EXPLAINING SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST CONTRIBUTIONS TO SECURITY STUDIES*

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze how constructivism has envisaged security and the contribution of constructivism to the security debate. We shall argue that constructivist and rationalist approaches to international security and the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) generate competing perspectives. In the first section of the paper, we briefly discuss diversified perspectives in constructivist thought and present the main assumptions of the constructivist approach. Secondly, emphasis shifts to presenting the contributions of constructivism to security studies. The constructivist challenge to the rationalist assumptions have been studied with emphasizing the differences on specific concepts such as power, anarchy, cooperation, capability, conflict and sovereignty. As a case study, this essay examines the constructivist understanding on the ESDP and presents the constructivist critiques to the rationalist approaches. Whilst security studies have been increasingly approached by constructivism with presenting ontological contributions, there is still need for further theoretical and empirical research.

Key Words

Constructivism, Security Studies, Critical Security Studies, Constructivist Security Studies, ESDP

Introduction

During the Cold War, security studies were mainly studied by political realism. Yet, in the post-Cold War period, non-traditional security studies have begun to challenge the realist assumptions on security. Although there are a lot of developments in the non-traditional literature on security studies such as the work of the Copenhagen school, the Welsh school, feminist work and

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post structural work, this article is confined to analyze constructivist security studies. Thus, we will look at those scholars who brought the assumptions of social constructivism[1] to security studies. For instance, Adler and Barnett's edited book combines Karl Deutsch's work on security communities with constructivism and underlines that security seemed achievable through community rather than power.[2] Slightly different, but expressing views on the effect of constructivism to security studies, Katzenstein's edited book focuses on identity, norms and culture in national security interests, but the state is still viewed as the main actor in security.[3] Different from Katzenstein's analyses, Huymans' work focuses on the social significance of language in social relations as a critical constructivist research, which sees immigration issues as a security problem.[4] On the other hand, the traditional security approach has considered sovereignty and territory as the most important concepts to be protected in which security is based upon primarily military power.

This article aims to explain the constructivist approach in security studies by outlining the context and the conceptual repertoire of constructivism on security. We shall argue that constructivism as a school of thought considers security differently than the mainstream IR[5] theories. This research aims to expose its added value for the research on this area by explaining social ontology of constructivist approach in security studies in an integrative and organized manner, indicating how it is differentiated from the rational approach. This research proceeds in two steps. Firstly, it reviews constructivism in IR and specifically in security studies. Secondly, as a case study, it focuses on the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). It is concluded that the constructivist approach provides a new avenue for further research and academic discussion within IR as well as the European security studies. Yet, we have to note that we will not explore the evolution and the general framework of the ESDP, but constructivist conceptualization of the ESDP and how this constructivist approach has contributed to the debate in terms of the external impact of the ESDP. The mainstream IR critics directed towards the constructivist analyses and the studies aspired to extend the traditional agenda of security studies fall outside the scope of this research.

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[1] Hereinafter we will refer to social constructivism as constructivism.

[2] Amanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (eds.), *Security Communities*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

[3] Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1996.

[4] Jef Huymans, *The Politics of Insecurity, Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU*, London, Routledge, 2006; Jef Huymans, "Defining Social Constructivism in Security Studies: The Normative Dilemma of Writing Security", *Alternatives*, Special Issue, Vol. 27, 2002, p. 41-62.

[5] In the text, abbreviation as 'IR' denotes the academic discipline.

Constructivism and IR Theory

Constructivism is not itself a theory of IR, but a theoretically informed approach to the study of international relations, which is based on the notion that international relations are 'socially constructed'. Taking a sociological constructivist position in IR allows us to be critical towards rationalism, which is "formal and informal application of rational choice approach to IR".[6] Yet, constructivism aspires to describe itself as a 'middle ground' position.[7] Nicholas Onuf introduced the actual label of constructivism to IR in 1989.[8] Alexander Wendt has followed with influential articles and a book in the 1990's.[9] In the evolution of constructivism, the 'English School' and the 'Copenhagen School' have contributed to the debate considerably.[10] Since its first presentation in the IR, there have been a lot of studies on constructivism and thus, today there is a difference between constructivists concerning the level of analysis.[11] For instance, Wendt has focused on interaction between states in international system and ignored non-systemic sources of state identity such as domestic political culture. According to Price and Reus-Smit, Wendt's approach is called 'systemic' constructivism. On the other hand, 'holistic' constructivism is seen more concrete and historical than 'systemic' constructivism, which adopts a perspective to integrate domestic and international structures.[12] For instance, on the international side, Martha Finnemore focuses on the norms of international society and on their effect to state identities and interests.[13] In the book edited by Katzenstein, other constructivists argue that culture, norms and identity also matter in national security.[14] Slightly different than Finnemore's approach on international environments, Katzenstein and Hopf focus on the role of domestic norms in the area of national security.[15]

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[6] James Fearon and Alexander Wendt, "Rationalism v. Constructivism: A Skeptical View", in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, Bath A. Simmons (eds.), *Handbook of International Relations,* London, Sage Publications, 2002, Fearon and Wendt, "Rationalism v. Constructivism…", p. 54.

[7] Steve Smith and Patricia Owens, "Alternative Approaches to International Theory", in John Baylis and Steve Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 274; Emanuel Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1997, p. 319-363.

[8] Nicholas Onuf, *World of Our Making*, Columbia, SC, University of South Carolina Press, 1989.

[9] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999; Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics", *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2, 1992, p. 391-425.

[10] See Hasan Ulusoy, "Revisiting Security Communities After the Cold War: The Constructivist Perspective", *Perceptions*, Vol. 8, 2003, p. 161-196.

[11] Christian Reus-Smit, "Imagining society: constructivism and the English school", *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 2002, p. 494-495.

[12] Richard Price and Christian Reus-Smit, "Dangerous Liaisons? Critical International Theory and Constructivism", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1998, p. 268.

[13] Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1996.

[14] Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security...*

[15] Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Relations: Identities and Foreign Policies*, Moscow, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2002; Peter Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and National Security*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1996.

