy”, in which case their mobilization seeks to trigger action by stronger third parties that then compel the intended target to grant some pacific bargain that will recoup mobilization costs. If this fails to engender a negotiated bargain and the target prepares for, or initiates war, the rational thing is to back down. Some do, but some are not able to do so and find themselves in a disadvantageous war. In this paper I focus on the correlates that can account for the difference between those “weak mobilizers” who are able to avoid war when their gamble fails, and those who are not.

*(The rational choice literature in mobilization uses the term “strong” for some of the actors. It has not used the term “weak” in this context. Thus the term is open for use. Keep your eyes out for such situations. Rather than creating a neo-logism, a new word, for a term, you can cut down on the jargon by using useful antonyms for concepts, which have not been utilized fully in the literature.*

*My first exposure to rational choice works was during my MA studies at the University of Chicago. This was especially in the study of deterrence, where the approach dominates. But I did not fully grasp its rules until graduate studies at the University of Illinois. This*

<sup>3</sup> On how “public” mobilization fosters wars see Branislav L. Slantchev, “Military Coercion in Interstate Crises,” *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 4 (2005): 533–47; and Ahmer Tarar, “Military Mobilization and Commitment Problems,” *International Interactions* 39, no. 3 (2013): 343–66. On their effect within war see Kyle Mackey, “Prewar Mobilization and the Termination of Interstate Wars,” January 26, 2014, <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2385749>.

*project began from a simple question: What other phenomena of international relations are similar to deterrence? Have they been explored by the existing literature? What are the gaps? Mobilization was that similar phenomenon, and I noticed the gap when it came to looking at “weak” mobilizers.)*

As part of this exploration I develop an explanatory story of the conditions under which “weak mobilizers” will conduct a public mobilization, and why some are able to back down when this fails to bring about a positive bargaining shift, while others get dragged into war. I argue that a central variable here is the ability of decision makers to overhaul their winning coalition. This is because the hand-tying effect of mobilization strengthens hardliner members of the winning coalition. In rational choice terms it increases the audience costs of accommodation. As a result, accommodation is more costly than military defeat, leading to preference for a disadvantageous war. However, if the decision makers can overhaul the winning coalition, they can then open up domestic space for accommodation, and thus avoid war.<sup>4</sup>

To evaluate this argument I use a multi-method approach. I use a large n-analysis of mobilizations in crises and Militarized Disputes (henceforth MIDs), and before wars to see if the ability to overhaul the winning coalition affects the ability of “weak mobilizers” to avoid going to war. I argue that an empirical differentiation between “weak” and “strong” users of “public” mobilization is the duration of the period between the onset of mobilization and the end of a crisis or initiation of war. The longer this is, the stronger the likelihood that we are dealing with a “weak mobilizer”. However, since mobilization studies are subject to the same limitations concerning intentions as deterrence studies, I also look at the case study of some of the Balkan State mobilizations in the period 1878-1909.

*(As noted before, any phenomenon of international relations which is tied to the question of intentions tends to be very hard to observe. This makes large-n study and even comparative case studies quite difficult. Keep this in mind with your own concepts and items of study. If intentions play a big role you may very well have to limit your analysis to the use of rational choice theory in combination with detailed single-case studies. If you are able to do a comparative case study, then this will likely make your research more persuasive. However, combining this with even some simple large-n analysis will also enhance your project.)*

I argue that the empirical conditions in the Balkans between the signing of the Treaty of Berlin of 1878, and the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, were conducive for “public” mobilization by “weak mobilizers” as a way to gain Great Power intervention in local crises and make up for their weakness vis-à-vis their targets. Sometimes this worked spectacularly, as was the case of the Greek 1880/1 mobilization over the cession of Thessaly. Sometimes the attempt would fail and lead to a diplomatic retreat but avoidance of war, as was the case with Serbia in 1909. And sometimes it would backfire leading to dis-advantageous wars, as was the case with Greece in 1897.

*(Simple case studies can always be a good complement to large-n studies. Multi-method papers are hard to publish as, due to space restrictions, most venues prefer to focus on either qualitative or quantitative. But if well done, these are the papers that are more likely to be*

<sup>4</sup> On the concept of Winning Coalitions see Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow, *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge: MIT University Press, 2003). On the concept of overhauling the winning coalition in international relations see Bear F. Braumoeller, *The Great Powers and the International System: Systemic Theory in Empirical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

published in the top tier journals.

*I encountered large-n studies for the first time during my MA studies at the University of Chicago. The introduction was largely shallow, indeed dismissive. It was during the PhD studies at Illinois, that I understood the logic and usefulness of large-n studies. My undergraduate education provided no such exposure, which made my training in large-n studies harder, compared to peers who had been introduced to such methods early on.)*

## 2. Mobilization and Its Role in Bargaining

Mobilization has been at the center of two literatures in international relations. The first is the literature on the influence of military doctrine and the offense-defense balance. The other literature is the rationalist theory of war.<sup>5</sup> It is to this second corpus of work that this study is addressed. This literature is heavily reliant on the use of game theory to derive theoretical findings based on a set of assumptions about actor goals as a way to address the lack of observational data on decision maker motives. I will now briefly summarize that literature.<sup>6</sup>

The rationalist analysis of mobilization was incidental to its role as a strong signaling device due to sunk costs.<sup>7</sup> The development of the concepts of “private” and “public” mobilization only came when analysis moved to the influence of mobilization on war outcomes.<sup>8</sup> “Private” mobilization was seen as war inducing because i) it made mobilizers less willing to avoid military action and ii) because such action is likely to be accompanied by surprise, it undermined deterrence by the target. In another name, “private” mobilization fostered conditions of war-inducing deterrence failure. In reaction there was an assumption that “public” mobilization was pacific. Slantchev questioned this and noted the double character of military mobilization. It is a sunk cost, that makes war less likely by credible signaling, but it is also a hand-tying feature, that makes war more likely by affecting the payoff of any war for both target and initiator.<sup>9</sup>

Tarar studied how power shifts brought about by mobilization within a crisis can lead to war due to commitment problems, even as they decrease the likelihood of war due to private information.<sup>10</sup> The problem is that if mobilization results in a power shift sufficient to exceed the bargaining surplus, this triggers Powell’s general inefficiency condition that leads to war due to commitment problems.<sup>11</sup> To put it simply, if the gain in military capability via mobilization is large enough as to give a first strike advantage to the initial mobilizer, it is likely to lead to fears that even if the target accommodates, it will still be attacked. If the target state expects this to be the case, there are powerful incentives to launch a preemptive war. This is especially the case with gradual mobilization, which is almost always “public” as the time taken up by the process negates any element of surprise. In this case mobilization is done in stages seeking bargaining points. For Tarar this creates a commitment problem as

<sup>5</sup> For examples of the first literature see the collected works in *Offense, Defense and War*, ed. Michael E. Brown, Owen R. Cote Jr., Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004). Central works of the second literature are Fearon, “Rationalist explanations for War”; Robert Powell, “Bargaining and Learning While Fighting,” *American Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 2 (2004): 344–61; Slantchev, “Military Coercion in Interstate Crises”; Tarar, “Military Mobilization and Commitment Problems”; Mackey, “Prewar Mobilization and the Termination of Interstate Wars”.

<sup>6</sup> For a general review see Mackey, “Prewar Mobilization and the Termination of Interstate Wars”.

<sup>7</sup> This was done in Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War”.

<sup>8</sup> See Brian Lai, “The Effects of Different Types Of Military Mobilization on the Outcome of International Crises,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 2 (2004): 211–29.

<sup>9</sup> See Slantchev, “Military Coercion in Interstate Crises”.

<sup>10</sup> See Tarar, “Military Mobilization and Commitment Problems”.

<sup>11</sup> See Powell, “Bargaining and Learning While Fighting,” and Robert Powell, “War as a Commitment Problem,” *International Organization* 60, no. 1 (2006): 169–203.

any bargain at one point, may be overturned by further mobilization at another point.

Mackey completes the picture by looking at whether “public” or “private” mobilization actually confers any advantages if war breaks out. By looking at the duration of war he finds indicators that “private” mobilization increases the likelihood of an early submission by the target, but if that does not happen, then the war is likely to last longer. “Public” mobilization is likely to lead to wars of medium duration. The reason for this is that by revealing information about resolve it fosters the adjustment of combatant goals during the fighting to a bargain that ends the fighting. In another name “public” mobilization, unlike “private” mobilization, enhances the information revealing function of conflict<sup>12</sup>.

*(The literature on mobilization is small. This is another characteristic of the study of topics where intentions are important, and thus observational data hard to generate. It is always better to try to build a story of the development of a research program than to just list references. In general, a good literature review is structured by your argument. Previous literature is explored in relation to the elements of your argument. How does it provide the foundations for your own argument? What gaps of the previous literature you are trying to address? What interactions of previous works have been missed that your work consummates? What previous findings support elements of your argument? Which findings are you trying to advance? How do the works in a research program build up on each other and towards consilience? In other words, you need to show how your own contribution is a logical result of the existing literature and how it advances it.)*

One of the problems of the above literature is that it does not sufficiently differentiate among the goal of “public” mobilizations. While in all cases the goal is to reveal information in pursuit of a non-violent bargain, the context might have a big impact on whether the bargaining process will collapse to war. This is because “public” mobilization might have both a negative, deterrent goal, and a positive, compellence goal. Deterrence can come in two forms. The first is mobilization with the goal of deterring a negative action from a target. This is classic deterrence. However, a special sub-case is “armed neutrality”. In this case the mobilization of a state is in reaction to the onset of war in its neighborhood. In this case the goal is to deter war diffusion, rather than war onset.

*(This is where I lay forth the weakness of the past literature. In this case we have a classical example where new research strands are uncovered by “un-packing” a previously used concept into its constituent parts. A problem in this case is that I open the concept of “public” mobilization based on intentions, the very thing this field of study has an issue with observing. This means that the most crucial step in this paper is not the explanatory story, but a clear statement of persuasive empirical implications for the two different mobilization motives. This is the only way one can build the space for conducting large-n observational studies of different intentions. The explanatory story on the other hand would be more important in a study whose goal is to add a new concept, and more importantly to develop a new theory, which is essentially to explain the mechanisms by which one concept “causes” another concept. Because here I am more interested in observing a previously un-observable concept, the main explanatory task is to justify the connection between my observable variable, duration of mobilization, with the concept I seek to empirically grasp, motivation for mobilization.)*

<sup>12</sup> See Mackey, “Prewar Mobilization and the Termination of Interstate Wars”.

The other goal of “public” mobilization is compellence. In this case the goal is to engender a positive change of behavior from parties. There are two different types of mobilizations seeking compellence. In one case, the mobilizer seeks to compel the target to grant an issue position. In the other case, the goal is to compel third party actors to act in order to indirectly compel the target. From the perspective of rational choice, the two strategies do not differ. But the different mechanism of compellence in the two cases, direct and by proxy, has important theoretical implications about both the initiation of mobilization, and its failure. In the second case, very weak actors, that would normally not attempt direct compellence towards stronger actors, may attempt to trigger action by stronger third parties, which can then compel the relationally strong actor to accommodate the weak initiator of mobilization. This is “compellence via proxy”.

“Compellence via proxy” is an interesting case. If successful, it permits a weaker actor to compel a stronger actor, via the action of third parties that meet or exceed the strength of the stronger actor. It is also very risky, as the success or failure of the policy relies on the actions of third parties. Empirically the third parties have usually been major powers. The initiators of mobilization in this case have historically being minor powers seeking to compel a stronger minor power or other actor. Mobilization seeking to trigger “compellence via proxy” is the focus of this paper. I will briefly explore the logic that leads states to attempt it, and the conditions under which it is likely to be attempted. My main effort explores what happens when it fails. When the third parties refuse to act in the interest of the mobilizing state, and thus when it is left to face the target of the compellence demand, why are some such actors able to back down and avoid escalation to war, while others are unable?

