

Analyzing Foreign Policy Crises in Turkey

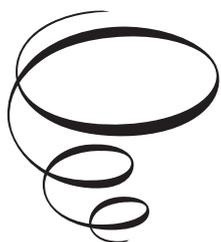
Analyzing Foreign Policy Crises in Turkey:

*Conceptual, Theoretical
and Practical Discussions*

Edited by

Fuat Aksu and Helin Sarı Ertem

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This book is dedicated to:

NURETTİN AKSU,

missing you, your curious questions and encouraging comments...

and

MELİH MURAT ERTEM,

thank you for your inspiring ideas and generous support...

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In alphabetical order.

PREFACE

This book resulted from a three-year long TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) Project, examining the Turkish foreign policy crises and crisis management strategies in the Republican Era. The project, which received remarkable interest in Turkish academia, allowed us to examine 34 foreign policy crises in the last 92 years since the foundation of the Republic of Turkey. It is worth underlining here that the brainstorming in our “Coercive Diplomacy and Crisis Management in Turkish Foreign Policy” course made a valuable contribution to the embodiment of this project. Colleagues and students, who encouraged us for a much comprehensive study of this critical issue, believed in the necessity of making it a book and gave their kind support by writing the chapters of it.

This book requires us to thank not only these esteemed contributors, but many other names and institutions. Among them, TÜBİTAK and Yıldız Technical University, Scientific Research Projects Coordinatorship (YTU - BAPK), deserve our special thanks for the academic and financial assistance they gave to this project. We would also like to thank the participants/staff officers of the Turkish War Colleges, The Armed Forces Higher Command and Management College, which made eye-opening contributions during our discussions there especially on the military decision making processes of the Turkish crisis management.

Prof. Dr. Klaus Brummer, our Section Chair in the 2014 ECPR General Conference in Glasgow, where the first findings of this project were shared with the academia, and a leading name in crisis studies, Prof. Dr. Charles F. Hermann also deserve our thanks due to their comments and questions that improved our researches. We also have to thank the Deans of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences at Yıldız Technical University, Prof. Dr. Güler Aras and Prof. Dr. Kenan Aydın, and Cambridge Scholars Publishing for their kind support during the research and publishing processes of this book.

Finally, our special thanks goes to our family members, especially our spouses and children, without whose love and patience this book would not be finished. We would also like to commemorate dear Nurettin Aksu,

whom we lost during the preparation of this book. His loving-kindness and support for his children and grandchildren will never be forgotten.

We hope this book can inspire further academic studies in the area of foreign policy crises.

Fuat Aksu and Helin Sarı Ertem
Istanbul, November 2016

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|---|
| DP | Democrat Party (<i>Demokrat Parti</i>) |
| FP | Felicity Party (<i>Saadet Partisi</i>) |
| FIR | Flight Information Region |
| EOKA | Ethniki Organosis Kyrion Agoniston or National Organization of Greek Cypriot Fighters |
| FSA | Free Syrian Army |
| GCA | Greek Cypriot Administration |
| GUP | Great Union Party |
| ICBP | International Crisis Behavior Project |
| IHH | The Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief |
| ISIS | Al-Dawla al-Islamiya al-Iraq al-Sham or Islamic State of Iraq and Syria |
| JDP | Justice and Development Party (<i>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi</i>) |
| KRG | Kurdistan Regional Government |
| MB | Muslim Brotherhood |
| MIT | Turkish National Intelligence (<i>Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı</i>) |
| MP | Motherland Party (<i>Anavatan Partisi</i>) |
| NMP | Nationalist Movement Party (<i>Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi</i>) |
| PKK | Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan or Kurdistan Workers' Party |
| PYD | Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat or Democratic Union Party |
| RPP | Republican People's Party (<i>Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi</i>) |
| SNC | Syrian National Council |
| TFPC | Turkish Foreign Policy Crises |
| THY | Turkish Airlines |
| TMT | Turkish Resistance Organization (<i>Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı</i>) |
| TPAO | Turkish Petroleum Corporation (<i>Türkiye Petrolleri Anonim Ortaklığı</i>) |
| TRNC | Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus |
| TUBITAK | Technological Research Council of Turkey |
| UNGA | United Nations General Assembly |
| UNSC | United Nations Security Council |
| YPG | Yekitina Parastine Gel or People's Protection Units |

CHAPTER FIVE

REFLECTIONS OF BELIEFS AND WORLDVIEWS OF THE TURKISH RULING ELITE ON THE SYRIA CRISIS*

HELİN SARI ERTEM

Introduction

A crisis situation in foreign policy is a process that threatens national values and interests, and usually obliges the decision-makers to make their decisions in a rapid way. It can also lead to a problem of survival for the states, if not well-managed. The basic aim in the crisis management is to protect the national targets and interests without going to a war.¹ In the international relations, a crisis is a situation of disagreement, which is possible to solve but can also turn into a war.² With these characteristics, the recent Turkey-Syria tension, which has been going on since the beginning of the Syrian civil war in 2011, can also be considered as a crisis situation that, in the eyes of the Turkish decision makers, threatens Turkey's national interests and even survival. It is closely related not only to the changing regional circumstances but also the domestic and systemic factors.

Within its multi-dimensional character, the Syrian civil war both caused a serious foreign policy crisis and loaded a heavy humanitarian and financial burden on Turkey. It has also created great concerns about the sustainability of the Turkish foreign policy especially led by Ahmet Davutoğlu (former Foreign Minister btw. 2009-2014 and former Prime

* This chapter is supported by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey - TÜBİTAK 1001 Project (Project No: 112K172).

¹ For details see: Mehmet Seyfettin Erol and Ertan Efeğil (eds.), *Krizler ve Kriz Yönetimi: Temel Yaklaşımlar, Aktörler, Örnek Olaylar*, (Ankara: Barış Kitap, 2012): iii.

² Erol and Efeğil, *Krizler ve Kriz Yönetimi...*, 53.

Minister btw. 2014-2016), who pursued, in his words, a “humanitarian and conscientious diplomacy” favouring the individual rather than the regimes. This has automatically increased the number of academic studies to examine the possible roots of this policy, which is claimed to have put the “human” factor before every other element, although that might even risk the national security in various terms. This increased the curiosity about the role of the recent Turkish leaders on the formulation of that “value-based” foreign policy.

Hence, the aim of this chapter is to focus on the impact of the “individual” (here, the political leader) on the recent Turkish foreign policy making. It argues that the personal approaches of the recent Turkish ruling elite towards the world surrounding them have been highly influential on their decision making and crisis management strategies, generally on the Middle East and specifically on Syria. In fact, despite the traditional Turkish foreign policy approach that has often been in harmony with the necessities of *realpolitik*, recent policies of this elite towards the Syrian civil war reflect a strongly idealist approach, where the beliefs accompanied with a certain worldview play a determining role. With its highly complex nature that affects both domestic and foreign policy of Turkey, Syria crisis revealed the moral codes of the Turkish ruling elite both on this specific crisis and on the world in general. For that reason, it is a relevant case to explore how beliefs as well as worldviews of the political leaders play a significant role on decision making and crisis management processes. Actually, the Syria crisis is a direct reflection of how the Turkish ruling elite perceives the world, which role they attribute to Turkey in this world and in which way they interpret the actions of the other actors.

As Rosenau underlines, foreign policy has multiple sources and apart from external and societal environments, governmental structure, bureaucratic roles and personalities of the individuals too affect the foreign policy making.³ Regarding the individual effect, which is in the scope of

³ James Rosenau, “Pre-theories and Theories of Foreign Policy”, excerpt in J. Vasquez, *Classics of International Relations*, 3rd Edition, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996); also see: Michael Cox and Doug Stokes, *US Foreign Policy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 6. Also see: Jack. S. Levy, “Psychology and Foreign Policy Decision-Making”, in Leonie Huddy, David O. Sears and Jack S. Levy (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, 2nd Ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) and Janice Gross Stein, “Threat Perception in International Relations”, in Leonie Huddy, David O. Sears and Jack S. Levy (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, 2nd Ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

this chapter, Rosenau argues that personality, past experiences, upbringing and personal convictions matter greatly on the leaders' way of foreign policy decision making. Thus, the personal characteristics of the decision makers are believed to have a significant impact (which is more than foreseen by the neo-realists) on the way they perceive the foreign policy crises and on the means they choose to manage them. As Cox and Stokes underline, the abovementioned "idiosyncratic" characteristics of the leaders influence the foreign policy behaviour especially in the countries such as the USA, where the personality traits and beliefs of the presidents are believed to have a strong impact on the foreign policy decision making process.⁴

Things do not seem to be different in Turkey either. The personality traits, belief systems and worldviews of the recent Turkish ruling elite play a significant role on the escalation or quieting down of various political crises in the near past such as the crises with Israel and Russia. It is the same for the Syria crisis, which has been affecting Turkey since its start in March 2011 as a matter of national interest and even survival due to its complicated nature involving the subjects such as the chronic Kurdish problem or Turkey's efforts to be a "democracy model" for the Middle East. With this claim, the chapter examines the Syria crisis with regard to the two leading political figures of the Turkish foreign policy, former Prime Minister (PM) and current President of the Republic Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and former Foreign Minister and former PM Ahmet Davutoğlu, who were highly influential on determining a new foreign policy vision for Turkey in the beginning of the 2000s. The chapter argues that the two leaders have a liberal internationalist (and liberal interventionist) worldview, through which they envisage a new world order and justice where "the oppressed or mistreated societies, among which the Muslims take a wider place, will be represented much fairly". As this chapter points out, for Erdoğan and Davutoğlu, the Syria crisis has been both a "litmus paper" that shows how the Syrians, as a part of the Muslims, are left alone by the West to suffer, and a "catalyst" to make Turkey raise its voice for the change that is being desired in world politics.