Furthermore, Reus-Smit examines the ongoing debate between constructivists inspired by sociological institutionalism, Habermasian communicative action theory and Foucaldian writings on knowledge and power. The first one points out 'logic of appropriateness', the constitutive power of norms over interests and behavior; the second one gives emphasis to 'logic of argument', the role of communicative action in mediating between agents and intersubjective values; the third one highlights the production of discourses. Thus, according to the first one, norms constitute and influence state interests and identities, whilst for the second one, norms do not constitute identities and interests in any straightforward way, and according to the third one, norms are discursively dependent.[16]

Today, besides the differences between constructivists on the level of analysis and ontology, Reus-Smit states that there are also differences concerning methodology. Based on methodology, he categorizes two groups namely, 'interpretive' and 'positivist' constructivists. The former one emphasizes ideas, norms and culture with a distinctive interpretive methodology, whilst the latter one is driven by simple pragmatism with a desire to make concrete empirical analysis.[17] Constructivism is, from an interpretive perspective, "committed to a deeply inductive research strategy that targets the reconstruction of state/agent identity, with the methods encompassing a variety of discourse-theoretic techniques".[18]

Furthermore, according to Hopf, there is a differentiation between 'critical', which is the school dominant in Europe, and 'conventional constructivism', which is the prominent school in the United States.[18] The buzzwords for conventional constructivism are norms and identity, for critical constructivism are power and discourse. Conventional constructivism examines the role of norms and identity in shaping international political outcomes. Hopf considers that the conventional one operates between the mainstream IR and critical theory.[20] As indicated by Katzenstein et.al,

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[16] Reus-Smit, "Imagining Society…", p. 493-494.

[17] Reus- Smit, "Imagining Society…", p. 495-496.

[18] Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Social Constructivism in Global and European Politics: a Review Essay", *Review of International Studies,* Vol. 30, 2004, p. 231.

[19] Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory", *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1998, p. 171-200. Furthermore, there is an argument that besides conventional and critical, there is also a distinction between modern and postmodern constructivism. What separates critical constructivism from postmodernism is the acknowledgement by critical constructivists of the possibility of a social science and a willingness to engage openly debate with rationalism. See for details, Peter J. Katzsentein, Robert O. Keohane and Stephen D. Krasner, "International Organization and the Study of World Politics", in Peter J. Katzsentein, Robert O. Keohane and Stephen D. Krasner (eds.), *Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1999, p. 5-45.

[20] Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism…", p. 171-200.

conventional constructivism differs from rationalists on ontology because it put emphasis on social ontology, i.e. "they emphasize how ideational or normative structures constitute agents and their interests".[21] Individuals and states as social beings cannot be separated from a context of normative meaning. In this connection, conventional constructivism tries to complement rationalism with sociological perspectives, but does not diverge substantially from rationalists on the issues of epistemology or methodology. In other words, while the commitment of conventional constructivists to social ontology differs significantly from the mainstream IR, they use positivist epistemology.

Yet, there are those who prefer critical epistemological position in constructivism. For example, Price and Reus-Smit prefer to place constructivism in critical social theory and state, that "the new generation of critical theorists (in the 1990's) has been labeled "constructivists" because of their characteristic concern with the social construction of world politics".[22] Ulusoy states that "constructivism is critical in the sense that it aims to recover the individual and shared meaning that motivate actors to do what they do".[23] Furthermore, while the mainstream IR theories are concerned with "explaining why particular decisions resulting in specific courses of actions are made", the critical constructivists focus "on how threat perceptions, the object of security, are socially constructed". Thus, the mainstream IR theories are concerned with 'why' questions and are considered as 'explanatory', while critical constructivist approach is concerned with 'how' questions and is considered as 'understanding.'[24] Critical constructivism emphasizes discourse and linguistic methods, use of language in social construction of world politics. It is considered that conventional constructivism suffers from lack of empirical studies. Thus, constructivism has been transformed into a critical one. Furthermore, emphasis on epistemology, led to the 'linguistic turn' in constructivism, which is called a tension between conventional constructivism regarding consistency. Conventional constructivism is consistent based on an understanding of language and action as rule-based.

[21] Katzsentein, et.al, "International Organization…", p. 35.

[22] According to Price and Reus-Smit critical international theory has four characteristics. First of all, epistemologically, they question positivist approaches to knowledge, and state that there cannot be objective, empirically verifiable truth about social world. Secondly, methodologically, they reject a single scientific method. Thirdly, ontologically, they challenge rationalist conceptions of human nature and action and instead they emphasize social construction of actors' identities. Lastly, normatively, they do not accept value neutral theorizing. See, Price and Reus-Smit, "Dangerous Liaisons.." , p. 261-266. For critical theories in international relations, also see: E. Fuat Keyman, *Küreselleşme, Devlet, Kimlik/Farklılık: Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramını Yeniden Düşünmek*, Istanbul, Alfa Basım, 2000; E. Fuat Keyman, Eleştirel Düşünce: İletişim, Hegemonya, Kimlik/Fark, Atila Eralp (ed.), *Devlet, Sistem ve Kimlik: Uluslararası İlişkilerde Temel Yaklaşımlar,* Istanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 1997, p. 227-261.

[23] Ulusoy, "Revisiting Security Communities…", p. 161-196.

[24] Ulusoy, "Revisiting Security Communities…", p. 161-196; Keith Krause, "Critical Theory and Security Studies", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 1998, p. 317.

However, by 'linguistic turn', it is considered that we have to 'look and see' how language is put to use by social actors as they construct their world.[25]

Although there are recent debates in constructivism as indicated above, the main assumptions of constructivist approach can be presented in several points, which challenge the rationalist assumptions. Firstly, according to constructivists, the international system "is a set of ideas, a body of thought, a system of norms, which has been arranged by certain people at a particular time and place".[26] Human agents construct social reality and reproduce it on their daily practices.[27] Thus, constructivism sees the international system as 'socially constructed' and not given.

Secondly, constructivists argue that agents do not exist independently from their social environment. Thus, state interests emerge from an environment in which states operate and are endogenous to states' interaction with their environment.[28] Social world involves thoughts, beliefs, ideas, concepts, languages, discourses, signs and signals. People make social world, which is meaningful in the minds of people. In other words, at the hearth of constructivist work is that social environment defines who we are, our identities as social beings.[29] In addition, normative or ideational structures do not exist independently from social environment. Constructivists focus both on differences among people and how those relations are formed by means of collective social institutions.[30]

Thirdly, constructivists emphasize the importance of normative or ideational structures as well as material structures in defining the meaning and identity of an individual.[31] According to constructivists, human beings interpret the material environment. For example, the international system of

[25] Karin M. Fierke, *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007. About the maturing research in social constructivism see also, Checkel, "Social constructivism…", p. 229-244.

[26] Robert Jackson and Georg Sorenson, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003.