### 3. The Logic and Pitfalls of Compellence via Proxy

The explanatory story begins with the assumption that states are made up of two political constituencies relevant to foreign policy decision making. The elites in government, who are the main decision makers, and the winning coalition which is the minimal proportion of the selectorate, those who can participate in the process by which elites in government are chosen, that the elites in government must have the support of, in order to maintain their position. Elites in government engage in international politics in reaction to demands from their winning coalition.<sup>13</sup>

The issues over which the winning coalition will demand action will vary according to the issue cycle.<sup>14</sup> But what does not vary is that the primary goal of the winning coalition is to satisfy its stakes on issues. The primary goal of the elites in government is to remain in power. Both constituencies are instrumentally rational. If the elites in government fail to pursue policies that satisfy the winning coalition, it will defect and thus lead to the collapse of the elites in government. Thus elites in government have an incentive to pursue the interest of the winning coalition up to the point where that pursuit does not endanger their ability to retain power.

*(The Issue paradigm of Vasquez and Mansbach, based on viewing world politics through the concept of issues, is one of the most under-utilized tools in the study of international*

<sup>13</sup> For the concepts see Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson and Morrow, *The Logic of Political Survival*. Only the winning coalition and elites in government are relevant in this analysis. We can thus ignore the selectorate. For the motivation for engagement in international politics see Braumoeller, *The Great Powers and the International System*.

<sup>14</sup> On the concept of the issue cycle see Richard W. Mansbach and John A. Vasquez, *In Search of Theory: A New Paradigm for Global Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981)

*relations. It places domestic politics squarely in the center of the causes of international behavior, without discounting how the international environment affects the life-cycle of issues. The only auxiliary theory to point for the paradigm is Steps to War by Senese and Vasquez, presented in a book published in 2008.<sup>15</sup> However the pre-theory is flexible enough to accommodate theories that were not developed within it. This is the case with Logic of Political Survival. The combination of the two can lead to a richer story of the rise and fall of issues and how these are tied to the interplay of domestic political constituencies and international factors.*

*The scholar should be open to exploring the potential links between a paradigm and theories developed outside the paradigm. Efforts to explore such links are possible paths to concilience, but must be done in a systemic manner not to lead to ad-hoc connections that undermine rigor.)*

Military coercion is one of the most powerful and problematic tools available to elites in government for pursuing their goals. The promise of military coercion is that in comparison to pacific tools, if it is successful it can minimize the size of the accommodation of the defeated that is necessary for resolving the issue in a satisfactory way. The danger is that it is costly and can lead to war. War is dangerous because the costs associated with it can endanger the goals of the elites in government, the winning coalition, or both. A military defeat may lead to government change. The war might harm the stakes of the winning coalition in important issues (for example destroying industry for industrial elites). Military coercion thus is a risky gamble for elites in government. They are more likely to take it when they are either confident that it will not lead to war, or when they are confident they can win any war that erupts.

*(Whenever you use the Rationalist Theory of War you have to answer the question of “why would governments engage in the gamble?” The rationalist answer--the trinity of commitment problems, private information, and issue indivisibilities--is a good abstract treatment but not satisfying. States go to war, and it is evident empirically that the march to war is not always just a gamble of the government, but a demand of domestic constituencies. Once we consider the role of constituencies it becomes easier to begin grasping empirical correlates that foster or dampen the rise of the three rationalist paths to war. In other words, it may be worth relaxing the simplicity of rationalist frameworks in order to be able to grasp them empirically. But this should never entail breaking the assumption of instrumental rationality.)*

From the above we can argue that it is very unlikely for the elites in the government of a state that is weaker in military capabilities compared to another state to try military coercion against that stronger state. This is because the stronger party will not take the military coercion as a serious threat, and because it can always threaten war to force an end to coercion activity. In the face of these potentialities the weak state has only two options. The first is to enact military coercion when the stronger state has been forced to expend its actualized and latent military capabilities against other threats. This creates a momentary window of parity, or advantage for the weaker state. The second is when the action of the weaker state can trigger action by third party actors who are stronger than the target of the weaker state, and who will then take action to compel the strong target to accommodate some of the demands of the weaker state. This is the essence of “compellence by proxy” and my focus.

<sup>15</sup> See Paul D. Senese and John A. Vasquez, *The Steps to War: An Empirical Study* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

*(In reality at this point of this exercise the focus is rather abstract. For example in the empirical section you will definitely see cases that do not fit perfectly the “compellence via proxy” concept. At an early stage when you are trying to nail down the empirical relevance of your ideas, some ambiguity is necessary in order to lead to a better final product. Being too precise at such an early stage might result in a variable that is so restricted as to be irrelevant, that is, being so rare as to be idiosyncratic. Because the study of international relations seeks to uncover regular behaviors in international politics, idiosyncratic events are not of interest. They are the proper venue of the study of history, or of current events. At the same time, precision must never be taken to the point where the resulting variables are essentially unique. A model that is too exact a replication of reality is reality, and thus not useful as a guide to reality. One can say that in the social sciences precision must be in the service of abstraction.)*

What kinds of states are more likely to react positively to such attempts to elicit “compellence via proxy”? These are probably regional or major powers. This is because these are the states more likely to have the willingness and opportunity to react to “compellence by proxy” attempts in a positive manner. They are strong enough to be able to coerce the stronger party in a dispute. If they also value stability in the region or are opposed to letting the weaker party pay the price for a failed “compellence by proxy” attempt, then they are able and willing to intervene. However, their capability advantage also makes them able to manage the consequences of a failure of the policy of the weak state. They could ignore the bait, let the weak state enter a dis-advantageous war due to failure of “compellence via proxy”, and then intervene after the war to determine the contours of the peace agreement. They can even let the weak state pay the full military price of its gamble. This is the central pitfall of a policy of “compellence via proxy” for the weak states. If the stronger third parties do not take the bait, then they are dangerously exposed to their target.

*(You will notice that here I do not define weak or strong. This is on purpose. At this point I am still wrestling with the concept. It would be easy to define weakness in terms of military capabilities, but a state might also be “weak” because non-material conditions greatly limit its ability to use power. The framework of opportunity and willingness for the engagement in military activity, developed by Siverson and Starr in 1990, indicates that “weakness” might reside in either element of the decision.<sup>16</sup>This is important, as material weakness is observable and measurable, but motivational weakness on average is not. This means that the concept of weakness one uses can have a crucial determination on the kind of variables that can be extracted, and in turn the kind of papers one can write on them. This is always the case with any concept that has both a material and ideational element. More precision is required, but for the time being I am focusing on the cases of mobilizations that led or did not lead to war, as opposed to the specific characteristics of the actors. Indeed it may be the case that this paper is doing too much, both looking at the failure of bargaining by mobilization, and trying to build a story of why such mobilization is more likely to fail.)*

This risk is especially acute when the weaker party is trying to use “compellence by proxy” to trigger intervention against its opponent by a major power that has important relations with both disputants. Because such a major power would lose in the political arena if its two allies fought, it would have incentives to intervene and avoid such a war result.

<sup>16</sup> Randolph M. Siverson and Harvey Starr, “Opportunity, Willingness, and the Diffusion of War,” *American Political Science Review* 84, no. 1 (1990): 47–67.

Nevertheless, being forced to choose among its allies or clients in a dispute could also hurt it, by leading one of the two to potentially defect. The competing incentives can lead to unwillingness to intervene until it is too late and war has erupted. The major power may also hope that by staying aloof it will force the weaker ally/client to back down without the need to lose political capital by intervening. It might also wish to “teach” the weaker power a lesson by permitting it to be defeated and then intervening to modify the result of combat in order to strengthen its position with both clients.

Intervening or not intervening is a risky policy for the major power. During the crisis that led to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Balkan War, the Russian decision makers fully understood why their state would be a target of an attempt by Bulgaria and Serbia to trigger “compellence via proxy” against each other. Fearing that if they intervened, they would lose one of the two allies, Russia stood aloof. The result was war and the defeat of Bulgaria. The Russians did intervene after the war to seek to shore up their weakened position vis-à-vis their defeated client, but ultimately failed to do so, losing Bulgaria to the Central Powers.

The above discussion indicates that gambling on “compellence via proxy” is a very risky gamble for a weak state, even when the potential intervener has both the opportunity and willingness to intervene. Considering this, when such a policy fails, why are some of the decision makers able to back down and avoid the escalation to war, while others fail? This then is the central question. We can conceptualize “compellence via proxy” as the specific instance of a more general phenomenon of bargaining by mobilization.

*(Our question is partly theoretical--who will and why will they engage in “compellence via proxy”, and partly empirical--why it fails. A better project would have three papers--one focusing on the conditions that lead states to attempt “compellence via proxy”, one focusing on why it fails or not, and one on why do some states avoid the cost of failure (war), while others do not. When you broach a new topic it is quite natural that a lot of ideas will co-habit the early manuscripts. That is fine as long as you use it as a tool to lay out the future project, and as long as you have the resources (in time, interest, and co-authors) to pursue the different strands. Trying to answer all of them in one paper is a recipe for failure. But at this point putting them down and seeing how they interplay is worthwhile.)*

A policy of “compellence via proxy” requires increasing the probability of war so as to alert potential interveners to the need to consider action to avoid war. The most powerful non-war signal that can be sent is the “public” declaration of partial or full mobilization. The heavy economic and social cost of mobilization is a powerful signal of intentions. Furthermore it is likely to trigger military action by the target state. The elites in government that begin this process are likely aware that they will probably lose a war if it happens. But they bet that there will probably be intervention that will avert the war and permit them to satisfy some of the stakes of their winning coalition in the dispute. However, mobilization has another domestic consequence. Its hand-tying feature greatly increases the political cost of backing down. There are many reasons for this.

First, the economic loss suffered by the society and potentially members of the winning coalition will increase the stake of the winning coalition in a resolution of the dispute that helps recoup their losses due to mobilization. Thus the winning coalition is unlikely to permit accommodations that do not recoup its losses. More importantly the preparation for war associated with mobilization will strengthen the political position of domestic

hardliners committed to escalating the crisis to war.<sup>17</sup> As a result, avoiding war after a failed “compellence by proxy” attempt can be as costly as losing the war for elites in government. Either option can lead to their fall from government.

Caught in this bind most governments would probably choose escalation and war. This is because the threat of overthrow due to action by the winning coalition is always greater than the threat from war, simply because war is the realm of chance.<sup>18</sup> The weak state has a non-zero probability of winning the war. Intervention might follow the onset of war and shore up defeated elites in government. Thus as long as the chance of being overthrown by a winning coalition that is dissatisfied due to accommodation after a failed attempt at “compellence via proxy,” is higher than the chance of overthrow due to war, war will be the rational choice. But if that is not the case, if somehow the chance of overthrow by an angry winning coalition can be reduced below that of war, then diplomatic retreat will be the rational choice.