Parallel to the decreasing impact of the military and bureaucratic elite on Turkish politics, especially since 2007-2008, the weight of the civilian political figures, such as Erdoğan and Davutoğlu, have gradually increased on domestic and foreign policy making. As is known, the concerns over the "conservative democrat" vision of the new ruling elite, which have come forward with the Justice and Development Party's (JDP) rise to power in 2002, received the reaction of the traditional military and

⁴ Cox and Stokes, *US Foreign Policy...*, 7.

bureaucratic elite as the strong supporters of the Kemalist ideology and secularism. The decrease in this tension, which became possible only through the relative passivation of the traditional elite with the help of certain reforms in the state system and the huge public support the JDP received, automatically allowed a wide range transformation in Turkey's foreign policy methods and practices.

The new Turkish foreign policy was based on the six core principles of Davutoğlu, who became an active figure in Turkish politics with the start of his foreign policy advisorship in 2004: a balance between security and freedom, zero problems with neighbors, a multi-dimensional foreign policy, a pro-active regional policy, an altogether new diplomatic style and rhythmic diplomacy.⁵ Among these, the “zero problems with neighbors” has become the most publicized principle especially after facing the challenges posed by the “Arab Spring”.⁶ As Davutoğlu also underlined, taken literally, this principle was “obviously an idealistic model”.⁷ In fact, not only this principle, but also the majority of the six above mentioned principles reflected an idealistic worldview of Davutoğlu, who received a prominent support of Erdoğan, while trying to put these principles into practice.

The two figures certainly share a reformist approach towards Turkey and the world. They have strong inclinations to question the existing world order, Turkey's place in it and the idea of “justice”, which in their eyes represent the “justice” of the leading global powers, namely the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (UNSC).⁸ Looking at the Syria crisis, one can see a similar reformist approach in the way these two leaders tried to handle the relations with Damascus. The relations with the Bashar al-Assad regime, which followed a fluctuating route in the last decade with a visibly sharp fall since 2011, is a good example where the Turkish ruling elite's highly idealist and critical worldview has been influential on their decision making. As Erdoğan and Davutoğlu often underline, Turkey chose to take side with the people rather than the regime

⁵ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Zero Problems in a New Era: Realpolitik is No Answer to the Challenges Posed by the Arab Spring”, *Foreign Policy*, (21 March 2013).

⁶ Davutoğlu, “Zero Problems...”

⁷ Davutoğlu, “Zero Problems...”

⁸ “Davutoğlu: Küresel Adalet için BM Reformuna İhtiyaç Var”, *Haberler.com*, October 13, 2012. <http://www.haberler.com/davutoglu-kuresel-adalet-icin-bm-reformuna-htiyac-4013020-haberi/>

in Syria and people in their eyes represent the weak Syrians, who are suffering under Assad's "tyrannical" power.⁹

Within this scope, the chapter will first summarize the theoretical international relations and foreign policy analyses, which allow us to take the impact of the "individual" level of analysis into consideration. After that, the chapter will briefly examine Erdoğan's and Davutoğlu's challenging approach towards the current order and justice on the world. This will help the reader to develop an idea on their worldviews, which we claim is based on "Liberal Internationalism"¹⁰ in search for a "better" and "fairer" international system through peaceful means while not underestimating the importance of military power. Later on, as a case study to understand Turkish ruling elite's liberal internationalist/interventionist world view, the chapter will focus specifically on the Syria crisis, which has tensed the newly repaired relations between Turkey and the Assad regime, while bringing the two countries almost at the edge of war. The next part of the chapter focuses namely on Davutoğlu and reflects the results of our attempt to make a content analysis of Davutoğlu's discourse on Syria. Erdoğan's content analysis on Syria will be the subject of another academic study due to time constraints. The chapter will then try to see what kind of a relationship exists between Davutoğlu's popular Syria terminology and his worldview. The conceptual analysis of Davutoğlu's speeches will be made by his 94 published speeches (84 as the Foreign Minister and 10 as the PM), which could be achieved through the internet. "Text mining", based on statistics, will be our scientific method to analyse the unstructured data.

The chapter will not get into the details of the crisis literature in order not to repeat the information given in the first chapters of this volume. Instead, it will focus on the Syria case specifically to make the reader be able to compare and contrast it with various other foreign policy crises that are being discussed in other chapters. This will hopefully encourage

⁹ As this chapter will also present, the JDP elite often accuses Assad of being tyrant, causing the Syrian people suffer. "Çalık: 'Mağdur Suriye Halkının Yanında, Zalim Esed'in Karşısında Durduk'", *Haberler.com*, July 11, 2015.

<http://www.haberler.com/calik-magdur-suriye-halkinin-yaninda-zalim-esed-in-7498756-haberi/> ; Also see: "Turkish PM calls for 'Syria without Assad' in UN address", *Hurriyet Daily News*, September 30, 2015,

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-pm-calls-for-syria-without-assad-in-un-address.aspx?pageID=238&nID=89211&NewsCatID=359>

¹⁰ For details of the "liberal internationalism" concept see: Tim Dunne and Matt McDonald, "The Politics of Liberal Internationalism", *International Politics*, Vol. 50, No.1, (2013): 1-17. Also see: Beate Jahn, *Liberal Internationalism: Theory, History, Practice*, (London, NY: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2013).

further researches on how, and under which circumstances the leading political elite interpreted these crises and shaped their foreign policies accordingly.

The Impact of the “Individual” on Foreign Policy Making

The classical theories of international relations and foreign policy analyses tend to deny the role of the “individual” in foreign policy making. For them, the states and the system are the leading actors responsible for the foreign policy practices. As neo-realists argue, the anarchic character of the system is enough to understand the selfish behaviours of the states. They consider the state as the standard unit of analysis and seek to explain the state behaviour with such an approach. The supporters of Rational Choice, for example, believe that all political actors act rationally as if the information they have are fully neutral, deprived of personal or bureaucratic misunderstandings or mistakes.¹¹ However, the vagueness in the front end of the crises, the time pressure, the difficulty in foreseeing the results and the risk factor in the decisions to be made increase the role of the political leader.¹² The leader might not always be able to take a rational decision, despite his/her experienced advisors, various bureaucrats and crisis management teams, but take decisions which might trigger dangerous political actions.¹³

As Burchill et al. underline, the state behaviour can be explained at three different levels: the state level (e.g. national history or ideology), the system level (e.g. the anarchic order) and the individual level (e.g. the impact of a particular national leader).¹⁴ Among the realist perceptions, the neo-classical realism is an exception with its inclusion of the “domestic” in foreign policy analysis. As a theoretical approach in the International Relations (IR) discipline, neo-classical realism provides us with a method to examine the relations between the states, considering the impact of the

¹¹ For the impact of perception and misperception on international politics, see: Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1976.

¹² Oktay Bingöl, “Uluslararası Krizlerde Liderin Rolü”, in Mehmet Seyfettin Erol and Ertan Efeğil (eds.), *Krizler ve Kriz Yönetimi: Temel Yaklaşımlar, Aktörler, Örnek Olaylar*, (Ankara: Barış Kitap, 2012): 87.

¹³ Bingöl, “Uluslararası Krizlerde ...”, 87.

¹⁴ Scott Burchill, et al. *Theories of International Relations*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009): 45.

domestic elements as well as the systemic ones on foreign policy decision making.¹⁵

Through such an approach, neo-classical realism brings the “individual” side of the story back into the IR theory. As Fareed Zakaria (one of the leading names of neo-classical realism) claims, the main actors of the international relations are not the states but the statesmen and for that reason, not the objective measures of power, but the statesmen’s perception of shifts in power determine the foreign policy practices.¹⁶ However, although it considers the individual (thus the decision maker/statesman/leader etc.) as an intervening variable, neo-classical realism does not look at the background of this actor. So it is worth noting here that there is still a need to improve the limitations of the neo-classical analysis of the individual’s impact on decision-making. Here the constructivist approach comes to our rescue. As the neo-classical realism does not shut the door to constructivism, the researchers can prefer to combine these two methods, seeing them mutually complementary to get into the details of the personal traits, backgrounds, and worldviews of the leaders and the impact of these elements on political decision making.

As a matter of fact, constructivism (and some other post-structural and critical theories of IR) promises a lot regarding the impact of the “identity” on the actions of the actors (whether it is the individual or the state).¹⁷ And

¹⁵ For details see: Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Lipsman and Jeffret W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State and Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Gideon Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy”, *World Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 1, (October 1998): 144-172 and Fareed Zakaria, “Realism and Domestic Politics: A Review Essay”, *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 1, (Summer 1992): 177-198.

¹⁶ Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998): 42.