[27] Thomas Risse, "Neo-functionalism, European Identity and the Puzzles of European Integration", *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 2005, p. 291-309; Emanuel Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1997, p. 319-363.; Wendt, *Social Theory of* ...; Thomas Christiansen, Knud Erik Jorgensen and Antje Wiener, "The Social Construction of Europe", *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 1999, p. 528-544; J. Fearon and A. Wendt, "Rationalism and Constructivism in International Relations Theory", in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth Simmons (eds.), *Handbook of International Relations Theory*, London, Sage Publications, 2002.

[28] Risse, "Neo-functionalism, European …", p. 291-309.

[29] Wendt, *Social Theory of* ...; Risse, "Neo-functionalism, European…", p. 291-309.

[30] Jackson and Sorenson, *Introduction to International Relations…*

[31] Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground…", p. 319-363; John Gerard Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-Utilateralism and Social Constructivist Challenge", in Peter J. Katzsentein, Robert O. Keohane and Stephen D. Krasner (eds.), *Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1999, p. 239.

security and defense consists of territories, populations, weapons and other physical assets. But the important thing is how these material resources are conceived, organized and used in international security. In addition, constructivists stress on intersubjective beliefs such as ideas, conceptions and assumptions.[32]

Finally, according to constructivism, norms and shared beliefs constitute actor's identities and interests, e.g. the way people conceive themselves in their relation with others. Constructivists concentrate on the social identities and interests of actors. Social identities and interests are not fixed but relative and relational.[33] Interests are based on the social identities of actors.[34] Constructivist analysis redefines the concepts of roles, rules, identity and ideas considerably departing from the rational choice conceptualizations.

In short, constructivism challenges the material and rational assumptions of the mainstream IR theories and attempts to address neglected issues. In addition to the theoretical framework given above, there are few empirical works of conventional and critical constructivists yet improving. For instance, Price and Tannenwald's work on nuclear and chemical weapons advance our understanding.[35] Finnemore and Klotz question materially derived or objective rationalist explanations,[36] while Weber and Bartelson[37] address different questions from those addressed by the mainstream IR scholars.[38] Yet, more empirical work is necessary; but even at this point it is posing a threat to neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism.[39]

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[32] Jackson and Sorenson, *Introduction to International Relations…*

[33] For instance, Bozdağlıoğlu examines Turkish Foreign Policy from a constructivist point of view with a focus on Turkey's identity-based foreign policy. He argues that in order to adequately understand the preferences and interests of Turkey in foreign policy, for instance its Western orientation and alienated relations with the Middle Eastern neighbors, the analysis shall be equipped with examining Turkish identity, which has been shaped through the new Western identity of Turkey constructed in the following years of the Independence War. He further underlines that whilst the realists emphasize the security and economic interests in explicating the Western orientation of Turkey, being a part of Europe and reaching to the level of contemporary civilization through Westernization lied at the core of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkey preferred to preserve its Western orientation sometimes at its own cost. More importantly, the negative interactions with Europe have resulted in shifts in Turkey's foreign policy that in turn approves the constructivist assumption that preferences and interests are not fixed but subject to interaction. For an application of constructivism to Turkish Foreign Policy, please see Yücel Bozdağlıoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish Identity*, London, Routledge, 2003.

[34] Price and Reus-Smit, "Dangerous Liaisons...", p. 259-294; Wendt, *Social Theory of...*; Jackson and Sorenson, *Introduction to International Relations…*

[35] Richard Price and Nina Tannenwald, "Norms and Deterrence: The Nuclear and Chemical Weapons Taboos", in Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1996, p. 114-53.

[36] Finnemore, *National Interests...*; Audie Klotz, "Norms Reconstructing Interests: Global Racial Equality and US Sanctions Against South Africa", *International Organization*, Vol. 49, No. 3, 1995, p. 451-78.

[37] Cynthia Weber, *Simulating Sovereignty: Intervention, the State, and Symbolic Exchange*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995; Jens Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995.

[38] Price and Reus-Smit, "Dangerous Liaisons...", p. 276.

[39] Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together.…", p. 215-245.

Social Ontology of Constructivism in Security Studies

We are used to thinking of security as physical security and focus on power and politics. Thus, in structural realism competition for security is primarily based upon military power. Critics of realist-derived security studies challenge the positivist orthodoxy. Critical security studies (CSS) involve various approaches such as the Frankfurt school, the Welsh school, the feminists, the Third World specialists, human security researchers and so on.[40] According to CSS, "security is what we make it. Different world views and political philosophies deliver different views and discourses about security".[41] CSS consider that "there is a need for a broader and deepened approach to re-thinking security".[42] Thus, they are looking to security at different levels as individual, group, societal, state, regional and international.[43] They also look to other security agents such as social movements, international governmental and nongovernmental organizations and individuals.[44] In short, CSS challenge the traditional security understanding by not only broadening and deepening the concept but also considering other referent objects and security agents than state. Yet, CSS do not "rule out the concern with the military dimension of security".[45] CSS identify possibilities for change and emphasize a normative basis to criticize the existing practices.[46]

Krause presents common core features of critical perspectives on security, which are in sharp contrast to the mainstream IR theories. First, the principal actors in world politics are "social constructs, and products of complex historical processes that include social, political, material and ideational dimensions". Second, they are "constituted (and reconstituted) through political practices that create shared social understanding". Third, since world politics is socially constructed, it is not static. Fourth, there is not objective truth in the social world. Fifth, accepted methodology is interpretive. Lastly, the purpose of theory is not explanatory, but understanding.[47]

[40] Pınar Bilgin, "Security Studies: Theory/Practice", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 1999, p. 31-32; Pınar Bilgin, Ken Booth and Richard Wyn Jones, "Security Studies: The Next Stage?", *Inverno, Naçao e Defesa*, No. 84, 1998, p. 152.

[41] Bilgin, et.al., "Security Studies…", p. 153; Ken Booth, "Security and Self: Reflections of a Fallen Realist", Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams (eds.), *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1997, p. 83-119.

[42] Bilgin, et.al, "Security Studies…", p. 154.

[43] On individual and societal dimensions of security, see: Pınar Bilgin, "Individual and Societal Dimensions of Security", *International Studies Review*, No. 5, 2003, p. 203-222.

[44] Bilgin, "Security Studies: Theory/Practice", p. 38.

[45] Bilgin, et.al., "Security Studies…", p. 155.

[46] Bilgin, "Security Studies: Theory/Practice", p. 39; about other normative international relations theories see: İhsan D. Dağı, "Normatif Yaklaşımlar: Adalet, Eşitlik ve İnsan Hakları", Atila Eralp (ed.), *Devlet, Sistem ve Kimlik: Uluslararası İlişkilerde Temel Yaklaşımlar,* Istanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 1997, p. 185- 227.