*(War has its own logic. More importantly war will create its own constituency that will drive for war. This is something that many of us forget. We assume a linear relationship between government decision and outcome. However, the reality is that war is a dynamic phenomenon and even just the preparation for it can have massive consequences on domestic politics that make it harder for governments to change course. This is something Vasquez and Senese point out in Steps to War, but are not able to empirically evaluate since that would require data on the balance of hardliners and accommodationists in government and how that balance changes due to decisions made by governments. Large-n Data collection for such a project would be a monumental task, but could greatly enhance our study of war and peace.)*

The main determinant of the risk posed by a dissatisfied winning coalition to the elites in government is the ability of the elites in government to overhaul their winning coalition.<sup>19</sup> Overhauling the winning coalition is the process by which elites in government can change the composition and size of their winning coalition in order to manage dissatisfaction. It can be done by non-violent means, like Gorbachev’s overhaul of the Soviet winning coalition in preparation of Perestroika. But it can also be violent, like the Stalinist purges. The important thing here is that elites in government that can overhaul their winning coalitions can reduce the risks associated with accommodation policies after a failed “compellence by proxy” attempt. And this threat could potentially be brought below the threat level posed by a disadvantageous war. When this is the case, in the face of a failed “compellence via proxy” policy, elites in government are more likely to seek to avoid war.

Overhauling the winning coalition is a factor conditioned primarily by the size of the winning coalition. Very small winning coalitions or very big ones are more easily overhauled. Small coalitions can be overhauled quickly, narrowing any window of opportunity for resistance. And, smaller coalitions are likely dependent on the elites in government for their social status, making rebellion risky. Large winning coalitions, like those of democratic states, suffer from high coordination costs, making it hard for a unified opposition to form.

<sup>17</sup> Bargaining via Mobilization can be seen as a “Realist” cultural practice that advances states on the Steps to War. For the argument and empirical evaluation of the Steps to War see Paul D. Senese and John A. Vasquez, *The Steps to War: An Empirical Study* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

<sup>18</sup> As Clausewitz argued, due to friction the result of a war can never be pre-determined. Which means even the weaker actor can always gamble on a non-zero chance of victory. See Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976)

<sup>19</sup> Braumoeller introduces the concept to the study of international relations; see Braumoeller, *The Great Powers and the International System: Systemic Theory in Empirical Perspective*.

Furthermore the large size of the coalition makes it easier for the elites in government to make targeted overhauls without endangering their overall social support. “Logrolled Coalitions” are the hardest to overhaul.<sup>20</sup> Such systems are medium in size – small enough to facilitate resistance coordination, but too big to be easily overhauled. In this case attempts to overhaul the coalition might trigger a political crisis and lead to violent resistance. The coalition is big enough that the resistance can be dangerous to the elites in government, but too small to permit the isolation of recalcitrant members. Thus the ability of the elites in government to overhaul their winning coalitions, primarily determined by size, is the main independent variable that determines whether states in the face of failed “compellence via proxy” politics will be able to back down and avoid war or not.

*(Here I would like to make a didactic point. We scholars sometimes forget that governments have some ability to choose who they “govern”. This ability greatly increases the freedom of choice of a government in international politics. We tend to assume domestic politics as either an inhibiting or fostering condition on international outcomes, but one largely free from the manipulation of decision makers. But that is not the case. Decision makers vary in how tied their hands are by domestic groups. Any research design that posits an important role for domestic politics on the international outcomes of the decisions of decision makers, without controlling for their ability to manage their dependence on those domestic factors, is by default making certain assumptions that might not be wise empirically. Ergo, why in this paper the ability of decision makers to overhaul the winning coalition is the most important domestic factor, as it largely determines how restricted or not domestic factors are on decision makers.*

*My first introduction to this idea was via Bear Braumoeller’s 2012 book “The Great Powers and the International System. This was after my graduate studies.)*

From the above discussion I extract the following hypothesis:

H1: A curvilinear relation exists between the size of a winning coalition of a state and whether its “public” military mobilization will experience war onset. Very large and very small winning coalitions will have a negative impact on the probability of onset. Mid-sized coalitions will have a positive impact.

*(Curvilinear associations are common in international relations, but also very difficult to deal with in empirical models. Here I decided to go for a basic cross-tabulation as a first “stab” at the data. There are methods for working with them, but sometimes the data one has is not adequate to get the most out of them. This is not the case with cross-tabulations. The primary reason why curvilinear associations are problematic is because most linear models assume a linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Cross-tabulations, as well as graphical displays are free from such necessary parametric assumptions. There are large-n regression tools that can accommodate curvilinear associations, like Spearman Rank Correlation and polynomial regression, but there are beyond the scope of this paper. An added issue is that the low number of observations generated by mobilization in interaction with the curvilinear association, make most regression models a risk due to instability that comes from insufficient observations. Remember, in general you should have at least 100 observations, preferably more, before running a regression.*

*For a general review of statistical techniques of the social sciences, and the advantages of*

<sup>20</sup> The concept is introduced and analyzed in Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and Strategic Ideology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 17.

*cross-tabulations, a useful guide is Joseph F. Healey, Statistics: A Tool for Social Research. (Cengage Learning, 2014). Cross-tabulations were among the first statistic tools I was introduced to in my MA studies. But it took the PhD, and my work after to fully grasp their importance.)*

#### 4. Research Design

I will evaluate the empirical persuasiveness of Hypothesis 1 by two methods. One is a basic large-n study using mobilization data compiled from secondary sources. The other is a series of comparative case studies of mobilizations by Greece and Serbia in the 1878-1909 period. For the large-n study I will cross-tabulate the size of the winning coalitions of the states of interest with the outcome of their attempts to trigger “compellence via proxy” by partial or full mobilization. The data for winning coalition size comes from the Bueno De Mesquita Winning Coalition Dataset 1816-1999.<sup>21</sup> I evaluate the likelihood that any relationship was due to random chance by using the chi-square test of statistical significance.<sup>22</sup> This should not be seen as a full statistical exploration of the data, but instead as a first “stab” at it.

#### 5. Compiling Mobilization Data

One of the challenges of research on the influence of mobilization on interstate politics is the lack of data on mobilizations. The only dataset with some basic information on mobilization occurrence is the Interstate Crisis Behavior (ICB) dataset. The MID dataset of the Correlates of War (COW) project also notes mobilization as a hostility action. Neither dataset provides information on whether the mobilization was partial or full, whether it was “public” or “private”, its duration, and whether it was part of the initiation of the use of force. There is no data on whether a war or MID level use of force was preceded by mobilization.

Additionally, there is ambiguity about what actions count as mobilization. For mobilization to play the role it does in the rationalist theory of war, it has to be costly. But military preparations can take many forms. They can start from putting on alert specific forces, putting on alert the whole army, up to inducting large numbers of the civilian population and infrastructure into the military. Increases in military preparedness simply do not have the economic and social cost of the induction of large numbers of civilians into the military. The last activity is extremely resented by the civilian population, while putting troops on alert is still an intra-military activity that will probably not substantially affect civilians. Consequently the sunk costs and the hand-tying effect of partial or full mobilization, defined as the induction of civilians and the civilian infrastructure into military control, are very different and much more severe than those of putting troops on alert.

*(When you are compiling data, always prefer to write down more rather than less information. Always! Even if that information might not be immediately useful for your research, it will be useful for future researchers. Also, always build a small narrative for your cases. However time consuming it is, even jotting down four-five lines, this can be an extremely important piece of information for researchers.)*

This is something decision makers understand well as the following example of a letter written by Greek Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos in 1934 testifies “...*He knew* (speaking

<sup>21</sup> See footnote 3 for citation information.

<sup>22</sup> The use of statistical significance tests has its critics. See for example Timothy R. Levine, Rene Weber, Craig Hullett, Hee Sun Park, and Lisa L. Massi Lindsey, “A Critical Assessment of Null Hypothesis Significance Testing in Quantitative Communication Research,” *Human Communication Research* 34, no. 2 (2008): 171–87.

of King Constantine I of Greece) *how detested in all conditions is a general mobilization, which detaches from families and work citizens, and which thus and with the associated regulations and rules, deeply shakes and obstructs the normal economic and social life of a country*".<sup>23</sup> Only full or partial mobilization incurs the sunk costs and hand tying effects that the rationalist theory of war has considered important. Consequently, I only focus on such mobilizations for this paper. Another characteristic of this type of mobilization is that it is very hard to conduct it as "private". The disruption of civilian life will be a big indicator that something is going on, though a potential target may still not be sure about the objective.

The lack of detailed mobilization data forced the two prior projects that used large-*n* evaluations to evaluate the influence of mobilization in crises, to base their variables on readings of the sources used for coding the initial crisis events.<sup>24</sup> Since the MID dataset does not have narratives and specific sources per case, both Lai and Mackey relied on the ICB case narratives for their variables. For this paper I relied on ICB case narratives to compile mobilizations in crises, either as trigger conditions or as reactions.<sup>25</sup> I used the MID dataset to locate mobilization cases that did not lead to war (via the highest hostile act variable), and then used the COW war data, and the Sarkees and Wayman narratives, and secondary literature to locate cases of mobilization that took place in the lead up to wars.<sup>26</sup>

*(The goal of a good large-*n* dataset is that the researcher does not need to do any extra research. The dataset is complete and reliable enough that it in itself is an authority. If that is not the case, and one must make subjective judgements based on secondary sources, then some of the benefits of large-*n* study are negated. For example, the fact that the information on mobilization inherent in the available data is ambiguous leads to the necessity of subjective calls about events and their conceptualization. This undermines the authoritative stature of the data-set as a source. Thus researchers using existing datasets to extract mobilization data will have to justify decisions of how variables were created, as opposed to simply justifying the use of the data-set. This is unavoidable during the development of a research project.)*

In general, mobilization is rare in international relations. It requires a certain level of bureaucratic and infrastructure development that most states in the history of the modern interstate system (1816 - present) have lacked. It is also a very costly measure that many states simply cannot afford. Finally, in many cases of war, states have chosen not to mobilize. A limited war might be less costly than a war of full mobilization. Thus many states might even eschew mobilization in the case of war. To compile a list, and due to the lack of adequate resources for a full dataset, I took all the cases of mobilization that did not lead to war in Crises and MIDs, and added a random sample of 133 war cases from COW in order to get cases where mobilizations led to war or happened due to war. There are 73 cases of mobilizations that did not lead to war, nine cases of Crisis mobilizations that led to war, 49 war cases in which mobilization happened after the war onset or on onset (and thus of no

<sup>23</sup> From Eleftherios Venizelos, "Yiati o Vasilef diatirei tin Epistrateusi?" [Why does the King maintain the mobilization?] 1934 Article in *Eleuthero Vima*. In Greek reproduces in *H Hestoria tou Ethnikou Dihasmou kata tin arthografia tou Eleftheriou Venizelou kai Ioannou Metaxa* [The History of the National Schism via the articles written by Eleftherios Venizelos and Ioannis Metaxas] (Athens: Kyromanos Editions, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> See Lai, "The Effects of Different Types of Military Mobilization on the Outcome of International Crises," and Mackey, "Prewar Mobilization and the Termination of Interstate Wars".

<sup>25</sup> The ICB summaries are at Jonathan Wilkenfeld, Michael Brecher, Joseph Hewitt, Kyle Beardsley, and Pelin Eralp, "ICB Data Viewer," ICB Project, accessed December 11, 2017, <http://www.icb.umd.edu/dataviewer/>.

<sup>26</sup> For COW war data and narratives see Meredith Reid Sarkees and Frank Wayman, *Resort to War: 1816 – 2007* (Washington DC: CQ Press, 2010). For the MID data see Glenn Palmer, Vito D'Orazio, Michael Kenwick, and Matthew Lane, "The MID4 Data Set: Procedures, Coding Rules, and Description," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 32, no. 2 (2015): 222–42.

interest to this paper), and 41 cases where mobilization happened between 1 and 365 days or more before war onset.