¹⁷ See: Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), and Glenn R. Chafetz, Michael Spirtas and Benjamin Frankel, “Introduction: Tracing the Influence of Identity on Foreign Policy”, in Glenn R. Chafetz, Michael Spirtas and Benjamin Frankel (eds.), *The Origins of National Interests*, (London, Portland: Frank Cass, 1999), 7-22. For other studies on the relationship between identity and foreign policy, see: Yosef Lapid and Fredrich Kratochwil (eds.), *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, (Boulder London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996); David Campbell, *Writing Security: The United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992); Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); and Alexander Wendt, “Collective Identity Formation and the International State”, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 88, No. 2, (June 1994): 384-397.

talking about identity, the personality traits, personal backgrounds, emotions, perceptions and convictions of the actors automatically turn into intervening variables in decision-making processes. Political Psychology¹⁸, which is one of the most stimulating perspectives in foreign policy analysis, highlights the impact of the psychological states of individuals or groups on the way they perceive and treat the world around them, thus the political issues. It has a huge literature, both theoretical and practical, which analyse the impact of the individual characteristics on foreign (and domestic) policy decision making.¹⁹ It is also a useful tool to understand the relationship of leader's heuristics, cognitive structures, motives and leadership styles with the formation and management of the crises.²⁰

This chapter too benefits from the discipline of Political Psychology, which provides us with various new tools to examine the impact of the "individual" on foreign policy decision making. As Cengiz Erişen argues, considering the domestic and individual levels of analyses, "political psychology offers the best tools and the most distinct ways of approaching a foreign policy phenomenon."²¹ Leaders as the key decision makers in foreign policy are in close alignment with Political Psychology and by studying their individual qualities, as well as the groupthink and the

¹⁸ See, for example: David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 2004), and Rose McDermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations*, (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004). Also see: Elif Erişen, "An Introduction to Political Psychology for International Relations Scholars", *Perceptions: Special Issue on Political Psychology and Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. XVII, No. 3, (Autumn 2012): 9-28.

¹⁹ For such researches see, for example, Margaret G. Hermann, "Explaining Foreign Policy Behaviour Using the Personal Characteristics of Political Leaders", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 1, (Mar., 1980): 7-46; J. Philipp Rosenberg, "Presidential Beliefs and Foreign Policy Decision-Making: Continuity during the Cold War Era", *Political Psychology*, Vol. 7, No. 4, (Dec., 1986): 733-751; Deborah Welch Larson, "The Role of Belief Systems and Schemas in Foreign Policy Decision-Making", *Political Psychology*, Vol. 15, No. 1, Special Issue: Political Psychology and the Work of Alexander L. George, (Mar., 1994): 17-33; Stephen G. Walker and Lawrence S. Falkowski, "The Operational Codes of U.S. Presidents and Secretaries of State: Motivational Foundations and Behavioural Consequences", *Political Psychology*, Vol. 5, No. 2, (Jun., 1984): 237-266.

²⁰ Bingöl, "Uluslararası Krizlerde ...", 95.

²¹ Cengiz Erişen, "Introduction", *Perceptions: Special Issue on Political Psychology and Foreign Policy Analysis*, Volume XVII, Number 3, (Autumn 2012): 3.

context the leaders function in, it is possible to understand how they influence the foreign policy making.²²

Despite the comprehensive literature of Political Psychology, the research on the impact of leaders' emotions, belief systems and worldviews on Turkish foreign policy making has been an issue of concern quite recently. This, however, should not underestimate the strong role played by the individual preferences in Turkish politics which require an examination of the psychological roots of attitudes in political decision making. As Erişen points out, the earlier studies on political psychology focused much more on the rationalistic side of the decision making processes and emotions, for example, were considered to be "an obstacle that prevents citizens from engaging in rational political behaviour".²³ Today, there is a strong argument that actually emotions affect the political attitudes, preferences, decisions and information processing of the decision-makers.²⁴

The acquittance of the emotions regarding policy analyses owes itself to further academic studies, which determined that emotions should not be considered as the core reason behind irrational behaviour but a strong determinant of political behaviour and judgement.²⁵ These studies also underlined that emotions should be examined as the complementary force of cognition in political decision making. Antonio Damasio, for example, argues that emotion is equal to delivering cognitive information directly and via feelings²⁶ and for Mark Johnson, "there is no cognition without emotion and we are often unaware of the emotional aspects of our thinking".²⁷ Within this context, a simple "like-dislike" evaluation might lead the political decision maker while determining his/her policy preferences.²⁸ Thus the leader's feelings about a certain event/issue might shape his political decisions, which are also under the impact of his/her perceptions towards the environment around him and his or his countries'

²² C. Erişen, "Introduction"... , 4.

²³ Cengiz Erişen, "Emotions as a Determinant in Turkish Political Behaviour", *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1, (2013): 116.

²⁴ David Redlawsk, *Feeling Politics: Emotion in Political Information Processing*, (New York: Palgrave, 2006) and George E. Marcus, W. Russell Neuman, and Michael Mackuen, *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgement*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000).

²⁵ C. Erişen, "Emotions as a Determinant...", 116-117.

²⁶ Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain*, (New York: Avon, 1994): xiii.

²⁷ Mark Johnson, *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007): 9.

²⁸ C. Erişen, "Emotions as a Determinant...", 117.

place in this environment. Concordantly, Erdoğan's and Davutoğlu's beliefs about the world in general and Turkey's place in it have certain clues to understand their foreign policy behaviour in general and on Syria.

Beliefs are the causal mechanisms that shape the perceptions of reality and the decision of the leaders, while leading to cognitive and motivated biases regarding the incoming information from the surrounding social and political atmosphere. As Michael D. Young and Mark Schafer also point out, "Perceptions of reality, whether accurate or not, become reality in a decision maker's mind, and he or she has no other basis upon which to act; thus these perceptions or images necessarily influence policy".²⁹ Faith and emotions too play a key role in the construction of beliefs.³⁰

The elite political belief has long been studied in political psychology and Alexander George was the leading name pointing out the role of political belief systems in foreign policy making.³¹ Deborah Welch Larson underlines that "a political belief system refers to the individual's beliefs about the political world".³² And for Milton Rokeach, a belief system is "the total universe of a person's beliefs about the physical world, the social world, and the self."³³ In the light of the information above, we can defend that leaders' belief systems contain general information about the world and this information leads them while making their political decisions. Their construction of friends and enemies, threats and interests, their willingness to cooperate or clash are all related to their understanding of the outside world, the nature of politics etc.³⁴ This will also determine their thoughts on whether the political life is conflictual or harmonious.

In fact, looking at the conservative and pro-Islamic belief system of the recent Turkish ruling elite, one can observe their understanding of the outside world as an unfair place, full of hostilities especially against the

²⁹ Michael D. Young and Mark Schafer, "Is there Method in Our Madness? Ways of Assessing Cognition in International Relations", *Mershon International Studies Review*, No.42, (1998): 17.

³⁰ Rose McDermott, "Political Psychology", in James W. Davis (ed.), *Psychology, Strategy and Conflict*, (London, NY: Routledge, 2013): 55.

³¹ See: Alexander George, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making", *International Studies Quarterly*, No. 23, (1969): 190-222, and A. George, "The Causal Nexus between Cognitive Beliefs and Decision-Making Behaviour: The 'Operational Code' Belief System", in L. Falkowski (Ed.), *Psychological Models in International Politics*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1979): 95-124.

³² Larson, "The Role of Belief...", 7.

³³ Milton Rokeach, *Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1968): 123-124.

³⁴ Larson, "The Role of Belief...", 19.

Eastern nations, including Turkey. This certainly is a negative perception of the outside world, which obliges Turkey, as Erdoğan claims, to “stand tall without bullying”³⁵ so as to become a kind of a “smart power’ holding a combination of hard and soft power, thus diplomatic and military means together.³⁶ For the Turkish leaders, however, this negatively perceived outside world is open to change if the countries like Turkey, as the new rising powers, can arouse the attention of the international society to object this unfairness. This leads us to the idea that Turkey is actually undertaking a liberal internationalist role, which foresees an intervention in the outside world to regulate the assumed mistakes, ill treatments and injustice around us through various means including military if necessary.

Erdoğan and Davutoğlu’s Liberal Internationalist Worldview

The “worldview” or “Weltanschauung”, can briefly be defined as “the overall perspective through which we see and interpret the world around us” or as “a collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual or a group”.³⁷ Through our worldviews, we make assumptions about the possible images, interactions and courses of actions of the other actors.³⁸ The “world” that we live in and give meaning to cannot be understood without the culture and the values we have. Relatedly, the “worldviews” of the people are also value-driven and cannot be deprived of their cultural codes, which are also under the impact of religious beliefs. For Diederik Aerts et al., every worldview also contain ideological

³⁵ This has been a famous slogan of the Turkish ruling elite in the last decade to underline the belief in Turkey’s strength by not ignoring the need to protect its humbleness. “Başbakan Erdoğan: Biz Dik Duracağız Ama Dikleşmeyeceğiz”, *Hurriyet*, June 17, 2006, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/basbakan-erdogan-biz-dik-duracagiz-ama-diklesmeyecegiz-4600457>

³⁶ For details on the concept of “smart power”, see: Joseph Nye, “Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power”, *Foreign Affairs*, (July-August 2009), <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2009-07-01/get-smart?page=1>

³⁷ See: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/worldview>. It is interesting to see that dictionaries of Oxford and Cambridge pay little attention and have no details at all on the concept of “worldview”. For an interesting critical evaluation of the concept see: David K. Naugle, *Worldview: The History of a Concept*, (Michigan, Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2002).