[47] When Krause has used the term critical he stated that it does not include the radically different ideas that emerge from post-structuralism or post-modernist projects. Krause, "Critical Theory…", p. 316-17.

In short, CSS indicate a collection of approaches, which are questioning traditional security studies and rejecting the (neo)-realist mindset of Cold War era security studies. The Copenhagen, Aberystwyth and Paris schools have dominated critical literature within the field of security studies in the 1990s. CSS has been associated with specific individuals such as Keith Krause, Michael Williams, Ken Booth and Richard Wyn Jones, and debates such as the securitization theory and desecuritization, the emancipation of individuals and the securitization of migration.[48] Yet, according to Williams, there is no unanimity on what exactly a critical approach to security means.[49] Nevertheless, recently the collective works of the Critical Approach to Security in Europe (C.A.S.E collective) have offered a clear typology of the critical approaches to security in Europe.[50]

Our preference is to point out an approach with only constructivist contributions to security studies, which is a narrower range of perspective than presented in CSS that is a collection of approaches as indicated above. As mentioned in the earlier section, constructivism is the middle ground between the mainstream research traditions in IR and critical theory, though the concerns of critical studies and those of constructivism are somewhat similar as reflected by concern on identity and norms on security agenda.[51] Yet, CSS share a broad sociological and political approach and are all based on a reflectivist and constructivist epistemology. Critical scholars go further than the various forms of constructivism with greater concern for the epistemological and emancipatory challenges in international security. Within CSS, there is more concern on other regions such as the Southern Africa (Booth) and the Middle East (Bilgin) when compared with the focus on the ESDP.[52]

What is the contribution of constructivism to security studies? We have to again admit that constructivism is not seen as a theory of security, but they have brought the assumptions of constructivism into security studies, which can be considered an approach rather than a theory. In the following, based on the characteristics of constructivism portrayed in the previous section, we have tried to outline the conceptual repertoire of constructivism

[48] See for details on recent evolution of critical views: C.A.S.E. "Critical Approaches to Security in Europe: A Network Manifesto", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2006, p. 443-487.
[49] Michael J. Williams, "The Practices of Security. Critical Contributions", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1999, p. 341-344.
[50] C.A.S.E. "Critical Approaches to Security…"
[51] Williams, "The Practices of Security…"
[52] Ian Manners, "European (security) Union: From Existential Threat to Ontological Security", *Copenhagen Peace Research Institute*, Working Paper No. 5, 2002.

on security, also indicating the differences between constructivist and rationalist conceptions of security, though we admit that our aim is modest to portray these characteristics. We believe that security research would gain from constructivist arguments since constructivism offers opportunities to advance the debate within the security studies based on the rationalist paradigms. As stated by Price and Reus-Smit, constructivism can contribute to the development of critical international theory.[53]

Firstly, there is a notable difference between constructivism and rationalism based on their ontological commitments. Constructivists argue that there is social interaction, and thus favor social ontology instead of individualistic ontology of rationalism. They do not see international relations within the context of international power structure. Instead, they are concerned with the impact of 'norms', 'identities' and 'strategic cultures' in international security.[54] According to constructivists, 'norms' are inter-subjective beliefs rooted in and reproduced through social practice.[55] Thus, constructivists view international security differently from the rationalist approaches.[56] Constructivists concentrate on social structure rather than material one in the international system. For instance, Checkel focuses on the question of why actors comply with social norms, and argues that one of the major differences between rationalism and constructivism stems from their tools of explaining compliance. For rationalists, compliance mechanisms are individualistic like coercion, cost-benefit calculations and material reasons; on the other hand, constructivists prioritize the role of social learning, socialization and social norms.[57]

Secondly, the rational understanding of power is narrow and usually materialistic. On the other hand, constructivism views 'socially constructed' knowledge (ideational forces) as a factor of power, which especially affects state interests and identities. Besides, they are not only concerned what power means but also what power does, whether intentionally or not.[58] Constructivist approach does not deny that power and interests are important.

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[53] Price and Reus-Smit, "Dangerous Liaisons?...", p. 259-294

[54] Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It…", p. 391-425.

[55] For a detailed analysis on norms in international relations see: Annika Björkdahl, "Norms in International Relations: Some Conceptual and Methodological Reflections", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2002, p. 9-23.

[56] Examples on different considerations between liberals, realists and constructivist see: Aaron L. Friedberg, "The future of U.S.-China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?", *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 2005, p. 7-45; Thomas Berger, "Set for Stability? Prospects for conflict and cooperation in East Asia", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 26, 2000, p. 405-428.

[57] Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change", *International Organization*, Vol. 55, No. 3, 2001, p. 553.

[58] For a constructivist understanding of power see: Guzzini, "A Reconstruction of Constructivism…", p. 147-182.

Rather constructivism asks a different and prior set of questions. It questions what the interests are and investigates the ends to which and the means by which power will be used. Norms shape interests and interests shape actions. Norms do not determine actions. Changing norms may change state interests and create new interests.[59] For constructivists, in addition to power, identities and norms influence how security interests are defined. Furthermore, constructivist understanding of power involves hard power, institutional power-which can control others in indirect ways,[60] and productive power-generated and transformed through discourse. "Power, in short, means, not only the resources required to impose one's own will to others, but also the authority to determine the shared meanings that constitute the identities, interests and practices of states, as well as the conditions they confer."[61] There is a renewed interest in conceptualization and the study of power in constructivist analysis.[62]

Thirdly, constructivists consider states as role players –trying to do what is appropriate or proper to do in a given situation.[63] Thus, states are guided by norms, which involve standards of appropriate behavior. States conforms to norms not for utility maximization as assumed by rational choice approaches, but because they understand it appropriate and good within the 'logic of appropriateness'. The utilitarian approach found in rational choice is totally agent-driven. On the other hand, the 'logic of appropriateness' found in constructivism has social structure-driven component as well as paying attention to self-interest and gain.[64]

Fourthly, whereas for the rationalist paradigm, the interests are pre-determined and fixed, constructivists argue that the actors' interests are redefined with intensive interaction and shaped with the 'logic of

[59] Martha Finnemore, "Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention", in Richard K. Betts (ed.), *Conflict After the Cold War*, New York, Longman/Pearson, 2004.

[60] International organizations are related to power, because they can be sites of identity and interest formation. Adler, "Seizing the Middle…", p. 336. For an example see: Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan, "China, WTO and Developing Countries: a Constructivist Analysis", *Perceptions,* Vol. 9, 2004, p. 13-29.