*(Combining my selected sample with a random sample dampens some of the selection bias inherent if choosing cases. I had to do that due to the lack of resources for a full exploration of every case of Crisis or MID.)*

Of the 64 cases of mobilization that did not lead to war, 10 were mobilizations in reaction to ongoing wars. In this case a state mobilizes its armies in reaction to the onset of a war between two other states. These cases are characterized by motivation ambiguity. Mobilization might be an attempt to gain a bargaining advantage against the war opponents. The Greek mobilization of 1878 in the midst of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878 is an example of this. But it can also be part of a policy of “armed neutrality”. The Dutch mobilization at the onset of World War II is an example of this. But discerning which of the two motives underpin the behavior is not an easy task. While both are a form of bargaining, here we are interested in bargains that seek positive goals, not negative goals like deterrence. At this point it is safer to exclude such mobilizations from our analysis, though the cases are not so many that a future project cannot focus on them. Thus we have 54 cases where mobilization did not lead to war and could be considered as part of a bargaining strategy.

For the 41 cases where mobilization happened before war onset, the range in duration of days is very large (to be exact at least 364 days). The issue is finding a persuasive point after which we can argue that the mobilization was part of a bargaining strategy instead of a war-preparation measure. This can be tricky, because it is a matter of “diplomatic” time. This is the minimum “time” required for a state to a) become aware of the mobilization signal, and b) decide how to react. Changes in technology have greatly affected “diplomatic” time. A process that would require days if not weeks in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century might be resolvable in hours in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus “diplomatic” time is a bit contingent on the technological era. One way to get benchmarks is to compare the duration of the period between mobilization and war for each case, to an average of such durations for similar wars, and then group cases according to the available technology. This is doable.

Fourteen cases were in the 1930-1950 period, when telephone and radio communications predominated. Two cases were in the 1960s-1970s period when more advanced communications methods were available. Fifteen cases were in the 1900-1930 period when wired telegraph and early wireless technology predominated. Two cases were in the 1890s period when the wired telegraph and optic telegraph were the main tools. Finally, seven cases were in the 1816-1880 period, when written and optic telegraph communications predominated.

In the 1930-1950 period the average duration between mobilization and war was 116 days. Eight cases are significantly under this average, and thus can be argued to likely be cases of war-preparation rather than bargaining. The other six cases are sufficiently long to open the possibility that they were primarily bargaining moves that went wrong. Of those six though, four can be safely considered as part of “armed neutrality” policies (Norway, Greece, Netherland and Belgium in World War II). That only leaves the case of the US mobilization before its participation in World War II, and the Italian mobilization before its invasion of Ethiopia (both of which started at least a year before onset).

*(Quite obviously the US and Italy cases do not fit well the “compellence via proxy” concept. The Italian case might work more because one could see Italy’s long mobilization*

*as an attempt to force the League of Nations powers to apply pressure to Ethiopia for accommodation. In this case Italian “weakness” would come from issues having to do with domestic politics, or the fear of League reaction. The US case is harder to justify. I include it only because of the paucity of data. Keep in mind that it is better to have some cases that are bad fits than to have to make too many unique exclusions in your research design. The reason again is to avoid such a restrictive set of inclusion criteria that you end up with a list of idiosyncratic cases, from which no useful social-scientific findings can be extracted.)*

During the 1960s-1970s cases, Syria and Egypt mobilized at least seven days before the onset of the Yom Kippur war, and El Salvador mobilized 20 days before the onset of the Football War. We can safely exclude the Yom Kippur case, since it has been explored by other scholars and is the archetypical example of “private” mobilization (i.e one that by default seeks military advantage in war, rather than bargaining advantages). The El Salvador case has a sufficient duration of mobilization to onset that it could be treated as a case of “public” mobilization.

In the 1900-1930 period the average duration of mobilization to onset was 15 days. Seven of 15 cases fall well below the threshold and can be argued to be war preparation cases. The other eight cases are long enough to have provided time for bargaining. In the 1890s the two mobilization cases both saw rather long mobilization to war periods. In the First Sino-Japanese War, Japan mobilized 25 days before war onset. In the Greek-Ottoman War of 1897 both sides mobilized at 58 and 56 days before onset. In both cases there is sufficient time for bargaining, and thus both can be argued to be possible cases of mobilization with a bargaining objective.

In the 1816-1880s period the average duration of mobilization to onset period was 82 days. This is heavily skewed by the mobilization of the Mexican army at least one year before the onset of the Mexican-United States of America war. All the other cases are from the Wars of German and Italian Unification in the 1859-1866 period. If we only look at those cases, the average is 33. With that second average there are two cases where the duration is long enough as to permit time for us to argue these were bargaining moves. The first is the Piedmontese mobilization of 1859. This is an interesting case. The Piedmontese government sought to bait Austria to declare war so as to justify a French intervention in the war on its side. This fits the “compellence via proxy” concept, but is an extreme form in which the gambler knows the game is rigged in their favor. Still it was risky in the sense that the French government could always have defected. The other case is the Austrian mobilization, 49 days before the onset of the 1866 Austro-Prussian War. This is also a possible case of bargaining by mobilization. The Prussian mobilization was also 39 days before the war, but we know that the government was committed to fighting. Thus of the seven cases of this period, only three can be considered as possible cases of mobilization for bargaining.

Our data thus is made up of 54 cases where mobilization could have been done for bargaining purposes and did not lead to war and 16 cases where mobilization could have been done for bargaining purposes and led to war. Since two cases were duplicates in the ICB and MID datasets, the duplicates were excluded, leading to a total of 68 cases. If the mobilization led to war, I code the variable as a 1. If it did not, I code it as zero. Thus we have 16 cases of 1 and 54 cases of 0. This is the dependent variable of the analysis.

## 6. Large-N Analysis

The findings of the large-n analysis are presented in Table 1 and Table 2. In Table 1, I use as the independent variable the size of the winning coalition in the year before the end year of the crisis, or last year of the MID, or the year of war-onset, i.e a lagged variable. In Table 2, I use as the independent variable the size of the winning coalition during the end year of the crisis, or last year of the MID, or the year of war-onset. In both cases the variables do not indicate a statistically significant association. On the other hand I do find elements of a curvilinear relationship between the size of the winning coalition and mobilization being accompanied by war. This is more evident in Table 2 than in Table 1. The Bueno De Mesquita *et al* variable ranges from 0 to 1, indicating how much of the population is part of the selectorate (there are five levels: 0/0.25/0.5/0.75/1). When you look at the row totals under the frequencies when the war variable is 1, one can see the following.

*(Brian Gaines, who taught us statistics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, always lauded the humble cross-tabulation as a statistical tool. They are the most forgiving of the methods available-in the sense that fewer of their perquisite assumptions are violated by the reality of social phenomena. They are simple to use, and they are accompanied by a good set of statistical significance tests. It is a wise move to always begin the evaluation of large-n data with a series of cross-tabulation tests, as they tend to catch some basic problems)*

In Table 1, the highest percentages of war onset are in the middle ranges of Winning Coalition size (0.25 and 0.5), which are more likely to be associated with “logrolling coalitions” and thus harder to overhaul. The percentage of war onset increases again at the full democracy tail (Winning Coalition value of 1), though not to a level higher than that present in the mid-range Winning Coalition sizes. In Table 2 this curvilinear relationship is clearer. Again, winning coalitions that fall within mid-range sizes have the largest share of war onsets.

The main culprit for the lack of statistical significance is the fact that in both Table 1 and Table 2, the row percentages for frequencies of mobilizations that did not lead to war are very similar to those that led to war. It should be noted that it is the case that in the mid-range sized Winning Coalition cases the no-war percentages are slightly lesser than the war percentages, and thus we have a frequency distribution that is in agreement with the explanatory story. However, the difference is slight and probably why it did not reach statistical significance. Future research, using more sensitive statistical models might be able to clarify whether we are missing something from the cross-tabulation evaluation. But at this point H1 has been falsified by the data.

Table 1- Cross-Tabulations of Winning Coalition Size and War Onset, Lagged Version

Winning Coalition Size =	0	0.25	0.5	0.75	1	Row Total
<b>No War Onset</b>	<b>2 (0.0)</b>	<b>20 (0.0)</b>	<b>13 (0.0)</b>	<b>10 (0.3)</b>	<b>7 (0.1)</b>	<b>52 (0.4)</b>
Row Percentage	3.85	38.46	25.00	19.23	13.46	100
Column Percentage	66.67	74.07	76.47	90.91	70.00	76.47
<b>War Onset</b>	<b>1 (0.1)</b>	<b>7(0.1)</b>	<b>4(0.0)</b>	<b>1(1.0)</b>	<b>3 (0.2)</b>	<b>16 (1.3)</b>
Row Percentage	6.25	43.75	25.00	6.25	18.75	100
Column Percentage	33.33	25.93	23.53	9.09	30.00	23.53
<b>Column Total</b>	<b>3 (0.2)</b>	<b>27 (0.1)</b>	<b>11(0.0)</b>	<b>17(1.3)</b>	<b>10(0.2)</b>	<b>68(1.8)</b>
Row Percentage	4.41	39.71	25.00	16.18	14.71	100
Column Percentage	100	100	100	100	100	100

Pearson  $\chi^2(4) = 1.7536$  Pr = 0.781. In parentheses is the chi-square distribution of each frequency.

Table 2- Cross-Tabulations of Winning Coalition Size and War Onset

Winning Coalition Size =	0	0.25	0.5	0.75	1	Row Total
<b>Now War Onset</b>	<b>2 (0.4)</b>	<b>18 (0.0)</b>	<b>12 (0.0)</b>	<b>13 (0.2)</b>	<b>7 (0.0)</b>	<b>52 (0.6)</b>
Row Percentage	3.85	34.62	23.08	25.00	13.46	100
Column Percentage	50.00	75.00	75.00	86.67	77.78	76.47
<b>War Onset</b>	<b>2 (1.2)</b>	<b>6 (0.0)</b>	<b>4 (0.0)</b>	<b>2 (0.7)</b>	<b>2 (0.0)</b>	<b>16 (1.9)</b>
Row Percentage	12.50	37.50	25.00	12.50	12.50	100
Column Percentage	50.00	25.00	25.00	13.33	22.22	23.53
<b>Column Total</b>	<b>4 (1.6)</b>	<b>24 (0.0)</b>	<b>16 (0.0)</b>	<b>15 (0.9)</b>	<b>9 (0.0)</b>	<b>68 (2.5)</b>
Row Percentage	5.88	35.29	23.53	22.06	13.24	100
Column Percentage	100	100	100	100	100	100

Pearson  $\chi^2(4) = 2.4810$  Pr = 0.648. In parentheses is the chi-square distribution of each frequency.

## 7. The Balkan Mobilizations 1878-1909

To supplement the large-n study I explore a number of case studies. The cases focus on the Serbian and Greek mobilizations of 1885 in reaction to the Eastern Rumelia Crisis; the Serbian mobilization of 1908/9 in reaction to the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the declaration of independence by the Principality (Tsardom) of Bulgaria; the Greek mobilization and invasion of Domokos on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1878 in reaction to the imminent end of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878; the Greek mobilization of 1880/1 in reaction to the refusal of the Ottoman Empire to cede the Thessalian territories awarded to Greece with the Treaty of Berlin; and the Greek mobilization of 1897 in reaction to the Cretan Revolt of 1896-1897.