³⁸ Thomas Mowle, “Worldviews in Foreign Policy: Realism, Liberalism and External Conflicts”, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 24, No.3, (2003): 562.

elements.³⁹ As cultures are always in a process of change, the worldviews are not fixed images of the world; therefore open to new concepts of reality.⁴⁰

Looking at their approach to the outside world, one can easily claim that despite their religiously conservative ideological background, Erdoğan and Davutoğlu have a quite critical approach towards the existing world order and the global understanding of justice. In a way, this is a resistance of “idealpolitik”, which prioritizes permanent “values”, to “realpolitik” that defends temporary “interests” in the outside world. Although Turkey’s critiques against the international order are not something new, but dates back to the 1920s, when the issue was about the British hegemony on the League of Nations,⁴¹ the traditional Turkish foreign policy during the 20th century is often accused by the ruling JDP of having been too much Western-oriented, ignoring the Middle East and Muslim societies. According to that claim, the traditional Turkish elite shared a view that saw Turkey as a secular state embracing the Westernization project with a cautious world view, often bound by the requirements of realpolitik.

The ruling Turkish elite’s statements on the world order and justice also has a reformist soul and it will not be wrong to call them “liberal internationalists”. Liberal Internationalism⁴², which has been on rise since the 1990s, can be summarized as a quest to make the anarchic world gain a better order. It is against the realist view seeing the anarchy as a permanent character of the world system. Believing in a liberal world order and a free market economy, it defends that, if necessary, liberal nations should intervene in other sovereign states to liberate them. For that reason, “liberal interventionism” is considered to be a variety of “liberal internationalism” and sometimes used as equals.⁴³ Either they are called

³⁹ Diederik Aerts, et al., *World Views: From Fragmentation to Integration*, (Brussels: Vub Press, 1994): 10.

⁴⁰ Aerts... et al., *World Views...*, 8-10.

⁴¹ Emel Parlar Dal, “Arap Ayaklanmaları Ekseninde Türk Dış Politikasındaki Dönüşüm ve Liberal Uluslararası Düzen”, in Özden Zeynep Oktav and Helin Sarı Ertem (eds.), *2000’li Yıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: Fırsatlar, Riskler ve Krizler*, (Ankara: Nobel Yayınları, 2015): 92.

⁴² Dunne and McDonald, “The Politics of Liberal Internationalism...”. Also see: Jahn, *Liberal Internationalism...*

⁴³ John Dumbrell, *Clinton’s Foreign Policy: Between the Bushes, 1992-2000*, (London, NY: Routledge, 2009): 81. As a term, “liberal interventionism” was first introduced by former British PM Tony Blair in a speech he gave in Chicago in April 1999, arguing that “nation states could intervene in the affairs of another by military means to promote stability”. This is also called the “Blair Doctrine”,

the former or the latter, they believe in the role of international law and institutions, such as the UN and this draws the line between them and those interventionists like the American neo-conservatives, who prefer to turn a blind eye to building an international architecture as we all witnessed during the occupation of Iraq in 2003.⁴⁴

Examining the foreign policy preferences of Erdoğan and Davutoğlu, one can see that they have a certain world image in their mind, full of unfairness that should be removed. They certainly believe in the need for the international institutions such as the UN, but the UN is a focal point of them as a platform that itself needs certain reforms to start removing the current global unfairness. Erdoğan often uses his popular statement “the world is bigger than five” in order to underline the inequality within the UN administrative system, created by the UNSC’s five permanent members, all nuclear. Within Erdoğan’s famous slogan above, we see a belief in “change” that can be materialized by the awareness and cooperation of the rest of the world against the leading global powers of our time.⁴⁵

Davutoğlu too pointed out the necessity to reform the UN structure quite frequently, underlying the need for it “to become compatible with the new balance of power that should include all countries, not just the victors of World War II”.⁴⁶ This is in harmony with the ideas of Barry Buzan from the Copenhagen School, who points out that the liberal international structure should not be Eurocentric but polycentric⁴⁷, and the cosmopolitan representatives of the English School, who argues for the need to make the international society more responsive to the needs of the weak and vulnerable.⁴⁸ It also overlaps another leading name, G. John Ikenberry’s argument that under the changing circumstances, there is a need for a less hierarchical and more participatory liberal international order, which

which defends that force can be used for good ends. For details of Blair’s speech, see: “The Blair Doctrine”, *PBS*, April 22, 1999.

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international-jan-june99-blair_doctrine4-23/

⁴⁴ David Bosco, “What Divides Neocons and Liberal Interventionists”, *Foreign Policy*, (9 April 2012), <http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/04/09/what-divides-neocons-and-liberal-interventionists/>

⁴⁵ “The World is Bigger Than Five”, *Daily Sabah*, February 25, 2015,

<http://www.dailysabah.com/world/2015/02/25/the-world-is-bigger-than-five>

⁴⁶ “The world is bigger than...”

⁴⁷ For details see: Barry Buzan, “Culture and International Society”, *International Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 1, (2010): 20.

⁴⁸ Andrew Linklater, “The English School”, in Burchill et al., *Theories of International Relations...*, 110.

contains new forms of partnership.⁴⁹ As seen, Turkey's efforts to stay connected with the international system through the existing organizations, while underlining a strong need for a reform within them, is a visibly liberal internationalist attempt that believes in "intervention" (either in the system or in the states), preferably through peaceful means but also militarily if necessary.

In accordance with this reformist approach, it can also be claimed that recent Turkish ruling elite (who contained Davutoğlu as well, until the near past, both as the FM and as the PM) believe in the necessity of intervening in certain problem areas that are considered to be significant for their political priorities. The means they use to intervene in these areas are mainly humanitarian (and military, if necessary) and the end they want to achieve is to change the world order in a fairer way. It is not of course possible to claim that they are capable enough to intervene in every problem area they see. In fact, similar to the US during the Bill Clinton era, they had to make a "selective engagement", while considering where to intervene and in which way.

The Palestinian-Israeli issue, for example, is among the top priorities of Turkey since the very beginning of the JDP era. In fact, the party and its leaders owe a great amount of their popularity in the Middle East to defending the Palestinian cause, which often cause tension with Israel and affect Turkey's relations with the US. The official statements on Israel again take root from the injustice being perceived in the world's attitude towards Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. Erdoğan's scold at Israel during the Davos Summit in 2009, for example, was a reflection of these feelings on Israel's unfairness to the Palestinians, accusing Israel of "knowing well how to kill", and the world of applauding this cruelty.⁵⁰ Erdoğan went further in 2012 and called Israel a "terrorist state" after its military operation in Gaza, killing many civilians including children.⁵¹

These strong accusations against Israel were the extensions of Turkish ruling elite's critical approach towards the current balance of power in the Middle East and in the world. During Turkey's mediation attempts between the West and Iran regarding the nuclear crisis, one of the leading

⁴⁹ G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011): 11.

⁵⁰ See: "Recep Erdogan Storms Out of Davos After Clash With Israeli President Over Gaza", *The Guardian*, January 30, 2009, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/jan/30/turkish-prime-minister-gaza-davos>.

⁵¹ See: "Turkey's Erdogan Calls Israel A 'Terrorist State'", *Reuters*, November 19, 2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-palestinians-israel-turkey-idUSBRE8AI0FH20121119>

points of Erdoğan was again about the lack of world's fairness towards Israel's arms with nuclear war heads, while turning Iran's efforts for nuclear energy into a problem.⁵² During its mediation attempts between Iran and the West regarding the nuclear crisis, Turkey abstained in the International Atomic Energy Agency's vote in 2010, venturing to receive further accusations that it is moving away from the West. Turkish officials continued to underline their discomfort with the enforcement of the sanctions determined by the UNSC in 2010.⁵³ Through this way, Turkey was once again standing by the party that it perceived as the disadvantageous side under the unfair treatment of the dominant Western powers.⁵⁴ The claim "to be the voice of the weak" has long been the motto of the JDP, which was accused by the West either of having a "Neo-Ottoman" agenda or of shifting its axis towards the East.

Davutoğlu's definition of Turkish diplomacy in his era as "humanitarian and conscientious" is also worth mentioning in the scope of this analysis. Here we should first get into the details of what these concepts mean. The definition of the word "humanitarian" is "being involved in or connected with improving people's lives and reducing suffering"⁵⁵ and "conscientious" is the adjective form of "conscience" which is "a person's moral sense of right and wrong, acting as a guide to one's behaviour".⁵⁶ Although the dictionaries have certain definitions, both "humanitarian" and "conscientious" are quite ambiguous adjectives as their definitions are open to discussion. What is "humanitarian" and "conscientious" can change from one person to other. The states' understanding of involving outside affairs with "humanitarian" and "conscientious" reasons can also differ as they might have different moralities or might give morality a

⁵² "Erdoğan: Kimse İsrail'deki Nükleer Silahların Hesabını Sormuyor" (No one asks the account of the nuclear arms in Israel), *T24*, March 30, 2012.