[61] Adler, "Seizing the Middle…", p. 336.

[62] Stefano Guzzini, "The Concept of Power: A Constructivist Analysis", *Millenium, Journal of International Studies,* Vol. 33, No. 3, 2005, p. 493-522.

[63] There are two different basic logics of action by which human behavior is interpreted. On the one side there are those who see the individual action as driven by 'logic of expected consequences' and prior preferences. On the other side are those who see action as driven by 'logic of appropriateness' and senses of identity. Scholars committed to a consequentialist position tend to see an international system of interacting autonomous, egoistic, self-interested maximizers. Scholars committed to an identity position, on the other hand, see political actors as acting in accordance with rules and practices that are socially constructed, publicly known, anticipated and accepted. See James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders", in Peter J. Katzsentein, Robert O. Keohane and Stephen D. Krasner (eds.), *Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1999, p. 312.

[64] Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change", *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 4, 1998, p. 912-3.

appropriateness'.[65] Within the tradition of 'logic of appropriateness', actions are seen as rule-based in which actors are imagined to follow rules that associate particular identities to particular situations. "The pursuit of purpose is associated with identities more than with interests, and with the selection of rules more than with individual rational expectations."[66]

Fifthly, there is a difference between the rationalist and constructivist research based on the distinction between constitutive and regulative rules. Regulative rules are "intended to have causal effects," regulating already existing activities and behavior. On the other hand, constitutive rules create new actors, interests or categories of action.[67] Rationalists ignore constitutive rules. Constructivists have not yet managed to devise a theory of constitutive rules, but are concerned with them. For constructivists, rules do not simply constitute regulative frameworks for problem solving, but more importantly they are the means for the creation of a "we-feeling" or a "sense of community".[68]

Sixthly, constructivists' threat perception is different from realist assumptions.[69] For instance, for neorealists, the actions of the Soviet Union constituted an objective threat. Contrarily, constructivists argue that threat is constructed. Whereas the traditional security studies focus on threat, constructivism posits that security is a political construction while also prioritizing social interaction, identity, rules and norms.[70] For constructivists, security and threats are not objective and fixed but they are socially constructed.[71] Security in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired core values. Yet, for constructivism threats are not natural and inevitable. States may change their threat perceptions by evolutions in their environment and modified practices.

Seventhly, anarchy, sovereignty, interests and identities are socially constructed and can change in time whereas the mainstream IR theories assume that these terms are static. Thus, constructivism can better explain changing nature of sovereignty overtime than realism. According to constructivism,

[65] Ben Tonra, "Constructing the Common Foreign and Security Policy: The Utility of a Cognitive Approach", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 4, 2003, p. 740.
[66] March and Olsen, "The Institutional Dynamics …", p. 311.
[67] Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together…", p. 231.
[68] Tonra, "Constructing the Common ...", p. 741.
[69] Ulusoy, "Revisiting Security Communities…", p. 161-196.
[70] Ian Manners, "European (security) Union: From Existential Threat to Ontological Security", *Copenhagen Peace Research Institute*, Working Paper No. 5, 2002.
[71] Pernille Rieker, "EU Security Policy: Contrasting Rationalism and Social Constructivism", *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*, Working Paper 659, 2004, p. 7.

national interests are inter-subjective understanding about what it takes to advance power, wealth and influence.[72] As stated by Wendt, "anarchy is what states make of it."[73] Anarchy is not externally given as assumed by neorealism. States are not considered as prisoners in anarchical structure, they create it. Thus, constructivism underlines that social interaction may also lead to cooperative anarchy.[74] There is nothing inevitable and unchangeable about world politics. Everything is inter-subjective and thus uncertain. In other words, according to constructivism, international relations can be 'socially constructed' in more value-based and normative terms rather than based on material interests as assumed by the rational choice approach. Identities might change with social interaction that will influence security behavior of states, which in turn affect the type of anarchy circumstancing the states.[75] According to Wendt, identities provide the basis for interests, thus what kind of anarchy prevails depends on what kinds of conception of security actors have and how they construe their identity in relation to others.[76]

Finally, for constructivists, security dilemma emanates from unknown intentions and can be reduced by known identities. The rational perspective assumes that actors feel urgent need to secure one-self in facing uncertainty. Yet, for constructivism uncertainty is not constant but variable. If international reality is socially constructed, enemy, threat and conflicts must also be socially constructed, by both material and ideational factors. Thus, agents face a socially constructed reality that can be either good or bad.[77] Yet, as indicated by Huymans, constructivist authors face another dilemma called as normative dilemma. The normative dilemma is based on the understanding that the effect of communication depends on security language used, depending on the willingness of the author to securitize an issue.[78]

In recent years, constructivists have been conducting research on security studies.[79] For example, there are works of scholars addressing conventional topics such as the spread of weapons of mass destruction, deterrence, arms races, strategic culture and alliance politics with sociological

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[72] Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground…", p. 337.
[73] Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of it…", p. 391-425.
[74] Georg Sorenson, "An Analysis of Contemporary Statehood: Consequences for conflict and cooperation", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 23, 1997, p. 253-269.
[75] For a detailed discussion on constructivism and identity see: Maja Zehfuss, "Constructivism and Identity: a Dangerous Liason", *European Journal of International Relations,* Vol. 7, No. 3, 2001, p. 315-348.
[76] Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of it…",
[77] Adler, "Siezing the Middle…",
[78] For further details see: Huymans, "Defining Social Constructivism…", p. 41-62.
[79] See: Tuncay Kardaş, "Güvenlik: Kimin Güvenliği ve Nasıl?", Zeynep Dağı (eds.), *Uluslararası Politikayı Anlamak: 'Ulus-Devlet'ten Küreselleşmeye,* Istanbul, Alfa Yayınları, 2007, p. 125-152.

approaches.[80] Particularly, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization expansion has generated a constructivist literature, which grows out of a critique of rationalist explanations.[81] Furthermore, in the light of the foregoing discussion, it follows that the rationalist approaches would have little to offer on the subject of European security transformation, thus under attract of constructivism. Here again, constructivists have not yet managed to devise a fully-fledged theoretical formulation, but the constructivist conceptualization of the ESDP has contributed to the debate, which constitutes an important topic.