*(The qualitative analysis I will do here is not a deep case study. Instead I will use the cases to a) see if they corroborate the findings of the large-n analysis; b) provide examples of how the dynamics of the explanatory story play out or not in concrete cases; and c) look for elements missed by the large-n study. A deep case study, would preferably compare two of the cases on a critical test, and use process tracing and primary sources to tell us a story. However the cases I focus on are not well supported by documentary evidence, especially in English, precluding thus a deep case study. A introduction to case studies is John Gerring, "What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for?" American Political Science Review, 98, no. 2 (2004): 341–54).*

The six mobilizations had very different results. The Serbian 1885 mobilization and Greek 1897 mobilization led to defeat in disadvantageous wars. The Greek mobilization of 1878 fizzled without leading to war, as Greece failed to trigger “compellence via proxy”, and was forced to back down by the Great Powers before war erupted with the Ottoman Empire. The long term result was diplomatic gains in the Treaty of Berlin, but in the immediate aftermath Greek interests were absent from the Treaty of San Stefano (Ayastefano). This was also the case of the Greek mobilization of 1885, which triggered a naval blockade of Greece by the Great Powers. The Serbian mobilization of 1908/9 also fizzled but Serbia was also able to avoid war with Austria-Hungary or Bulgaria. It did not attain any immediate diplomatic gains. The Greek mobilization of 1880/1 was highly successful as war was avoided and the Great Powers forced the Ottoman Empire to proceed with the cessation of Thessaly to Greece. This is a good example of “compellence via proxy”. Table 3 summarizes the information on each case.

Table 3- Summary of Cases

Case	Decision Makers (sov=sovereign, PM: Prime Minister(s))	Full or Partial Mob.	Target	Compellence via Proxy targets	War?	Period between Mobilization Start and onset of War	If no war, duration of Crisis or MID	If no war, diplomatic gains?
Greece 1878	George I (sov)/ Alexandros Koumoundouros (PM)	Full	Ottoman Empire	Great Powers	No	N/A	7 days (21/1/1878-28/1/1878) <sup>27</sup>	No
Greece 1880/1	George I(sov)/ Charilaos Trikoupis 1880, Alexandros Koumoundouros 1881 (PMs)	Full	Ottoman Empire	Great Powers	No	N/A	219 days (16/6/1880 to 25/2/1881) <sup>28</sup>	Yes
Serbia 1885	Milan I(sov)/ Milutin Garašanin(PM)	Partial	Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria	Great Powers	Yes	54 Days <sup>29</sup>	N/A	N/A
Greece 1885	George I (sov)/ Theodoros Deligiannis (PM)	Full	Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria	Great Powers	No	N/A	148 days 14/12/1885-12/5/1886 <sup>30</sup>	No
Greece 1897	George I(sov)/ Theodoros Deligiannis (PM)	Full	Ottoman Empire	Great Powers	Yes	58 Days <sup>31</sup>	N/A	N/A
Serbia 1908/9	Peter I (sov)/Petar Velimirović 1908, Stojan Novaković 1909	Full	Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria	Great Powers	No	N/A	174 days (7/10/1908 31/3/1909)	No

(As much as possible try to summarize qualitative information in visual ways. This includes tables and graphs.)

Can we consider these cases as attempts at “compellence via proxy”? The requirement for this is that the mobilizers have to be “weak” compared to their intended targets, and that there must be strong actors available that have both the opportunity and willingness to react

<sup>27</sup> See Greek General Staff-Army History Directorate, *I historia tis organosis tou Hellinikou Stratou 1821–1954* [History of the organisation of the Greek Army 1821–1954 (Athens: Army History Directorate Publications, 1957 reprinted 2005), 1–43, 72–6.

<sup>28</sup> COW MID information.

<sup>29</sup> See Colonel Regenspursly, *The Serbo-Bulgarian War of 1885-Combat at Slivnitsa* (Ohio: The Nafziger Collection, 1897, translated and polished in English 2007), 17.

<sup>30</sup> See Greek General Staff–Army History Directorate, *O Ellino–Tourkikos polemos tou 1897* [The Greek–Turkish War of 1897] (Athens: Army History Directorate Publications, 1993), 7, 11; and German Staff Officer, *Modern Warfare as Illustrated by the Greek–Turkish War* (London: Swan Sonnenschein Publications, 1900), 16–9.

<sup>31</sup> See Greek General Staff–Army History Directorate, *The Greek–Turkish War*, 84–85

to the crisis and try to impose a pacific solution that might accommodate the mobilizers. The second element is satisfied in the period by the presence of multiple European Great Powers that had expressed an interest in the resolution of issues in the Balkans and had past records of intervention. Indeed, Serbia and Greece had been past beneficiaries and targets of such interventions. Serbia had a great power patron in Austria-Hungary in the 1885 period, and Russia in the 1908/9 period. Greece was a ward of the Great Powers, with Russia, France and the UK having outsized political power, and with recent cases of the two naval powers imposing their will on Greece (1854, 1866), but also accommodating its interests (1868, 1881). Thus both states were not irrational in expecting that “compellence by proxy” could work. At the very least their targets, especially the Ottoman Empire, were states of great interest to the major powers, who had fought against them (Russia against the Ottoman Empire), for them (the UK, France, Russia for the Ottoman Empire, Russia for Bulgaria), or over them. The “Great Game” assured an audience for “compellence via proxy” and the 1878 Treaty of Berlin provided the legal framework for justifying such intervention.

What about “weakness”? Table 4 summarizes the distribution of military capabilities (in manpower) between mobilizers and their targets. In the Greece 1878 case, Greece can be considered a “weak” actor compared to the Ottoman Empire. While it is true that the Ottomans were reeling from the blows of the Russian Army in the 1877-1878 war, the Greek army was rather small compared to the forces available to the Ottomans by 28<sup>th</sup> January 1878. Furthermore, the imminent Russian armistice meant that additional troops would be able to confront the Greek invasion. Thus the Greek gamble was predicated on being able to get the Russians (still at war with the Ottoman Empire) or other Great Powers to accept a fait accompli, before the Ottomans were able to react. They failed, as the Russians ignored the Greeks, and the other Great Powers were interested in shoring up the Ottoman Empire after its defeat and thus refused to support Greece. The Ottomans were able to credibly threaten war on Greece once peace was made with the Russians. In 1880/1, 1885 and 1897 Greece was considerably weaker than the Ottoman Empire. Indeed in 1897 the Ottomans fought with a partial mobilization. Consequently Greece acted from a position of “weakness”.<sup>32</sup>

Table 4- The Distribution of Military Capabilities in the Cases

Case	Mobilizer Manpower	Target Manpower
Greece 1878 <sup>33</sup>	25000	40000-55000
Greece 1880/1	83000	151000-251000
Serbia 1885 <sup>34</sup>	32000	Bulgaria 92000 Ottoman E. 95000-200000 <sup>35</sup>
Greece 1885 <sup>36</sup>	83000	151000-251000
Greece 1897	90000	435000
Serbia 1908/9	30000	Austria-Hungary 314000 Bulgaria 59000

<sup>32</sup> A comparison of Greek and Bulgarian forces in 1885 is not useful for the simple reason that absent Ottoman permission the Greek army could not reach Bulgaria to fight it.

<sup>33</sup> On the condition of the Ottoman army and numbers see Quintin Barry, *War in the East: A Military History of the Russo-Turkish War 1877-78* (Wokingham: Helion and Company, 2012).

<sup>34</sup> 67000 were the field armies. See Regenspursky, *The Serbo-Bulgarian War*, 18. For Serbian and Bulgarian numbers see the same, pages 12, 18.

<sup>35</sup> On Ottoman numbers see Regenspursky, *The Serbo-Bulgarian War*, 8 and 16.

<sup>36</sup> On troops numbers in 1885 and 1897 see Pantelis Karykas, *Hellinikos Stratos 1821-1922* [Greek Army 1821-1922] (Athens: Epikoinonies, 2001), 38-45; German Staff Officer, *Modern Warfare*, 67, 111-17; Greek General Staff-Army History Directorate, *The Greek-Turkish War*, 69-75, 76-97.

In 1885 Serbia would not seem a weaker actor against Bulgaria. On paper the Serbian army in full mobilization could number 135,000 men. This force dwarfed the combined armies of the two Bulgarian principalities. However two conditions severely weakened Serbia. Serbian mobilization could trigger a war with the Ottoman Empire, the suzerain of the Bulgarian principalities, which could mobilize a much larger army than Serbia, and had standing forces that in combination with the vassal armies of the Bulgarian Principalities would outstrip a fully mobilized Serbian army. More crucially King Milan I of Serbia decided to go for a partial rather than full mobilization, thus only putting to the field 32,000 men.<sup>37</sup> The decision was a political one and this rendered the Serbians a “weak” party. In 1909 both Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria had standing armies that were more numerous than that of Serbia. Both could also mobilize more troops than Serbia as evidenced by mobilizations in 1912-1913. Thus in 1908-1909 Serbia was a “weak” actor.

*(It may seem interesting that I did not choose the cases with a thought to whether they fit the concept of “weakness”. Rather, I chose them to fit the concept of availability of third party potential interveners. You should choose case studies based on the independent variable or conditions most likely to see the rise of the relationship you expect. But never choose them on the dependent variable, the outcome. If you chose cases on the dependent variable you are essentially selecting those cases where the outcome was present or absent, which raises issues of selection bias. This means that any relationship you found could have been the result not of the independent variable but other variables associated with the presence or absence of the dependent variable, which you have missed, due to choosing based on the presence or absence of the dependent variable. Choosing cases based on other variables or the independent variable is less likely to suffer from selection. Actually preferably you should choose them by random lot. However this can be hard when information is not equally available for all possible cases.)*

We can thus argue that, more or less, all six cases fit the concept of “compellence via proxy”. This is corroborated by the long duration of the period between mobilization and war for the cases where war happened, and the long duration of the crises that did not lead to war (with the exception of the 1878 Greek case, where demobilization was almost immediate). The long periods were the results of waiting for great power intervention. In many cases the diplomatic character of the mobilizations was explicit. King Milan of Serbia, in the 1885 case, in his 1<sup>st</sup> October 1885 “speech from the throne” expressed his willingness to accept the union of the Bulgarian principalities if Serbia was compensated territorially. Milan’s unwillingness to mobilize fully for war, a move that would antagonize the Ottomans, and his rescinding of the 27<sup>th</sup> October 1885 order to cross the frontier due to the November Constantinople Conference, are two indicators of this attitude. Further supporting is the fact that he only declared war and invaded after the Great Powers in the Constantinople Conference refused to accommodate Serbian interests.<sup>38</sup>

In 1909 the Serbians again demanded compensation.<sup>39</sup> Once more the mobilization was explicitly part of a bargaining strategy that simply failed to work in the face of German support for Austria, and the unwillingness of Russia to fight a war for Serbia without the

<sup>37</sup> See Regenspursky, *The Serbo-Bulgarian War*, 11–12, 14. The causes of the decision will be discussed below.

<sup>38</sup> See Regenspursky, *The Serbo-Bulgarian War*, 14–7, 110, and Norman Rich, *Great Power Diplomacy, 1814–1914* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 1992), 231.

<sup>39</sup> See Luigi Albertini, *The Origins of the War of 1914*, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), 222–25; and Rich, *Great Power Diplomacy*, 413–14.

support of France and the UK. The Greek mobilizations of 1880, 1885 and 1897 were explicitly declared as parts of a diplomatic strategy to get the Great Powers to “listen” to Greek demands.<sup>40</sup> Indeed in 1880/1 one could say that Greece was the executor of the decision of the Great Powers as expressed in the Treaty of Berlin. The exception is 1878, when Greece tried to bring about a “fait accompli” with the invasion of Domokos. An element of this exists in 1897 when the sending of the Vassos Expeditionary Force to Crete was an attempt to bring the great powers before a “fait accompli”.<sup>41</sup>

*(The long duration between mobilization onset and either war onset or crisis termination is the warrant we have for the argument that these mobilizations were probably part of a “compellence via proxy” strategy. The long duration undermines their potential “private” character, and largely negates any military advantage. Thus the only rational option, excepting domestic goals, is that these are bargaining tools. That said, documentary evidence that decision makers explicitly made this connection is always welcome.)*

The above narrative and the findings of Table 3 show how much of a gamble attempts at “compellence via proxy” are and the reasons why they might fail. Of the six cases, only the Greek 1880/1 case was a success in that it both avoided war and led to immediate diplomatic gains. All other cases were failures. Two of the failures saw the eruption of war and the defeat of our “gamblers”. What is more, in 1878, 1885, 1897, and 1908/9 Greece and Serbia were pursuing goals that were inimical to the positions on the issues of some, or all the major powers. Indeed in two cases, 1878 and 1897, Greece tried to bring the powers before a fait-accomplish! Only in the 1880/1 case was Greek action in accordance with Great Power goals. It is thus evident that “compellence via proxy” can only work when it is in pursuit of goals tolerable if not facile for the third parties one wishes to bait.