⁵³ "İran Nükleer Krizinde Gözler Türkiye Üzerinde", *Deutsche Welle Türkçe*, April 21, 2010. <http://www.dw.com/tr/iran-n%C3%BCkleer-krizinde-g%C3%B6zler-t%C3%BCrkiye-%C3%BCzerinde/a-5489382>

⁵⁴ It is worth reminding here the "Sèvres Syndrome", which is shown as one of the primary psychological causes behind Turkey's negative perception of the West despite its more than a century-long tendency to be a part of it. As known, the Treaty of Sèvres imposed by the Allied Forces in 1920 brought the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire after being defeated in World War I. Since then, the treaty is believed to be the sign of the Turkish lack of trust towards the Western powers. See: Özlem Tür and Ahmet Han, "2000'li Yıllarda Türk Dış Politikasını Anlamak", in Özden Zeynep Oktav and Helin Sarı Ertem (eds.), *2000'li Yıllarda Türk Dış Politikası...*, 15.

⁵⁵ <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/humanitarian>

⁵⁶ http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/conscience#conscience__2

secondary place. As is known, realists believe that there is not any place for morality in the international affairs and even warn the leaders that they might risk the survival of the state, if they adhere to moral principles.⁵⁷ The idealists or liberals, however, often underline the need for universal principles,⁵⁸ among which we can place morality and conscience as well.

During his era, Davutoğlu's insistence to give a value-based character to Turkish foreign policy points out another theoretical discussion in the IR discipline in which the poststructuralists warn about the impact of the "power" and "power balances" in determining what is universally good and right.⁵⁹ As Alex J. Bellamy and Nicholas J. Wheeler underline, in the absence of consensus on the universal principles, such as which principles should govern the right of humanitarian intervention, the most powerful states would impose their own culturally determined moral values on weaker members of the international society.⁶⁰ This makes us understand Turkey's efforts to be a "smart power" in the international arena combining soft and hard powers. In fact one should accept that, even to impose an idealist approach for a fairer world, states need to be strong. Parallel to this view, which does not ignore the role of power, Davutoğlu imagined a new world order where Turkey would become a "centre", a key regional and international player rather than just being a "bridge" (between the West and the East), which underestimates Turkey's potential on the world stage attributing it a relatively passive role.

Davutoğlu's special emphasis on a moral foreign policy was an ambitious target accompanied by a reformist approach that had continuously shed light on the existing world order and justice, and the great powers' "unfair" treatment of the "weak". According to the Turkish Foreign Ministry, "humanitarian diplomacy reflects the compassionate and competent character of the Republic of Turkey and depicts the human oriented nature of the Turkish foreign policy, which merges Turkey's interests with its values. Through these means, Turkish foreign policy claims to take human dignity as a point of reference and remains

⁵⁷ Tim Dunne and Brian C. Schmidh, "Realism", in John Baylis, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens, *The Globalization of World Politics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011): 86.

⁵⁸ Lene Hansen, "Poststructuralism", in J. Baylis, S. Smith and P. Owens, *The Globalization of...*, 176.

⁵⁹ Hansen, "Poststructuralism"..., 176.

⁶⁰ Alex J. Bellamy and Nicholas J. Wheeler, "Humanitarian Intervention in World Politics", in J. Baylis, S. Smith and P. Owens, *The Globalization of...*, 514.

determined to use all its means and capabilities in this direction”.⁶¹ The concept is also summarized as: “persuading decision makers and other related actors to respect human rights and other humanitarian values”.⁶² For Davutoğlu, the main priority of the humanitarian diplomacy was claimed to be not the state but citizens, and Turkey, was expected to be interested in urgent humanitarian crisis in conflict-ridden areas⁶³ (from Syria and Iraq nearby to Somalia and Myanmar far away). As he underlined, “wherever there is an oppressed, a suffering person, Turkey is definitely there and this diplomacy is called a humanitarian, a conscientious diplomacy”.⁶⁴

Similarly, Erdoğan’s call to end Western dominance and to make the Muslims return to the world stage also puts emphasis on Turkey’s ambitious foreign policy and reflects a quest for a much equal share in the global decision-making process. His statements on 6 April 2016 have quite impressive clues about his critiques against recent global order and justice. He underlined that “we (as the Turkish ruling elite) demand a restructuring of the international organizations on equitable basis as the destiny of all countries is bound to what the 5 permanent members of the UNSC will say”. Erdoğan specifically asked “can there be justice [under such conditions]?” He also criticized about having no Muslim country in the UNSC, whose permanent members are “all Christian” (as he claims). Asking “Where is the freedom of faith on the world?”, he especially underlined the need for an equal representation of faiths and geographies in the UN, which should definitely be redesigned. For Erdoğan, “7 billion world population cannot bear this injustice, unfairness, tyranny and imbalance.”⁶⁵

This justice-driven foreign policy of the recent Turkish ruling elite once again contradicts with the realist worldview, which sees justice and ethics as subjects that are irrelevant to global politics. Realists are much

⁶¹ “Final Declaration of the Fifth Annual Ambassadors Conference: Humanitarian Diplomacy”, 2-7 January 2013,

http://www.mfa.gov.tr/final_deklaration_of_the_fifth_annual_ambassadors_conference.en.mfa

⁶² Murat Yeşiltaş and Ali Balcı, “Dictionary of Turkish Foreign Policy in the AK Party Era: A Conceptual Map”, *SAM Papers*, No.7, (May 2013): 22.

⁶³ Yeşiltaş and Balcı, “Dictionary of Turkish...”, 22.

⁶⁴ “Davutoğlu, Azerbaycan Diplomasi Akademisinde Konuştu”, *Haberler.com*, December 4, 2015, <http://www.haberler.com/davutoglu-azerbaycan-diplomasi-akademisinde-7938283-haberi/>

⁶⁵ For the details of all above mentioned statements of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, see his address to the headmen on 6 April 2016 through <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLsOT2-A-Hk>

more concerned about national interests which have nothing to do with justice or ethics. Liberals, however, criticize this immoral power politics, showing it as the primary source of conflict and violence. In this point of view, the idea of global politics take root in universal moral values that will be valid for all human beings regardless of their nationalities or citizenships.⁶⁶ This liberal argument too coincides with Turkish ruling elite's understanding of the world around us.

Erdoğan's and Davutoğlu's belief in regional cooperation and interdependence, which are also the primary principles of liberal internationalism, were the leading motivations behind Turkey's efforts to reset the relations with its neighbours through diplomatic and economic means. This approach, which is usually called by them as a "win-win" situation for the parties involved, achieved its peak level in the surprising rapprochement of Turkey with northern Iraqi Kurds, for example, although it did not bring the expected positive outcome regarding the Armenian or Cyprus problems. Similarly, Turkey's attempts to regulate the relations with the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria in the first decade of the 2000s have also been heavily damaged by the start of the civil war in 2011. As Michael Brecher underlined, the catalyst to a foreign policy crisis might be a destabilizing event in the international system⁶⁷ and in accordance with that estimation, the civil war in Syria turned into a foreign policy crisis, requiring a careful assessment of Turkey, which sees its national values and interests as being under threat.

The Syria Crisis: A New Catalyst to Turkey's Rising Disbelief in Current World Order

The Arab uprisings and the following Syrian civil war have certainly decreased Turkey's commitment to and belief in the current international order.⁶⁸ In fact, Erdoğan and Davutoğlu's target to turn Turkey into a liberal internationalist soft power in its region faced the biggest challenge with the escalation of these unexpected regional uprisings. As "winning the hearts and minds" of the Syrian people, rather than supporting the existing regime has become the primary preference of the Turkish ruling elite (though there are discussions on who the "Syrian people" actually are

⁶⁶ For details see: Andrew Heywood, *Küresel Siyaset (Global Politics)*, (Istanbul: Adres, 2013): 48.

⁶⁷ Michael Brecher and Jonathan Wilkenfeld, *A Study of Crisis*, (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997): 3.

⁶⁸ Parlar Dal, "Arap Ayaklanmaları Ekseninde...", 96.

and what they really want), Turkey-Syria relations received the strongest blow at the official level. Erdoğan and Assad, who once spent their holiday together⁶⁹, have gradually turned into bitter enemies. Erdoğan, as well as Davutoğlu, called Assad of being the murderer of his own people, and Assad heavily criticized Turkey's intervention in the Syrian civil war.

Turkey's reaction to the Syrian civil war was not independent from its observations on the possible birth of the "new Middle East". In his prominent parliamentary address on 26 April 2012, Davutoğlu claimed that "Turkey will be the owner, the pioneer and the spokesman of the new Middle East that is being born". His following words were the clear signs of Turkey's new reformist approach towards Syria as well as the Middle East:

"The voice of humanity's conscience on the Syria issue is Turkey under the JDP rule. This voice is a virtue above all kinds of political calculations. This voice is the requirement of our understanding of humanity, the interpretation of history and future imagination... As Turkey, we will continue to manage the great wave of change in the Middle East... Similar to the "new Turkey" claim in our mind, we also have a "new Middle East" claim. And on the basis of this claim, there is a new peace order, which is not based on ethnic and sectarian differences but on fraternity. Regardless of who says what, the pioneer and the spokesman of this order will be Turkey... The future is not in archaic regimes but in the will of the people."⁷⁰

Since 2012, the mutual relations have become worse. Bombed attacks in various parts of Turkey committed either by ISIS or the PKK increased the tension and the Syria crisis in Turkish foreign policy has gained a further aspect especially after Turkey's military intervention in Syria since August 2016. Turkey declared that the "Operation Euphrates Shield" was to fight against ISIS (al-Dawla al-Islamiya al-Iraq al-Sham/Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) and the PYD (Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat/Democratic Union Party), which is claimed to be a direct extension of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party/Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan), which Turkey has been fighting against since 1984. Erdoğan further defined the purpose of this Turkish military intervention as "ending the rule of the cruel Assad". He also added that "Turkey had no interest in Syrian territory" and that they

⁶⁹ "Hem Tatil Hem Siyaset İçin Bodrum'da", *Hurriyet*, August 5, 2008.