A Case for Constructivism: Conceptualizing the ESDP

Although the mainstream IR have been under attack by constructivists and other critical approaches,[82] the dominant methodology in the US for security studies has remained to be the rational choice approach, which is based on the assumption that actors are rational, self-interested and value maximizing. Thus, as far as the ESDP is concerned, rationalist analyses subscribe to the explanation of "strategic balancing against the US military power". Yet, European scholars are leading in the emergence of a distinctive/ critical European research agenda in security studies. In particular, the constructivist analyses depart from the state-centric assumptions that are stuck to rationalist calculations and the discussion of absolute and relative gains. Besides, it refuses to conceive the ESDP process as a bargaining between the member states' pre-established and fixed national interests that is ended up with the lowest common denominator.

Previous sections have given an outline of the context and the conceptual repertoire of constructivism in IR in general and security studies in particular. It is concluded that constructivists not only envisage international security by challenging rationalist approaches, but also pay attention to different aspects, with introducing new concepts. Regarding the literature on the European integration studies, similar variants among the rationalists

[80] Katzenstein, *Cultural Norms and ...*

[81] As a case study for constructivism, NATO's persistence and expansion after the end of the Cold War has been examined. NATO survived though its main reason for establishment no more existed. This could be explained by shared values and norms as well as material interests. See for discussions on this issue: Frank Schimmelfenning, 'NATO's Enlargement: A Constructivist Explanation', *Security Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2-3, 1999, p. 198-234; Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Identity in a Democratic Security Community: The Case of NATO", Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, New York, Columbia Press, 1996, p. 359-399; Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Between a New World Order and None: Explaining the Reemergence of the United Nations in World Politics", in Keith Krause and Michael Williams (eds.), *Critical Security Studies*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1997, p. 255-97.

[82] For example see: C.A.S.E, "Critical Approaches to …", p. 443-487.

and constructivists in approaching the ESDP can also be detached.[83] This final section assesses the criticisms directed by the constructivist approaches to the rationalist conception of the ESDP. It aims to explain how the ESDP has been conceptualized from a constructivist vantage point and how the constructivist approach has contributed to the debate in terms of the external impact of the ESDP, which offers to see the European Union as an actor in the international sphere.

Firstly, the constructivist and rationalist approaches conceive the development of the ESDP with differing propositions. This largely stems from differences among their methodological and ontological commitments at the metatheoretical level that in return have repercussions for their conception of security in general and the ESDP in particular. Indeed, the rationalist approaches explain developments in the European Union from the perspective of cooperation. This perspective has given explanation with the reasoning of reconcilability of national interests or a tactical maneuvering among nation states.[84] Hence, the rationalist approaches have largely overlooked the internal development of the ESDP and failed to account for the gradual progress at the institutional level and the incremental development of the ESDP. Indeed, the ESDP has turned out to be a hard case for the structural realists and intergovernmental approaches. Following neo-realist emphasis on the obstacles for cooperation in the anarchical self-help international system, the intergovernmental approaches have construed the ESDP as a zero-sum game between the European and national actors (the European Union's gain is the loss of national policies) or as a 'two-level game' in which policy-makers negotiate/project national interests and preferences.[85] More importantly, intergovernmentalism has not only overlooked the social, political and economic processes that are influential in framing instances of international cooperation but also been stuck to outcomes that have been devised as "optimizing economic and geopolitical interests" and thus neglected the social processes.[86] As far as the neo-functionalist approach is concerned,

[83] For example see: Jeffrey T. Checkel and Andrew Moravscsik, "Forum Section: A Constructivist Research Program in EU Studies?", *European Union Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 2002, p. 219-249.

[84] Kenneth Glarbo, "Wide-Awake Diplomacy: Reconstructing the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union", *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 1999, p. 634-51.

[85] For intergovernmental approaches, please see Stanley Hoffmann (1966), "Obstinate or Obsolete? The Fate of the Nation-State and the Case of Western Europe", *Daedalus*, Vol. 95, No. 3, p. 862-915.; Alan S. Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, Routledge, London, 1992, and Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, Ithaca N.Y, Cornell University Press, 1998.

[86] Frédéric Mérand, "Social Representations in the European Security and Defence Policy", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 41, No. 2, 2006, p. 131-52.

it has been accused of failing to account for the political integration and remaining largely silent on military matters.[87]

Secondly, as stated by Christiansen et. al. that the main contribution of the constructivist approaches to the European integration studies is the constructivist premises to account for the transformative repercussions of the European integration process over European state system, in other words, the change of the agents' identity, interests and behaviour.[88] Though there is no single approach able to explain all aspects of the European integration,[89] the impact of the process can be theorized within constructivist perspectives, but not by rationalists.[90] Thus, it opens a new floor for discussing not only the impact of ESDP on national foreign and security policies and the mutual relationship between the ESDP and national policies, but also the social integration emanating from communication and social learning.[91]

Thirdly, scholars subscribe to an alternative understanding of security concurrent to military issues and means. For instance, Sjursen underlines that the conception of European security has changed in three directions, the understanding of what constitutes threats to security, the means to address these threats/challenges and the ways for conflict resolution.[92] Similarly, Waever has elaborated on the 'societal security' concept in approaching European security. Whilst the state security approach has considered sovereignty as the most important concept, societal security has taken identity at the core of its analyses. Thus, constructivists understand the creation of security problem as a social phenomenon.[93] Besides, as the constructivist literature contributes to widen the security debate through taking norms and ideational factors into consideration, new conceptual tools have been invented. For instance, constructivism has defined the actors within the ESDP process as 'role players' rather than rational utility maximizers. The roles of actors are shaped

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[87] For a more detailed analysis on the European political integration and integration theory, see Ernst B. Haas, *The Obsolescence of Regional Integration Theory*, Institute of International Studies, Berkeley, 1975; Stanley Hoffman, "Obstinate or Obsolete? The Fate of the Nation State and the Case of Western Europe", *Daedalus*, Vol. 95, No. 3, 1966, p. 189-98; Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe, Social Purpose and State Power From to Maastricht*, UCL Press, 1998; Ben Rosamond, *Theories of European Integration*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 2000; Antje Wiener and Thomas Diez, *European Integration Theory*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

[88] Christiansen, Jorgensen and Wiener, "The Social Construction…", p. 528-44.

[89] See Nilüfer Karacasulu, "Avrupa Entegrasyon Kuramları ve Sosyal İnşaacı Yaklaşım (European Integration Theories and Social Constructivist Approach)", *Uluslararası Hukuk ve Politika (Review of International Law and Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 9, 2007, p. 82-100.

[90] Christiansen, Jorgensen and Wiener, "The Social Construction…", p. 529.

[91] Ben Tonra, "Constructing the Common", p. 734.