*(There is always a question about how deeply to look at your case studies. This largely depends on the role of the cases studies in your multi-method analysis, and the variables you are looking at. It also depends on who the intended audience is. The easier to proxy with quantitative variables or with clear indicators of narrative support, the less deep you have to be in the analysis. The more abstract the concepts at stake the deeper the analysis you will need. The more the audience is used to deep analysis (for example historians or anthropologists) the deeper your analysis must be. Normally “motivation” is the type of abstract concept that requires a deep analysis. However, i) the proxy of duration of mobilization to war onset or crisis termination, and ii) the role of the qualitative analysis as auxiliaries to the large-n study, make it more likely that the reader might accept a lighter look at the cases. Again, readers, question, and goal are the absolute determining factors on not just what methods to use, but also how to use them.)*

The next question is why were Greece in 1878, 1885 and Serbia in 1908/9 able to avoid war once their attempt at “compellence via proxy” failed, while they failed to do so in 1897 for Greece and 1885 for Serbia? Table 5 summarizes the information on the domestic politics of the two actors in the cases, based on data from Polity IV, and the Bueno De Mesquita *et al* Winning Coalition data.

On first view, the information in Table 5 corroborates the null findings of the large-n study. There do not seem to be any clear patterns of association between domestic politics variables

<sup>40</sup> Greek General Staff–Army History Directorate, *The Greek–Turkish War*, 7, 11, 25–6, 39, 57; German Staff Officer, *Modern Warfare*, 32–4.

<sup>41</sup> Greek General Staff–Army History Directorate, *The Greek–Turkish War*, 39.

and the dependent variable. While in the Serbian case there seems to be an association between a more “liberal” political system, as captured by Polity variables, and the avoidance of war, the Greek cases belie such an association. In neither case does the size of the winning coalition seem to matter. This corroboration of the large-n studies does seem to reinforce the view that the relationship between domestic politics and the failure to avoid war after a failed attempt to trigger “compellence via proxy” cannot be located in the role of the size of the winning coalition. But it would be wrong to totally discount domestic politics. The qualitative analysis can unearth some elements that might be important but were missed by the large-n study.

Table 5- Domestic Political Characteristics of Mobilizers

Case (Bold War cases)	Polity2 Score	WC score	xrreg	xrcomp	Xropen	xconst	parreg	parcomp	exec	exconst	polcomp
Greece 1878	9	0.75	3	3	4	7	1	4	8	7	N/A
Serbia 1885	-5	0.75	2	1	4	1	3	3	3	1	6
Greece 1885	10	1	3	3	4	7	5	5	8	7	10
Greece 1897	10	1	3	3	4	7	5	5	8	7	10
Serbia 1909	4	0.75	3	2	3	3	5	5	6	3	10

There are similarities between the Greek and Serbian political systems. Both systems were based on the mediated political participation of masses via competitive elections between parties united around individual politicians, heading patronage networks. In Greece those networks tended to be localist, while in Serbia they tended to be clan based. In both cases the state apparatus was a spoil used to reward voters, and one of the main tools for social mobility.<sup>42</sup>

But there were important differences. The franchise in Greece covered almost all adult male Greeks, while it was more restricted in Serbia. Education in Greece was more widespread, and the political class more confident. As the data in Table 5 shows, Serbia had a much more powerful sovereign than Greece had. This was especially the case during the reign of King Milan I. We can also see this by comparing the number of prime ministers that changed during the crises as noted in Table 3. Milan I did not change his prime minister in 1885. Compare this with the ministerial changes in the 1908/9 crisis. The liberalization of Serbia between 1885 and 1909, and especially the increase of restrictions on the ability of the sovereign to pursue options in foreign policy, does seem to be a difference between the outcome of the 1885 and 1908/9 crises.<sup>43</sup> Whether this difference is crucial is an open question. The Greek case does not permit us to resolve this, as in general, George I was a scrupulous constitutional monarch, especially after 1876.

Another domestic characteristic that cannot be captured by the large-n study is the role of nationalist conspiratorial societies in the politics of the two Balkan states. A difference between the 1878, 1880/1, and 1885 crises and the 1897 crisis for Greece was the activity of the conspiratorial society of the National Association (Ethniki Hetaireia/Eθνίκη Εταιρεία). This organization, created in 1894, by 1896 had a wide membership that pervaded the army

<sup>42</sup> For Serbia see Victor L. Albjerg and Esther M.H. Albjerg, *From Sedan to Stresa: Europe Since 1870* (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1937), 345; and Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers* (New York: Harper-Collins, 2012), 6–47. For Greece see Yeorgios Mavrogordatos, *1915 O ethnikos dihasmos* [1915 The national schism (Athens: Pataki Publications, 2015), 239–41, 250–51, 255, 257–58, 262–64, 266.

<sup>43</sup> For further information see Albjerg and Albjerg, *From Sedna to Stresa*, 339–40; Clark, *The Sleepwalkers*, 47.

and civil service and was active in supporting or fermenting Greek revolutionary activity in Crete and Macedonia. It also acted as a focus for civil society pressure on the government, one that was in general hardline.<sup>44</sup> Many contemporary observers and analysts blame the National Society for the inability of the Greek government of 1897 to back down from the steps to war.<sup>45</sup> Thus the inability of the Greek government to step back from war in the 1897 crisis is probably associated, to a certain degree, with the presence of the National Association. However no general rule can be brought out by this case, because the Serbian cases have contrasting conditions.

In 1885 King Milan was an absolute ruler who faced few checks and balances. There was no domestic conspiratorial network to limit his options. More important is the 1908/9 case. Ever since the bloody overthrow of King Alexander Obrenovich in 1903, Serbian decision makers had to operate under the fear of political assassination and the conspiratorial influence of the clique of regicide officers, organized around Dragutin Dimitrijevič (aka Apis of 1914 fame). Furthermore, in 1908 in reaction to the Bosnian annexation, a mass organization like the Greek National Association, the Serbian National Defense (Srpska Narodna Obrana) was organized to apply pressure on the decision makers to go to war.<sup>46</sup> But unlike the Greek case of 1897, the Serbian decision makers were able to overcome those pressures and avoid war.

*(The above qualitative findings could be connected to the idea of overhauling winning coalitions a bit more. But since there is no clear relationship, as was the case with the large-n study, a decision was made to save space.)*

The analysis of the cases above corroborates the statistical findings. It does not seem that winning coalition dynamics have a great influence on whether a state that attempts to trigger “compellence via proxy” is able to avoid war when that attempt fails. That is not to say that domestic politics do not play a role. The Greek 1897 case and the Serbian 1885 case both indicate an importance of domestic conditions. But what exactly is the more general causal role of domestic politics requires further study.

## 8. Conclusions

In this study I endeavored to add to the rationalist literature on the role of “public” mobilization in coercive bargaining. I focused on a specific empirical manifestation of “public” mobilization, mobilization with the goal of triggering “compellence via proxy”. In this instance a “weak” actor uses mobilization to trigger a crisis with a “stronger” adversary, with the goal of bringing about intervention by even stronger third parties in the hope that the final resolution will accommodate the stakes in the issue of the initial mobilizer. The main empirical question I focused on here is why, when such attempts to trigger “compellence via proxy” fail, some of the actors are able to back down from the steps to war which their actions have led them to, while others fail to do so and become embroiled in a dis-advantageous war.

To answer the above question I developed explanatory stories about the conditions under which states might try to bargain via “compellence via proxy”, why such conditions are rife with failure, and why when failure happens some governments are able to avoid escalation,

<sup>44</sup> Greek General Staff–Army History Directorate, *The Greek–Turkish War*, 39, 62.

<sup>45</sup> Some are pro–Ottoman, such as Ellis Ashmead Bartlett, *The Battlefields of Thessaly: With Personal Experiences from Greece and Turkey* (London: J. Murray 1897, reprinted in 1999); German Staff Officer, *Modern Warfare*, 35–6, 47–9. Others are more pro–Greek, like Frederick Palmer, *Going to War in Greece* (New York: R.H Russell, 1897), 7–10, 39–40, 52–54, 62–63, 98–103.

<sup>46</sup> For more information see Clark, *The Sleepwalkers*, 7, 15–20, 35–8.

while others are not. The explanatory story focuses on the dynamics between the winning coalition and the elites in government which rely on them to rule. The expectation was that the easier that it is for elites in government to overhaul their winning coalition, the easier it would be to execute complete reversals of policy and step away from war.

To evaluate this relationship I decided to focus on multi-method research design. I chose two methods I had become familiar with during my MA and PhD studies, and which are fairly simple to use. This was because of the combination of paucity of ready-made mobilization data, the expectation of a curvilinear relationship, and the lack of secondary sources on cases. I thus used a cross-tabulation large-n study model in conjunction with a broad overview of six Balkan mobilizations in the 1878-1909 period. While each of the two methods on its own would be a shallow evaluation of the question, in conjunction they provided consistent and robust results. These results were that there is no clear relationship between size of the winning coalition, the independent variable, and war onset after “compellence by proxy” failure, the dependent variable.

The above findings do not mean that domestic politics do not play a role in explaining why some states become engaged in dis-advantageous wars after failed “compellence via proxy” strategies, while others do not. Indeed the case studies point to possible domestic elements, like ruler autonomy, or non-state actor activity. But these are not clear. Furthermore, the operationalization of variables was rudimentary, and some of the coded cases were ambiguous. This was unavoidable because of the inherent problems with the study of the motives of mobilization, mainly our inability to perfectly know the motivations of decision makers. That said, the fact that the large-n cross-tabulations and the cases studies all agreed on a null result is a powerful and robust result. I do not expect more detailed data or sophisticated methods to reverse this result. Instead they are more likely to unearth which elements of domestic politics do influence the ability of decisions makers to avoid war after a failed attempt at “compellence via proxy”. They can also clarify if the null result is due to substantive or methodological causes.