⁷⁰ "PM Ahmet Davutoğlu's address to the Turkish Parliament on 26 April 2012", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCYFcNmYBA>

are there “to bring justice”⁷¹, which once again brings forward Turkey’s reformist approach to global or regional politics.

Actually, the historical baggage of Turkish-Syrian relations was already full of bitter memories, which eased the transformation from amity to enmity since the start of the civil war. Despite the Ottoman attempts to crush the Arab nationalism, countries such as Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia succeeded in their efforts to liberate themselves with the help of the Western powers. For a long time, Turkey had the feeling of “being betrayed by the Arabs” due to their uprising against the Muslim rule of the Ottomans. This might be one of Turkey’s subconscious reasons in trying not to intervene in the Middle Eastern affairs during the 20th century. Although Erdoğan and Davutoğlu conducted an assertive foreign policy underlining the need to make Turkey turn its face towards the Middle East as well as the West, this negative historical baggage can easily come to the agenda whenever Turkey goes through a problem with its Middle Eastern counterparts. In other words, current Turkish ruling elite’s positive perception of the Ottoman legacy continues to face the Arab nationalist challenge which constructs itself on a negative perception of the Ottoman era. This was the reason why Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad, similar to some Western counterparts, often accuse Turkish leaders of “seeing neo-Ottoman dreams” regarding their intervention in the Syrian civil war.⁷²

Negative baggage between Turkey and Syria is not limited to the Ottoman legacy but contains elements from the near past. Bashar al-Assad’s predecessor, his father Hafez Assad had long pursued a tense relationship with Turkey due to his shelter for the PKK. His motto was “the enemy of my enemy is my friend”⁷³, thus his relationship with Turkey was always in limbo. Turkey’s 1998 threat to use force against Syria to prevent his support for the PKK was a serious sign of a possible close combat between the two parties. Turkey and Syria got into a relatively moderate relationship after Hafez Assad’s deportation of the PKK leader

⁷¹ “President Erdogan: Turkey intervened in Syria to end the ‘rule of the cruel Assad’”, *The Independent*, November 30, 2016. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/president-erdogan-turkey-syria-assad-intervention-comments-kurds-isis-a7446956.html>

⁷² “Esad: Türkiye’nin Derdi ‘Yeni Osmanlı’ Olmak”, *Hurriyet*, September 20, 2012.

⁷³ Osman Metin Öztürk, *Dış Politikada Kriz Yönetimi*, (Ankara: Odak, 2004): 156.

Abdullah Öcalan in the same year due to Turkey's political and military pressure.⁷⁴

Despite this negative background, Turkey's efforts to revise its relations with the Middle East, including Syria, in the first decade of the 2000s received great regional and international interest. Relying on Davutoğlu's core principle of "Zero Problems with Neighbours", Turkey looked for all the means to advance its relations with this neighbouring region. With its 910 km-long border with Turkey, Syria has been one of the target neighbours to improve the relations through cooperation and interdependence. Starting from the first years of the JDP, Turkey gradually consolidated its relations with Damascus, relying on Davutoğlu's famous rhetoric of "common history and common culture". As a result, the two countries' trade volume tripled by 2009, reaching 1.8 billion dollars.⁷⁵ Mutual relations were in such a positive mood within such a short time that the two countries, which were at odds in the 1990s due to the PKK problem, started making common cabinet meetings that saw fighting against terrorism as one of their top priorities.

This surprisingly bright era, however, did not go on for a long time. The spread of the Arab Spring to Syria in 2011 alarmed Turkey similar to many other countries in the region. Turkey, which sees itself as the representative of the "sufferers", soon had to make a choice between the Syrian regime and its opponents whom have been asking for reforms. In a way, Turkey was in a position to make a choice between its ideals and commitments.⁷⁶ The ideals required the Turkish leaders to take side with the opponents, whom they often refer as the people of Syria, and the commitments required them to support the existing regime. Erdoğan and Davutoğlu preferred to take side with the opponents (or the "Syrian people" as they call)⁷⁷ after spending around 9 months to persuade the

⁷⁴ For the details of a study on Turkish practice of coercive diplomacy, see: Fuat Aksu, *Türk Dış Politikasında Zorlayıcı Diplomasi*, (Istanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 2008).

⁷⁵ In the end of the 1990s, the trade volume between Turkey and Syria was around 500 million dollars. See: "Türkiye-Suriye arasında Üçüncü Demiryolu Sınır Kapısı Açıldı", *T.C. Devlet Demiryolları*, January 19, 2010, <http://www.tcdd.gov.tr/home/detail/?id=360>

⁷⁶ Helin Sarı Ertem, "Arab Spring and the 'Regionalization' of Turkey's Kurdish Problem: Possible Outcomes for Turkey and the GCC", in Özden Zeynep Oktav and Helin Sarı Ertem (eds.), *GCC-Turkey Relations: Dawn of a New Era*, (Cambridge: GRC Publishing, 2015): 225.

⁷⁷ This act coincides with N. Atmaca's claim that "Davutoğlu's humanitarian diplomacy refers to the provision of humanitarian aid (and the funding of Islamic projects and NGOs), coupled with a rhetoric that appeals directly to the 'Arab street',

Assad regime but failing to do that.⁷⁸ Seeing that they were not able to make an impact on the Syrian regime despite various friendly warnings, Turkish ruling elite closed themselves cognitively to any policy change that might approach them with Assad. Their personal anger and feeling of betrayal, as well as the above mentioned negative historical baggage, played a role in this cognitive closure against the Syrian regime.⁷⁹ This has expanded the crisis and complicated its management.

Turkey soon applied an “open door” policy and turned into a safe haven for more than 2.75 million Syrian refugees.⁸⁰ This was a reflection of Turkey’s “humanitarian and conscientious diplomacy, which puts the people of another country at the centre and gives priority to their survival above [Turkey’s] national interests”.⁸¹ However, that has turned the Syria crisis into a “domestic problem of Turkey”.⁸²

The issue has also affected the relations with Europe. For a long time, Turkey looked for the necessary means to cope with the financial and social burden of the refugees and often felt that it was left alone by Europe in sharing this burden. Since the beginning of the war, Turkey claims to have spent more than 10 billion dollars for the Syrian refugees it received,

instead of relying only on a relationship with a country’s autocratic leadership.” Nuray Atmaca, “The AKP’s Worldview: Why Turkey Won’t Change Its Foreign Policy”, *Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP)*, 10 November 2015, <http://www.gcsp.ch/News-Knowledge/Global-insight/The-AKP-s-Worldview-Why-Turkey-Won-t-Change-Its-Foreign-Policy>

⁷⁸ For details see: Özden Zeynep Oktav, “The Impact of Syrian Uprising on Turkey-Syria Relations”, *Orient* 3, (2012): 58-63.

⁷⁹ As Hermann and Hermann underlines, if the leaders as autonomous decision makers, have a strong worldview, from among the information received, they start looking for the evidences to prove their own thoughts and beliefs. It is possible for such leaders to neglect and underestimate the data that stay out of their own thoughts and belief systems. See: Margaret G. Hermann and Charles F. Hermann, “Who Makes Foreign Policy Decisions and How: An Empirical Inquiry”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No.4, (December 1989): 365.

⁸⁰ For an updated state of the Syrian refugees in Turkey, see: “Turkey’s Refugee Crisis: The Politics of Permanence”, *International Crisis Group’s Report*, November 30, 2016. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey/turkey-s-refugee-crisis-politics-permanence>

⁸¹ “Turkey Unveils ‘Humanitarian Diplomacy’”, *Turkish Weekly*, 11 January 2013. <http://www.turkishweekly.net/2013/01/11/news/turkey-unveils-humanitarian-diplomacy/>

⁸² “Syria is Our Domestic Problem”, *AK Party-News in English*, August 7, 2011, <http://www.akparti.org.tr/english/haberler/syria-is-our-domestic-problem/11535>

which puts it at odds especially with the EU countries.⁸³ The EU promise to provide 3+3 billion Euro was far from helping Turkey in this quest to ease the refugee problem. A possible freeze in Turkey-EU relations might totally push a cooperation on refugees out of agenda. Up until this chapter is written, Ankara's call to the international institutions, including the UN and NATO, to intervene in this crisis and to move Assad from power has not yet brought a concrete result despite the much visible effort of the international society, including the countries which are involved in this crisis, namely Russia, Turkey, Iran and the USA, to achieve a peaceful solution in Syria.