[92] Helene Sjursen, "Changes to European Security in a Communicative Perspective", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 39, No. 2, 2004, p. 107-28.

[93] Ole Waever, "Securitization and Desecuritization", Ronnie Lieschutz (ed.), *On Security*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1995, p. 46-86.

not with a simple logic of gains. On the contrary, the actors work in 'logic of appropriateness' bearing in mind the expectations of other actors from the process or the context of the process.[94] According to Meyer, a form of European strategic culture is emerging through social learning mechanisms and institutional socialization.[95] Similarly, Sjursen proposes to integrate the insights of communicative approaches into the theoretical analyses of European security as it is through the communicative process that norms are validated within the communicative process.[96] Thus, there is a growing literature approaching European security by constructivist tools.

For instance, constructivism has introduced a new dimension to the European security debate through the 'speech act'. Indeed, Waever introduced the concept of 'securitization' drawing from constructivist conceptual tools.[97] 'Securitization' can be defined as "the act of classifying an issue as a matter of security, implying that the issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure".[98] Waever argues that during the construction of Europe as an identity, a peculiar security argument has been utilized, namely "fragmented Europe with wars and divisions". This has conceived the European past as the other for European identity and the word integration as the main security rhetoric of Europe.[99] Furthermore, securitization assumes that in regional security "a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently close that their national securities cannot be reasonably considered apart from one another".[100] According to Waever, the institutionalized European security structure is influential in formation of foreign policies of the European major powers. A concept and vision of Europe have become critical to each nation's vision of itself. In each country the concepts of nation, state and Europe became closely intertwined.[101]

Glarbo posits a constructivist account of integration on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) by using the "methodology of analytical bracketing", pointing to symbolic interaction foundations. He argues that the

[94] Tonra, "Constructing the Common ....", p. 739.
[95] Christoph O. Meyer, "Convergence Towards a European Strategic Culture? A Constructivist Framework for Explaining Changing Norms", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2005, p. 523-49.
[96] Sjursen, "Changes to European Security…", p. 107-28.
[97] Waever, "Securitization and Desecuritization", p. 46-86.
[98] Quoted in Johan Eriksson, "Observers or Advocates? On the Political Role of Security Analysts", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1999, p. 312.
[99] Ole Waever, "European Security Identities", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1, 1996, p. 128.
[100] Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: a New Framework for Analysis*, Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 1998.
[101] Ole Waever, "The Constellation of Securities in Europe", Ersel Aydınlı and James N. Rosenau (eds.), *Globalization, Security and Nation State*, New York, State University of New York Press, 2005.

history of integration on foreign and security policies shall not be reduced to national concerns/interests, since integration has also been a product of social construction, as a result of communication between national diplomacies.[102] Analogous to his position, Mérand argues that the ESDP can hardly be adequately understood without considering the social representations of actors, as products of institutional practices that are influential to explain instances of security cooperation in the process of preference formation. Mérand takes the foreign and security policy-makers within the ESDP as a case study and argues that intergovernmentalism shall be underpinned by an analysis on social representations about the role of the state, security challenges and organizational objectives that have been decisive for the French, German and British policy-makers within the ESDP process.[103]

Similarly, in his analyses, Tonra focuses on the construction of the CFSP with a focus on the impact of norms on the role, identity and behavior of actors through advocating the cognitive approach, which is rooted within the meta-theoretical foundation of constructivism. Albeit admitting that material structures do exist, Tonra argues that these structures are invested with powerful social meanings that in return lead actors to adopt certain roles of behavior in their relationships with other actors. Meanings evolve through a process of social learning. Thus, although actors are engaged in rational choice and rational action in foreign policy decision-making, ideas and belief structures provide alternative policy options and contribute to decision-making. For instance, he contends that the roles played by national actors within CFSP are not strategic, since national interests are evolving with participation in CFSP. Rules are considered to be constitutive.[104]

Furthermore, Joenniemi has identified three ways of security talk, which departs from fixed understanding of security. These approaches are "common security, liberal security and a-security". Common security approach argues "inclusion rather than exclusion of difference", emphasizing the joint interest of avoiding conflict and cooperation. The liberal security approach, after criticizing the common security approach as insufficient, looks at the external environment of the European Union and argues on the enforcement of normative preconditions set in order to deal with challenges. A-security approach brings into sight "that communality might also be framed

[102] Glarbo, "Wide-awake Diplomacy…", p. 634-51.
[103] Mérand, "Social Representations…", pp. 13-52.
[104] Ben Tonra, "Constructing the Common…", p. 731-56.

using codes other than security".[105] Besides, Ulusoy has discussed whether constructivism is the most appropriate approach to apply to the concept of security communities and stated "the fact that the security community and its aim of peaceful change might be established through the institutionalization of mutual identification, transnational values, intersubjective understandings and shared identities, shows the relevance of constructivism in formulating the concept of security communities".[106]

Last but not least, constructivism sets forth a new debate perceiving the European Union as a 'power' as far as the external impact of the ESDP is concerned. Within the rationalist paradigm, the European Union cannot be considered as a security actor given the lack of its military capability and military autonomy. At the most extreme, the European Union can be conceptualized as a 'soft security' actor, but such a conception is not sufficient for rationalists to describe the European Union as a security actor in the international sphere.[107] Indeed, in the literature, scholars have come up with varying arguments in accounting for the actor capability of the European Union.[108] For instance Duchene introduced the concept of 'civilian power' in the 1970s in order to grasp the unique and *sui generis* impact of the European Union, and its role in international relations through non-military actions such as economic, diplomatic and humanitarian measures.[109] For various scholars, the European Union is undoubtedly an economic actor considering the supranational character of common economic policies, market size and investment capacity of the Union, and its capability on the management of the international economic system.[110] However, when it comes to military actorness, it is generally underlined that the European Union can neither be considered as a military actor nor generate military presence due to its lack of military capability and military autonomy.

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[105] Pertti Joenniemi, "Towards a European Union of Post-Security?" *Cooperation and Conflict, Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association*, Vol. 42, No. 1, 2007, p. 127-148.

[106] Ulusoy, "Revisiting Security Communities…", p. 161-196.

[107] Rieker, "EU Security Policy...", p. 8.