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**Abstracts in Turkish****Uluslararası İlişkiler Disiplininde Metodolojik Yoksulluk ve Azgelişmişlik**

Ersel Aydınlı

*Bilkent Üniversitesi***Öz**

Bu makale, Türkiye’de Uluslararası İlişkiler (Uİ) disiplinindeki eğitim ve araştırmalarda metodolojinin öneminin yeteri kadar anlaşılammış olduğu önermesi ile başlamaktadır. Akademide disiplinin geliştirilmesi ve ‘merkez’ disiplin ile doğru diyalog kurulabilmesi için hem disiplini geliştirme çabalarında hem Uİ bölümlerinde verilen eğitimde teoriye önem verilmesinin izlenecek en iyi yol olduğu ileri sürülmüştür. Bu makale ise, ne yazık ki, bu odaklanmanın en iyi durumda teori ithalatı ve bunların özümsemesinde başarılı olduğunu, en kötü durumda ise içeriği değil ama boyutları giderek büyüyen yerel bir disiplin görünümü yaratılmasına neden olduğunu öne sürmektedir. Makalede, Türk Uİ disiplininin, küresel Uİ genelinde daha fazla değer kazanmasının sadece öğrencilerin ve akademisyenlerin metodolojik kabiliyetlerinin gelişimi ile mümkün olabileceği öne sürülmektedir, çünkü metodolojik araç ve yaklaşımlar, ve bunları etkili ve yetkin bir biçimde uygulamak için gereken uzmanlık, birlikte akademik disipline ait evrensel bir dil oluşturmakta ve böylelikle disiplin toplu içerisinde özgün tartışmalara ve müzakerelere olanak tanımaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Metodoloji, Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplini, merkez, çevre

**Türkiye Siyaseti Çalışmalarında Zamansal Ufuklar: Nedensel Olmayan Betimlemelerin Hakimiyeti ve “Küresel Isınma” Türü Nedensellik**

Şener Aktürk

*Koç Üniversitesi***Öz**

Bu makalede, Türkiye siyasetine odaklanan sosyal bilim çalışmalarındaki nedensel ve zamansal boyutu eleştirel açıdan değerlendiriyorum. Sosyal bilim analizlerinin genellikle gözden kaçan ama çok önemli bir yönü de nedensel süreçlerin zamansal boyutuyla ilgilidir. Nedensel süreçlerin zamansal boyutunun operasyonalizasyon ve ölçüm açısından doğrudan sonuçları vardır ve bu nedenle bu boyut araştırma tasarımlarının temel unsurudur. Çıkar bağımlı değişkeni (sonuç) kısa vadede mi yoksa uzun vadede mi ortaya çıkar? Hipotezleştirilen bağımsız değişkenler (nedenler) kısa vadede mi yoksa uzun vadede mi belirir? Paul Pierson (2004) doğal afetler metaforunu kullanarak nedensel ilişkilerin zamansal boyutları temelinde dört tür nedensellik sınıflandırması yapar: kasırga, deprem, göktaşı ve küresel ısınma. Uzun vadeli nedenlerin operasyonalizasyon ve ölçümü, neden ve sonuçların dönemselleştirilmesinin güçlüklerini de kapsayan önemli zorluklar içerir. Ne yazık ki Türkiye siyaseti çalışmalarının büyük kısmının daha en başta net olarak tanımlanabilecek bir bağımsız değişkeni (nedeni)

yoktur ve bu nedenle bunları “nedensel olmayan betimleme” çalışmaları olarak nitelemek doğru olacaktır. Üstelik bu çalışmaların çoğu, ölçme ve dönemselleştirme gibi zorluklara daha da fazla odaklanmayı gerektiren küresel ısınma türünden bir nedensellik (uzun vadeli nedenler ve uzun vadeli sonuçlar) ima etme eğilimindedir ama bunu açıkça ifade etmezler. Türkiye siyaseti ve toplumuyla ilgili saygın akademik dergilerde yayınlanan makaleler bile genellikle kilit değişkenlere (bağımlı ve bağımsız) dair bir operasyonel analiz içermez. Yapıcı bir eleştirel yaklaşımla ben burada tartışılan nedensellik ve zamansallık sorunlarını ele almak amacıyla, çok-zamanlı eş-sonluluk konusunda farkındalık dahil, araştırma tasarımına dair bir dizi ilke öneriyorum.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Nedensellik, kavramsallaştırma, operasyonel analiz, dönemselleştirme, zamansallık

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### Çatışma Çalışmalarında Geniş Örneklemli (“Large-N”) Analiz

Belgin Şan-Akca  
Koç Üniversitesi

#### Öz

Bu makale, geniş örneklemli veri setlerinin üretilmesi ve kullanımı ile devletlerarası ve ülke-içi niceliksel çatışma çalışmalarında operasyonel analiz ve ölçüm sorunlarını ilgilendiren konuları ele almaktadır. Daha spesifik ifade etmek gerekirse iç çatışmaların ulus-ötesi boyutları hakkındaki çalışmaları eleştirel bir biçimde değerlendirmektedir. Makalede ayrıca devlet ve devlet-dışı aktörlerin etkileşimleri hakkındaki araştırmaların bağlamında kendi kişisel deneyimlerime de yer verdim. Mevcut araştırmalardaki boşluklar ile geniş örneklemli veri analizinde temsili değişkenlerin (proxy) kullanımı da ele alınmış ve gözlemsel veri toplama ve kodlama konularına da ayrıntılı olarak değinilmiştir. Gelecekteki araştırmaların, Karşılaştırmalı Siyaset ve Uluslararası İlişkiler alanlarındaki çatışma çalışmaları arasındaki mesafenin kapatılması gerektiği ileri sürülmektedir. Veri toplama ve araştırmalarda şeffaflığın artırılması bağlamında akademik çalışmalara dair standartlar önerilmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Pozitivizm, iç savaş, devletlerarası savaş, yabancı ülke desteği, NAGs Veri Seti

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### Bilişimsel Uluslararası İlişkiler: Akışkan Veri Yapısı, Kodlama ve İnternet Araştırmalarının Disipline Katkısı Ne olabilir?

H. Akın Ünver  
Kadir Has Üniversitesi

#### Öz

Bilişimsel Sosyal Bilimler, iletişim teknolojilerindeki somut ilerlemeler ve devasa miktarlardaki günlük kişisel veri üretimi sayesinde son derece teknik ve popüler bir disiplin olarak son yıllarda ortaya çıktı. Kişi-başı veri üretimi, son dönemde hem boyut (“byte”)

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hem de ayrıntı (kalp ritmi gözlemleri, internet bağlantılı mutfak eşyaları ve akıllı telefonlar) anlamında önemli artışlar gösterirken, sosyal bilimcilerin dijital verilerden anlamlı sosyal, siyasal ve demografik bilgiler elde edebilme yeteneği de arttı. Veri madenciliği, doğal dil işlemeciliği, otomatik metin analizi, web araştırmaları, jeo-uzamsal analiz ve makina öğrenmesi gibi araçlardan biri veya birkaçının bileşiminin, gelişmiş uluslararası ilişkiler teorilerini test etme konusunda daha fazla ve daha iyi veri sağlamak amacıyla kullanılmasını ifade eden “bilişimsel uluslararası ilişkiler” konusunda devasa bir metodolojik açık mevcuttur. Bilişimsel uluslararası ilişkilerin potansiyeline ve uluslararası ilişkiler akademisyenlerinin bilgisayar bilimleri konusundaki teknik kapasitelerinin nasıl geliştirilebileceğine (örneğin Python, R, QGIS, ArcGIS veya Github ile başlamak gibi) dair bir değerlendirme yaptıktan sonra, makale, uluslararası ilişkiler öğrencilerinin bilişimsel uluslararası ilişkilere nasıl yaklaşması gerektiği konusunda bir fikir vermek amacıyla bazı yazarların çalışmalarına odaklanacaktır. Makale, bilişimsel yöntemlerin niceliksel ve niteliksel yaklaşımlar arasındaki yöntemsel ikiliği aştığını ve gerçek anlamda çok-yöntemli bir araştırma tasarımı inşa etmek için sağlam bir temel sunduğunu iddia etmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Metodoloji, bilgisayar bilimi, dijital araştırma, internet çalışmaları

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## **Otomatik Metin Analizi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler: Twitter İçin Özgün Bir Teknik ve Uygulaması**

Emre Hatipoğlu, Osman Zeki Gökçe,\* İnanç Arın ve Yücel Saygın

*Sabancı Üniversitesi*

*\*İstanbul Medipol Üniversitesi*

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### **Öz**

Sosyal medya platformları, doğalarından kaynaklanan hızlı ve geniş kapsamlı bilgi yayılımı özellikleri sayesinde geleneksel medyayı yavaş yavaş gölgede bırakarak siyasi iletişimin yeni mekânı haline gelmiştir. Bu platformlar, kalabalıklar içerisindeki iletişimi kolaylaştırmak ve hızlandırmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda araştırmacılara muazzam ve kolay erişilebilir bilgiler sunar. Bu devasa bilgi havuzu sistematik bir şekilde işlenebilirse araştırmacılar için verimli bir veri kaynağı olabilir. Fakat sosyal medya verilerinin sistematik analizi, siyasi analizler açısından bazı zorluklar da içerir. Otomatik metin analizindeki önemli ilerlemeler, sosyal medya verilerinden kaynaklanan bu zorlukları çözmeye çalışmıştır. Bu makale, Twitter üzerinden metin analizi yapan araştırmacılara yardımcı olması için bu türden yeni bir tekniği tanıtmaktadır. Bu teknik, twitter mesajlarını içerikleriyle birlikte otomatik olarak gruplandırma ölçütü olarak En Uzun Ortak Dizge Benzerliği Ölçevini (Longest Common Subsequence Similarity Metric –LCSSM), geliştirmektedir. Bu tekniğin kullanılabilirliğini göstermek amacıyla burada, Türklerin Suriyeli mültecilere yönelik duyguları konusunda yürütülen bir projeden elde ettiğimiz bazı bulguları sunuyoruz.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyal medya, dış politika, mülteci, kamuoyu, Türkiye

## **Beklenen Fayda Modellemeleri ve Oyun Teorisinin Uluslararası İlişkilere Uygulanması: İran'ın Nükleer Programı Hakkındaki Uluslararası Pazarlıklara Dair Bir Değerlendirme**

Özgür Özdamar  
*Bilkent Üniversitesi*

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### **Öz**

Bu makale, Uluslararası İlişkilerdeki beklenen fayda ve oyun teorisi yaklaşımlarının temel teorik yaklaşımlarını sunmaktadır. Ardından bunların spesifik bir araştırma konusu olarak İran'ın nükleer programı konusundaki uluslararası pazarlıklara uygulanmasını ele almaktadır. Makale, bu uygulamada, oyun teorisi ile beklenen fayda modeli olarak bilinen sınırlı rasyonalite modelini kullanarak İran'ın nükleer programı hakkında öngörülerde bulunmaktadır. Aralık 2005, Eylül 2006 ve Mart 2007'de üç analiz yapılmıştır. Her üç analizin öngörülerinin de gerçek hayatta konuyla ilgili yaşanan gelişmelerle örtüştüğü görülmektedir. Sonuçlar, analizin başlangıcından itibaren İran'ın uluslararası desteğini kaybettiğini göstermektedir ve son öngörü, tüm önemli uluslararası aktörlerin ABD yanlısı bir tutumu destekleyeceğine işaret etmektedir. Ayrıca her üç analiz de, İran nükleer programını kontrol altına alabilmek için Rus ve Çin desteğinin son derece önemli olduğunu göstermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Beklenen fayda teorisi, oyun teorisi, zorlayıcı dinamik ortalama seçmen modeli, öngörü, İran, nükleer program, Ortadoğu

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### **Uluslararası İlişkilerde Sistem Dinamikleri Modellemesi**

Ali Fisunoğlu  
*Carlos III – Juan March Institute of Social Sciences*

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### **Öz**

Bu makale, Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkilerdeki kullanımlarına özel bir vurgu yaparak sistem dinamikleri modellemesine dair bir giriş sunmaktadır. Sistem dinamikleri yaklaşımı, dinamik ve içsel bir perspektif sağlayarak geleneksel niteliksel ve niceliksel yöntemlere bir alternatif sunar. Bu da, alternatif politika tercihleri arasında kısa ve uzun vadeli projeksiyonlar yapmamıza ve değişkenler arasındaki dinamik etkileşimleri anlamamıza katkı yapar. Bu yaklaşım, çözümlerin farklı disiplinlerden fikirlerin bir araya getirilmesini gerektirdiği güncel karmaşık siyasi sorunları ele almak açısından özellikle kullanışlıdır. Sistem dinamikleri yaklaşımının sosyal bilimlerdeki uygulamaları, savaş süreçlerindentoplumsal eşitsizliklerin ortadan kaldırılmasına, demografiden beşerî kalkınma ve demokratikleşmeye kadar geniş bir yelpazeye yayılmıştır. Bu çalışma, sistem dinamikleri modelleri ve bu modellerin sosyal bilimlerdeki kullanımına dair kısa bir tarihle ve sistem dinamikleri yaklaşımının geleneksel niteliksel ve niceliksel araştırma yöntemleri karşısındaki avantaj ve dezavantajlarını tartışan bir karşılaştırmayla başlar. Bu tartışmanın ardından sistem dinamikleri modelinin temel unsurları açıklanmaktadır. Makalede, son olarak silahlanma yarışı ve ülke içi çatışmaların