A Conceptual Analysis of Davutoğlu's Syria Rhetoric

This part of the chapter is formulated to see whether we can track the signs of a liberal internationalist worldview in the political speeches of former PM Ahmet Davutoğlu especially on those containing the word "Syria"; and if so, with which terminology this liberal internationalist worldview is expressed by him. The method that is used is "conceptual analysis", which is one of the two types of content analysis (the other one is relational analysis), and examines the existence and frequency of concepts in various means of communication.⁸⁴ In a way, it is an unobtrusive or non-reactive method of social research that is chosen to enable us to observe which words are used frequently and in which context and here in this chapter, the target is limited to Davutoğlu's political speech texts that contain the word "Syria". Although President Erdoğan has certainly been a significant figure in Turkish foreign policy making, the assessment of his foreign policy rhetoric has been left to a further study, through which there can be a chance to compare and contrast the two leaders in detail.

As far as this study could reveal, the basic terminology used by Davutoğlu in his speeches containing the word "Syria", represents the basic characteristics of his beliefs, emotions and worldview which are nourished by a "Moral politik" (or an Ideal politik) based on values, rather than a "Realpolitik" shaped by interests. Regarding the critiques that he had actually pursued an adventurist foreign policy in the Middle East,

⁸³ "Erdoğan'dan AB'ye Mülteci Krizi Tepkisi: Alnımızda Enayi Yazmıyor", *BBC Türkçe*, February 11, 2016.

⁸⁴ For details on content analysis and its various types, see for example: B. Devi Prasad, "Content Analysis: A Method in Social Science Research", in D.K. Lal Das and Vanila Bhaskaran (eds.), *Research Methods for Social Work*, (New Delhi: Rawat, 2008): 173-193.

Davutoğlu often claimed that he had a value-driven agenda instead of an interest-driven one.⁸⁵ In addition to that, he did not accept that it has been pursuing a “sectarian” foreign policy in the Middle East and Syria either. Similar to Davutoglu, the other names of the Turkish ruling elite too often deny JDP’s allegedly sectarian inclinations and the accusations that it has been giving support to the radical Sunni and Salafî groups to fight against Assad. They also deny that Turkey suffers from an imperial overreach in Syria, which might finally bring it a defeat. The outcomes of our word frequency analysis have supported these responses, but also brought forward some interesting aspects regarding Davutoğlu’s world view that believes in the “construction” of a new order and gives Turkey a strong role in it. Let us now briefly explain how we shaped our research.

To make the conceptual analysis of Davutoğlu’s speeches, we focused on his published speeches, which we could achieve through the internet. To analyse this unstructured data, we used “text mining” as a scientific method based on statistics. Text mining is a relatively new area of computer science research that tries to solve the crisis of information overload.⁸⁶ Although the current technical developments allow us to store large amounts of data, including those on the political events and the ruling elite, to absorb and process this information is a difficult job. As Feldman and Sanger underline, text mining helps us to pre-process document collections and visualize the results of that.⁸⁷

The computer program that was used for the text mining in this research was “R Statistical Programming Language”. This program was chosen, thinking that it can be used easily in word frequency analysis as it has a text mining library. Some characteristics of the program, such as stemming, which are peculiar to some languages, were not used. We have only used its statistical ability based on word frequency. The stemming peculiar to Turkish was made by going through all the words; which is quite time consuming and is not an easy task and this might have created a slight margin of error in our results, which is the soft belly of content analysis.

Our data mainly covers the speech texts of Davutoğlu which we could achieve through the internet regarding two periods; 1) his foreign ministry between May 2, 2009 and August 28, 2014, and 2) the beginning of his prime ministry, which began on August 28, 2014 (and ended unexpectedly

⁸⁵ “Başbakan: Çıkar Odaklı Politika İzlemiyoruz”, *HaberA*, July 19, 2013.

⁸⁶ Ronen Feldman and James Sanger, *Text Mining Handbook: Advanced Approaches in Analysing Unstructured Data*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007): x.

⁸⁷ Feldman and Sanger, *Text Mining...*, x.

on May 24, 2016 with his resignation after a consultation with President Erdoğan). Although the data that we gathered from these two eras are not equal, the two eras were purposely kept separate in order to figure out if there is any visible change in the characteristics of the words he used. The following part will first summarize the basic findings we had achieved through text mining during Davutoğlu's Foreign Ministry and then will give our findings regarding his prime ministry.

In this first era, 84 texts on Turkish foreign policy were achieved and 41 of them contained the word "Syria".⁸⁸ While gathering the necessary data, we chose the texts which are written in Turkish. The interviews, public statements and other speeches that were given visually were intentionally left out. Going through the written material that we could gather, we made a word frequency analysis and tried to understand Davutoğlu's main approach and sources of motivation on the issue before and after the Syria crisis.

In the 41 official texts of Davutoğlu, containing the word "Syria", it has been found out that the most frequent words (except the common linguistic words such as "one", "all", "for" - in Turkish "bir", "bütün", "için"- etc.) are derived from the words "**human**" (insan), "**Turkey**" (Türkiye), "**history**" (tarih) and "**Syria**" (Suriye). The following is the table that summarizes the most frequent words in the texts that contain the word "Syria", together with the frequency of the words in the rest of Davutoğlu's foreign ministry speech texts that do not contain the word "Syria".

The total number of words that are derived from the word "**human**" (including humanitarian - insani) is 1082 from the texts containing the word "Syria" and 203 in the other texts. For the word "**history**", the ratio is 690/214 (the first set of numbers refers to the Syria texts and the second to the others that do not contain the word "Syria"). This shows the significance given by Davutoğlu to the concept of "history" while formulating his foreign policy.

Among the most frequent words after "history", one can see "**Islam**", which takes place for 336 times in his texts that contained the word "Syria" and for only 16 times in his other texts. We also see "**civilization**" (medeniyet) as a quite frequent word. For this word, the ratio that we have is 275/23. Similarly, the word "**Muslim**" is also a very frequent one in the texts that contain the word "Syria", being used for 195 times. The frequency of that word on the other texts is just 10. showing a strong relationship between Davutoğlu's perception of the Syria crisis and Muslimhood.

⁸⁸ See Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' web page on Davutoğlu's speeches as the Foreign Minister, through: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/sub.tr.mfa?52e904f9-78af-49b3-89b5-5b4bdb38d51f>

Table 5.1. Conceptual Analysis of Davutoğlu’s 84 Speeches btw. 2009-2014

| Word | Word Frequency in Speech Texts Containing “Syria” | Word Frequency in Speech Texts not Containing “Syria” |
|--------------|---|---|
| Human | 1082 | 203 |
| Turkey | 985 | 402 |
| History | 690 | 214 |
| Syria | 661 | 1 |
| Europe | 506 | 213 |
| City | 444 | 49 |
| Nation | 440 | 159 |
| People | 419 | 101 |
| Culture | 372 | 206 |
| Islam | 336 | 16 |
| Brother | 334 | 144 |
| Civilisation | 275 | 23 |
| Construction | 241 | 22 |
| Africa | 225 | 193 |
| Muslim | 195 | 10 |
| Jerusalem | 186 | 0 |
| Order | 182 | 10 |
| Restoration | 154 | 1 |
| Asia | 139 | 54 |
| Justice | 100 | 7 |
| Cruelty | 89 | 0 |
| Refugee | 79 | 1 |
| West | 71 | 14 |
| Sunni | 71 | 2 |
| Assad | 50 | 1 |
| Guest | 42 | 20 |
| Cruel | 25 | 1 |

Compared to the previously mentioned words such as “civilization” and “Islam”, the word “**Sunni**” does not have a very high frequency, with a ratio of 71/2. However, the ratio of the word “**culture**” (kültür), which is one of the leading proponents of Davutoğlu’s Middle East approach, is very high, 372/206. The ratio of the word “**people**” (halk) is 419/101, another high ranking concept often mentioned by Davutoğlu to explain the direction of his foreign policy. The ratio of the word “**nation**” (millet) is

again high, 440/159, possibly showing his perception of the Syrian civil war also as a matter of the Turkish nation.

The ratio of the word “**cruelty**” (zulüm and zulm) is 46 + 43/0 and the ratio for the word “**cruel**” (zalim) is 25/1, which signify that the words cruelty and cruel was almost fully used to refer the Syria related issues. The ratio of the word “**Assad**” is quite low; 25/0 (Esad) and 25/1 (Esed). This shows that PM Davutoğlu constructs Turkey’s Syria policy with a content that is driven mainly from the concepts such as history, Islam, Muslim, civilization, cruelty etc. rather than directly referring to Assad.

It is also seen that Davutoğlu has a special emphasis on the word “**city**” (şehir) in his texts on Syria. The words derived from “city” is used for 444 times in the Syria texts and for 49 times in other texts.⁸⁹ Reminding his famous “strategic depth” doctrine, which is considered to be a geo-strategic evaluation of Turkey and its place on the world, it is also seen in his speech texts containing “Syria” that Davutoğlu has quite a large number of geographic terms and geo-political expressions in his speech texts. “**Europe**”, for example, is used for 506 times in his speeches that contain “Syria” and for 213 times in his other speeches; the ratio of “**Africa**” is 225/193 and of “**Asia**” is 139/54. In addition, the ratio for the word “**West**” is 71/14. Interestingly, the word “**Jerusalem**” (Kudüs) is also used quite frequently in Davutoğlu’s speeches containing “Syria”, which has a ratio of 186/0.⁹⁰ Coming to one of the most significant aspects of the Syria crisis, we see the word “**refugee**” (mülteci) for 79 times in Davutoğlu’s speeches containing “Syria” and just for once in his other speeches. The frequency of the word “**brother**” (kardeş) is also very high (334/144) and the word “**guest**” (misafir), which was used by Turkey for a long time to define the Syrian refugees, was used for 42/20.