[108] Bretherton and Vogler defined 'actorness' as the capability to devise policy priorities purposefully and the ability to pursue these priorities cohesively, consistently and efficiently at the aim of realizing the policy objectives. Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor*, London and New York, Routledge, 1999. Yet, Allen and Smith introduce the concept of 'presence' to define the situations when the EU fails to exert influence through purposeful action. Rather than the concrete and purposive action of the actor, 'presence' unintentionally materializes stemming from the ideas, notions, expectations and imagination of the outside perception. David Allen and Michael Smith, "Western Europe's Presence in the Contemporary International Arena" in Martin Holland (ed.), *The Future of European Political Cooperation*, London, Macmillan, 1991.

[109] Quoted in Roy H. Ginsberg, *The European Union in International Politics; Baptism by Fire*, Maryland, Rowman and Littlefield, 2001, p. 39.

[110] Christopher Piening, *Global Europe: The European Union in World Affairs*, London, Lynne Rienner, 1997, p. 17; Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor*, London and New York, Routledge, 1999, p. 60.

Yet, constructivists emphasize the 'normative power' of the European Union with the reasoning that the European Union has not only impacted the perception and agendas of the national security actors and policies through Brussellisation and Europeanisation, but also devised its security policy through which it addresses various internal and external threats within the enhanced and multifaceted security agenda.[111] Within the constructivist analyses, the ideational and normative existence of the European Union, and the policies and actions of the Union have been considered as tools that bring forth actor capability on behalf of the Union. Young argues that the international presence of the European Union has not only stemmed from the commitment of the European Union to normative values, but the European Union has enshrined and implemented particular values and norms in its external policy through promoting human rights, encouraging development in the Third World with the principle of conditionality and exporting human rights and democracy through membership perspective for the former Eastern European countries and humanitarian assistance. Thus, he underlines that the sole focus shall not be the ideational/normative presence of the European Union, but the social learning process in external relations in discussing the international presence of the European Union.[112] Similarly, the analysis of Manners on how the European Union has contributed to the abolition of death penalty in some countries supplied an empirical basis on how the EU norms contributed to change actors' behaviors through social learning.[113] Hence, constructivist analyses have also contributed to the discussion on the external impact of the ESDP.

Thus, the constructive premises have not only broadened the research agenda with more identity-centred approaches for the ESDP, but also added new conceptual tools to the debate. After accusing the rationalist assumptions on the ESDP process for disregarding the social, economic and political processes in shaping cooperation and the impact of the process over actors' identity, interests and behaviour through socialization, communication and social learning processes, constructivist approaches contribute to the debate through integrating norms and ideational factors. Additionally, the

[111] Rieker, "EU Security Policy…", p. 1-18.

[112] He gave the enumerated examples; including a human rights component through human rights conditionality as a mechanism for controlling change in developing countries, human rights aid initiatives through European donors financed through the EU budget, funding human rights NGOS or specific human rights programme designed for economic and political change for former Eastern European countries, Indonesia, Palestinian Occupied Territories, Russia, Algeria, Kosovo, Bosnia, Slovenia, Ukraine and Turkey. For a more detailed analysis, please see Richard Youngs, "Normative Dynamics and Strategic Interests in the EU's External Identity", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 2, p. 415-35.

[113] Ian Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 2002, p. 235-58.

constructivist approach has contributed to the discussion on the external impact of the European Union with an emphasis on ideational and normative power. Yet, there is not much progress on empirical confirmation, although there are efforts of subjecting the constructivist analyses to empirical evidence. For instance, Farrell underlines that constructivists face two empirical challenges, namely, proving the existence of norms and demonstrating the impact of norms on actors' behavior.[114] Thus, constructivism has often been considered being too vague to produce a testable research agenda.

Conclusion

This article aims to explain the constructivist approach in security studies by outlining the context and the conceptual repertoire of constructivism on security. It is the contention of the authors that rationalist security conception needs to be challenged. Indeed, constructivism offers a middle ground between rationalism and reflectivism in security studies by distancing themselves from both without neglecting that there are diversified perspectives in constructivist thought.

Constructivism in IR has been increasingly studied in the last two decades, addressing similar issues of rationalism, but from a different angle. Yet, constructivists have also been concerned with different aspects of security that have been ignored by rationalists' ontology and epistemology. Constructivist security studies are based on similar ontological propositions with constructivist approaches in IR. The extent of literature cited in this paper points to the increasing constructivist research in security studies, which is especially concerned with the role of norms and identity and the process of social interaction. Yet, according to constructivists, norms do not determine actions. Changing norms may change state interests and create new ones. Constructivists claim that not only do material structures exist, but they are socially constructed. Through social interaction, social meanings of material structures may be redefined. Security is what states make of it and are in large part socially constructed. Furthermore, the actors are not considered as rational utility maximisers, but instead as role players. Constructivists are concerned with explaining behavioral outcomes that cannot be explained in terms of rationalist approaches to security studies based on power and interest.

[114] Theo Farrell, "Constructivist Security Studies, Portrait of a Research Program", *International Studies Review*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2002, p. 49-72.

As far as the ESDP case is concerned, the constructivist premises have been critical of the rationalist approaches that have overlooked the political, social and economic processes framing the ESDP and the impact of the ESDP on member states' identity, interests and behaviour. From such a perspective, the constructivist approach increases our theoretical ability to grasp the incremental development of the ESDP and in sharpening our analysis of security and defense cooperation in Europe. The constructivist approach has also increased our understanding about not only the transformative repercussions of the ESDP on actors' identity, preferences, incentives and interests through socialization, communication social learning, as an ongoing process rather than a static one, but also the widened security agenda. Moreover, the constructivist approach has also contributed to the discussion on the external impact of the ESDP. Thus, though the constructivist analyses have been criticized from various angles,[115] it contributed to the security debate with conceiving the ESDP as evolving with an emphasis on the social process and its impact on the interest/identity of actors/policy makers and societal security.

In short, constructivism brought up new concepts and a framework to security studies by distancing themselves from the 'materialist ontology' and 'rationalist explanations'. As it is argued in the article, constructivists have social ontological contributions to security studies, yet these have not been comprehensively studied. Finally, though critical constructivists are increasingly engaged in empirical work, much more work both theoretical and empirical is still needed.[116]

[115] For criticisms, please see Helen Sjursen, "The EU as a Normative Power: How Can This Be?", *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 1999, p. 235-51.; Adrian Hyde-Price, "Normative Power Europe: A Realist Critique", *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2006, p. 217-34.; Theo Farrell, "Constructivist Security Studies, Portrait of a Research Program", *International Studies Review*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2002, p. 49-72; Manners, 'Normative Power Europe…', p. 235-58.

[116] For the evaluation of empirical research on constructivism see: Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "Taking Stock: Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics", *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 4, 2001, p. 391-416.