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yayılmasına dair modeller geliştirerek Uluslararası İlişkilerden çeşitli uygulama örnekleri sunmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Niceliksel yöntemler, modelleme, silahlanma yarışları, ülke-içi çatışma

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## **Dış Politika Analizinde Eklektik Metodolojik Yaklaşım:**

### **Türkiye'nin Dış Politika Roller ve Olayları Veri Seti**

İsmail Erkam SULA

*Harvard Üniversitesi*

*Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi*

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#### **Öz**

Bu makale, Rol Kuramı çerçevesini kullanan eklektik bir kodlama projesinin adımlarını açıklamaktadır. Rol kuramı, dış politikanın karar alıcıların rol tasavvurlarını yerine getirmeye yönelik olarak yürütüldüğü varsayımını temel alır. Bu çerçeveyi kullanan araştırmalar, ulusal rol tasavvurlarını (national role conceptions), çeşitli araştırma teknikleri kullanarak ve genellikle karar alıcıların dış politika konuşmalarının içeriğini inceleyerek tespit eder. Bu makale, AK Parti dönemi Türk Dış Politikasında en sık ifade edilen ulusal rol tasavvurlarını tespit etmek için içerik analizinin nasıl kullanılabileceğini literatürdeki örneklerden de yararlanarak açıklamaktadır. Daha sonra literatürden farklı olarak bir adım ileriye gidip, ulusal rol tasavvurlarının performansına bakmak için olay-verileri analizinin kullanılmasını önermektedir. Makale, bu yaklaşımı kullanarak Türk Dış Politikası Roller ve Olayları Veri Seti'ni (Turkish Foreign Policy Roles and Events Dataset–TFPRED) geliştirmektedir. TFPRED, 'elle kodlanmış içerik analizi' ile 'bilgisayar destekli olay-verileri analizi'nin bileşiminden doğan bir üründür. Bu makale, TFPRED'in inşası sırasında içerik analizi ve olay-verileri analizinin kullanım aşamalarına dair ayrıntılı bir açıklama sunmaktadır. Ayrıca eklektik metodolojik bir yaklaşım geliştirme sürecini açıklamakta ve iki yöntemin birleştirilmesi konusunda yazarın deneyimlerine dair değerlendirmeler aktarmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İçerik analizi, bilişimsel sosyal bilim, olay-verileri, dış politika analizi, çok-yöntemli araştırma

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#### **Söylem Analizi: Avantaj ve Dezavantajlar**

Senem Aydın-Düzgit

*Sabancı Üniversitesi*

Bahar Rumelili

*Koç Üniversitesi*

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#### **Öz**

Söylem analizi, kimlik, anlam ve söylemin dünya siyaseti üzerindeki etkileriyle ilgilenen inşacı ve eleştirel düşünceye sahip Uluslararası İlişkiler akademisyenleri arasında özellikle

tercih edilen bir metin analizi yöntemidir. Araştırmalarında söylem analizini kullanan iki Türk akademisyen tarafından yazılan bu makale, Türkiye’de bu yöntemi tercih eden Uluslararası İlişkiler öğrencilerine rehberlik etmeyi amaçlamakta ve yazarların bu yöntemin avantaj ve dezavantajlarına dair değerlendirmelerini de içermektedir. Makalenin ilk kısmı, 1980’lerin sonlarından itibaren söylem analizinin Uluslararası İlişkilerdeki gelişimini üç aşamada incelerken, aynı zamanda söylem analizinin kavramsal ve epistemolojik dayanaklarına dair bir değerlendirme sunar. İkinci kısım, yazarların önceki ve devam etmekte olan araştırmalarında söylem analizi kullanırken yaşadıkları deneyimleri içermektedir. Üçüncü kısım, bir metin üzerinde nasıl söylem analizi yapılacağına dair uygulama önerileri getirmektedir. Son kısım, yazarların bu konudaki deneyimlerinden de yola çıkarak söylem analizinde karşılaşılan zorluklar ve bunları aşmanın potansiyel yollarına odaklanmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Söylem analizi, Uluslararası İlişkiler, niteliksel yöntemler, inşacılık, eleştirel söylem analizi

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### **“Uluslararası” Olanı Tarihselleştirerek Ufkunu Açmak: Karşılaştırmalı Tarihsel Analiz**

Mustafa Serdar Palabıyık  
*TOBB Ekonomi ve Teknoloji Üniversitesi*

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#### **Öz**

Bu makalenin amacı, Uluslararası İlişkiler’de karşılaştırmalı tarihsel analiz (KTA) yönteminin kullanımını incelemektir. Makale, bu yöntemin tarihsel gelişimi ve temel varsayımlarını ortaya koyduktan sonra farklı türlerinin sınıflandırmasıyla devam etmektedir. Ardından, yöntemin avantaj ve dezavantajları ve Uluslararası İlişkiler’in çeşitli teorileri tarafından kullanımı ele alınmaktadır. Makalenin ikinci kısmı, KTA’nın “uluslararası” olguyu daha iyi anlamamıza nasıl katkı yapabileceğine dair fikir verebilmek amacıyla bu makalenin yazarının kendi araştırmalarında bu yöntemi nasıl kullandığını göstermektedir. Bunu yaparken, yöntemin avantaj ve dezavantajları, yaptığı katkıları gösterecek şekilde ve uygulamada karşılaşılan sorunlarla birlikte değerlendirilmektedir. Makalenin sonucuna göre, “uluslararası” olguya sosyo-tarihsel bir derinlik katan KTA, disiplinlerarası yaklaşımları geliştirip tarihselcilik ve şimdilik sorunlarının aşılmasına yardımcı olarak Uluslararası İlişkiler çalışmalarına katkı yapabilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Karşılaştırmalı tarihsel analiz, uluslararası ilişkiler, tarih, yöntem

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## Uluslararası Tarih Çalışmak ve Gizlilik: Türk Dış Politikasındaki Eksik Boyut

Egemen Bezci

*Massey Üniversitesi*

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### Öz

Uluslararası tarih çalışmaları, büyük oranda şimdiye kadar keşfedilmemiş verilerden yararlanmaya dayalıdır. Bu verilerin kaynakları ulusal arşivlerden özel yazılara ve yarı yapılandırılmış mülakatlara kadar çeşitlilik gösterebilir. Türk dış politikasının tarih yazımına dair bir inceleme, mevcut akademik tartışmalara katkı yapacak özgün verileri ortaya çıkarmak için titiz bir metodoloji gerektirir. Uluslararası tarih öğrencileri, bu süreçteki olası lojistik ve metodolojik eksiklik ve engeller konusunda uyarılmalıdır. Bu makale, tarih yazımına dair çalışmalarla ilgili arşiv araştırması yaparken karşılaşılan bu lojistik ve metodolojik engelleri incelemektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tarih-yazımı, gizlilik, diplomasi, uluslararası tarih, istihbarat, Türk dış politikası

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## Niteliksel Mülakatlarda Düşünümsel Yaklaşım Üzerine YenidenDüşünmek

Alper Kaliber

*Altınbaş Üniversitesi*

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### Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Siyaset Bilimi alanındaki araştırmalarında yarı-yapılandırılmış mülakatları (YYM) kullanacak genç akademisyen ve öğrencilere rehberlik etmesi amacıyla bu yöntem üzerine özel bir vurgu yaparak niteliksel mülakatları değerlendirmektir. Bu çalışma, post-pozitivizmin bilimsel araştırma çabasını imkânsız hale getiren derin şüpheciliğinden ve pozitivizmin mülakatlara yönelik düşünce içermeyen ve sorunsallaştırmayan araçsal yaklaşımından ayrılmak ister. Bunların yerine, mülakat sürecinin çeşitli siyasi, etik ve hatta toplumsal sonuçları olan siyasi doğasını vurgulayan düşünümsel (reflectivist) bir niteliksel mülakat yaklaşımını savunur. Düşünümsel yaklaşım, araştırmacının, özellikle mülakat ortamı ve mülakat yapılan kişi üzerindeki rol ve etkileri konusunda her aşamada öz-eleştirel olmasını gerektirir. Bu makalenin planı şu şekildedir: önce, ana araştırma yöntemi YYM olan ve Türkiye'deki Kürt sorunu ve sivil toplum bağlantısı hakkındaki kendi araştırmam ele alınmaktadır. Ardından, niteliksel mülakatlar konusunda pozitivist ve post-pozitivistler arasındaki tartışmalarla birlikte burada savunulan düşünümsel yaklaşım değerlendirilmektedir. Makale, daha sonra üç farklı aşamada YYM konusuna girer: mülakat öncesi, mülakat ve mülakat sonrası. Son kısımda, Türk Uluslararası İlişkilerinde mülakat yöntemi kullanan bazı çalışmalar ele alınmakta ve çalışmamızda ortaya konulan teorik/metodolojik argümanlarla konu sonuca bağlanmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yarı-yapılandırılmış mülakat, niteliksel mülakat, niteliksel mülakata düşünümsel yaklaşım, niteliksel araştırma

## **Uluslararası İlişkilerde Seferberlik Tuzağı: Açık Seferberliği Bir Pazarlık Aracı Olarak Kullanırken Savaştan Kaçınmayı Başaramamanın Nedenlerine Dair Çoklu Yöntemli Bir Keşif**

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### **Öz**

Bu çalışmanın amacı, lisansüstü öğrenciler için bir sunum modeli olmaktır. Parantez içinde ve italik olan kısımlar, yazarın aldığı kararlar konusundaki yorumlarını içermektedir. Buradaki amaç, araştırmacının düşünce biçiminin yanında teorik, metodolojik ve içerik konusundaki diğer kararlarını nasıl yönlendirdiği ve en sonunda da bunları nasıl bir makaleye dönüştürdüğünü öğrencilere göstermektir. Söz konusu makale, güçlü tarafı zayıf aktörle uzlaşmaya zorlayacağı ümidiyle, “açık” (public) askeri seferberliğin, zayıf aktörler tarafından güçlü aktörlerle olan uzlaşmazlıklarına nasıl üçüncü tarafların müdahalesini çekme girişimi olabileceğini araştırmaktadır. Bu girişim “aracı yoluyla zorlama” olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Burada, bazı zayıf aktörlerin başarısızlığa tepki olarak neden savaşa tırmanmadan kaçınabilirken diğerlerinin kaçınmadığını araştırılmaktadır. Kazanan koalisyon (“winning coalition”) oluşturabilme yeteneğinin, zayıf aktörlerin karar alıcılarının esnekliğini etkilediği varsayılmaktadır. 68 “açık” seferberlik örneğine dair bir geniş örneklem değerlendirmesi ile 1878-1909 dönemindeki altı Balkan devletinin seferberliğine dair bir değerlendirme, oluşumu belirleyen faktörlerin bir parçası olarak kazanan koalisyonun boyutunun, savaş başlangıcı veya savaştan kaçınması ile bir bağlantısı olmadığını göstermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Askeri seferberlik, savaş, kazanan koalisyon, rasyonel savaş teorisi, kriz