The word “**restoration**” (restorasyon) is also a very frequent word in the Syria texts, with the numbers 154/1. Relatedly, the ratio for the word “**construct**” (inşa) is 241/22. The statistics we achieved for the words “**Order**” and “**Justice**”, the two pioneering aspects of Davutoğlu’s

⁸⁹ Davutoğlu is well known for his interest in the conceptual and theoretical analyses of “cities” and “civilisations” and the relationship between them. For details see his latest book: Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Medeniyetler ve Şehirler*, İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2016.

⁹⁰ The significant place that Jerusalem (Kudüs) holds in Davutoğlu’s belief system is also reflected in his latest book. It is interesting to see that the titles he used in this book for Jerusalem (Kudüs) and Damascus (Şam) both contain the word “grief” (hüzün). The same grief is felt in his words for Aleppo as well. See: Davutoğlu, *Medeniyetler ve...*, 30-31 and 42-43.

worldview are about 182/10 for “order”, and 100/7 for “justice”, which are also quite high numbers.

Table 5.2. Conceptual Analysis of Davutoğlu’s 10 Speeches Containing “Syria” btw. 2014 – 2016

| Word | Word Frequency in Speech Texts Containing “Syria” |
|--------------|---|
| Turkey | 280 |
| Citizen | 180 |
| Terror | 118 |
| Human | 100 |
| Brother | 96 |
| Europe | 38 |
| History | 30 |
| City | 18 |
| Construction | 13 |
| Culture | 12 |
| Guest | 10 |
| Cruelty | 8 |
| Order | 8 |
| Civilisation | 7 |
| Islam | 4 |
| Assad | 4 |
| Africa | 3 |
| Asia | 3 |
| Cruel | 3 |
| Justice | 3 |
| Sunni | 2 |
| Muslim | 1 |
| Jerusalem | 0 |
| Restoration | 0 |

As mentioned earlier, these are the word frequency results we could achieve from Davutoğlu’s speeches as the foreign minister. In addition, we also went through 10 of his addresses to the nation, titled “Yeni Türkiye Yolunda” (On the Way towards New Turkey) and 2 official public messages during his prime ministry, all published online by the Press Centre of the Turkish Prime Ministry between September 30, 2014 -

March 31, 2016.⁹¹ Through this additional data, we were able to compare and contrast, though within a limited scope, Davutoğlu's most frequent terminology during his two different posts, regarding the texts containing the word "Syria". We did not find it very meaningful to compare his speeches containing the word "Syria" with those not containing it, as the number of the speeches without "Syria" only numbered 2 within the limited time and scope we gave to his speech texts in prime ministry. Further studies can improve this side of the research.

As seen in the Table 5.2, in 10 of his prime ministerial speeches and official messages that contain the word "Syria", "**Turkey**" (Türkiye - for 280 times) is the first, "**citizen**" (vatandaş, for 180 times) is the second and "**terror**" (for 118 times) is the third most frequent word. This points out a different outcome compared to his foreign ministerial texts. This is certainly a reflection of the changing circumstances in Turkey due to the rising terror activities in and outside of the country and their close relationship with the incidents in Syria. We should not of course ignore the impact of the mainly domestic focus of the prime ministerial agenda either. Looking at these texts, we can also see the certain decrease in the usage of the words "Islam" (only for 4 times in 10 speeches) and "Muslim" (only for 1 time).

There is also a limited usage of the word "Africa" (3 times) and "Asia" (3 times), while the word "**Europe**" is still being frequently used for 38 times. The high frequency of the word "Europe" is certainly related to the "refugee" problem between Turkey and Europe. The words that are derived from the word "**human**" (including humanitarian) are also ranking high (100 in total); however, "history", for example, is not among the top ten words (for 30 times only), different than his foreign ministerial texts we examined before. There is also a dramatic decrease in the usage of the words "civilization" (for 7 times), "culture" (12) "cruel" (3) and "cruelty" (8). The word "Sunni", however, is again not very frequent (for 2 times only) as this was the case while he was the Foreign Minister. The words "Esad" is again less frequent (Esad for 3 times - Esed for once). The words "**brother**" (for 96 times) is still ranking high, while there is a decrease in the usage of "guest" (for 10 times). This can be a reflection of the increasing belief in Turkey that the Syrian refugees are a permanent reality of Turkey now, instead of the previous idea that they will be hosted temporarily here.

Interestingly, there is a decrease in the word "city" (for 18 times) with no mentioning of "Jerusalem" this time. The word "restoration" does not exist at all and there is a deep fall in the usage of the word "construction" (for 13 times). The words "order" and "justice" are again quite visibly less

⁹¹ <http://www.bbm.gov.tr/Forms/pgNews.aspx?Type=4>

frequent (“order” for 8 times and “justice” for 3 times only). The outcomes we achieved signify certain convergences and divergences between Davutoğlu’s Syria rhetoric during his two different posts within two different time periods and conjunctures. The excel tables above are prepared in order to show these converging and diverging points through the words we gathered. Relying these tables, we can claim that there is a relative decrease in Davutoğlu’s liberal internationalist approach towards Syria when we compare his foreign ministerial and prime ministerial terms. In a way, his assertive and ambitious tone that strongly favoured a reformist change in Syria is not as strong as it was in previous years, although his pro-“Syrian people” approach continues. We come to that point, especially seeing the decrease in the frequency of the words “culture”, “civilization”, “city”, “restoration”, “construction”, “order” and “justice” etc., while preserving the high frequency of the words “nation”, “refugee”, “brother” etc.

As we mentioned before, all these comments have a certain margin of error, as they were made by gathering the necessary data through a statistical method, word frequency, which was practiced without focusing on the subject or the main angle of the speech texts we examined. It also tends to disregard various other elements behind these texts, such as who wrote them under which conditions. However, still, we could achieve significant indicators that allowed us to think on the relationship between the Syria policy of Davutoğlu and his worldview and beliefs. Even this, we believe, can stimulate further quantitative studies.

Conclusion

This chapter is a reflection of a humble effort to understand the possible links between leaders’ foreign policy making and their worldviews as well as their belief systems. It gained strength from various studies within the discipline of Political Psychology, which searches the influence of the cognitive structures, heuristics, leadership styles and motives of the leaders on their political decisions. Within this scope, the psychological states of individuals are closely related to how they perceive the world around them and shape their foreign policies accordingly.

In this respect, Turkish ruling elite’s beliefs and worldviews have also been highly influential on their political decisions. Among them, the two leading names, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and former FM and former PM Ahmet Davutoğlu’s worldviews, which take root from a “conservative democrat” vision (as they call), seem to have a quite critical and reformist approach towards the outside world. They believe in the

necessity of changing the international system by renewing the existing international order and justice. The UN has been one of the most criticized international organizations, which in Turkey's eyes, is far from bringing solutions to the existing crises of the world, including the unequal treatment of the Muslim communities such as the Palestinians. This liberal internationalist/interventionist worldview has become much more visible especially by the beginning of the Syrian civil war that forced Turkey to make a choice between its ideals and commitments. Soon after, "moral politik" won and Turkey took side with the Syrian people rather than backing the Assad regime. This intervening attitude, which gained a military tone by mid-2016 as well as the humanitarian one that has been mentioned since the beginning of the crisis, is the pioneer of Turkey's Syria policy. In fact the crisis has turned into a "domestic problem", as Erdoğan claims, which threatens Turkey's very core interests such as national security and territorial integrity.

By the end of 2016, the Syria crisis is far from a solution and Turkey is much more involved in the increasing level of violence inside and outside of its borders. The terror attacks of ISIS and the PKK as well as the ruined Kurdish solution process have been the biggest challenges before Turkey's future targets which was once summarized by Davutoğlu as "zero problems with neighbours". This certainly affected the ruling elite's political discourse. Examining Davutoğlu's Syria rhetoric in this chapter through text mining although with various technical and methodological shortcomings, signals of this change were already evident in Davutoğlu's Syria speeches between his foreign ministry and prime ministry. Even though he protected his pro-"Syrian people" approach, the words that reflect his liberal internationalist/interventionist worldview were slightly decreasing in his prime ministerial post.

One can consider that as a sign of a loss of hope for a "fair" solution in Syria, which has long been favoured by the Turkish ruling elite, who consider themselves as the "pioneer" of change in the Middle East and the "spokesman" of the Syrian people. Turkey's military intervention to Syria by August 2016 can be a further step of this assertive but risky policy choice, which continues to underline the aims of "bringing justice to Syria" and "ousting tyrant Assad from power". Whether Turkey will be influential on ending this crisis positively is not yet clear. But there is a growing regional and international effort to find a peaceful solution to Syria.