



**THE RISE OF POPULISM AND NATIONALISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS
FOR COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST
PERSPECTIVE**

Mert CETIN

MA Thesis

Department of Globalization and International Relations (ENG.)

Adviser: Assoc. Prof. Hakan CAVLAK

2020



**POPÜLİZM VE MİLLİYETÇİLİĞİN YÜKSELİŞİ VE COVID-19
PANDEMİSİ ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİLERİ: SOSYAL İNŞACI BİR
PERSPEKTİF**

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Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Küreselleşme ve Uluslararası İlişkiler (ING.) Anabilim Dalı

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T.C.
TEKIRDAG NAMIK KEMAL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF
GLOBALIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (ENG.)
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TEKIRDAG-2020
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TEKİRDAĞ NAMIK KEMAL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
KÜRESELLEŞME VE ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER (ING.)
ANABİLİM DALI
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YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

Mert Çetin tarafından hazırlanan “The Rise of Populism and Nationalism and its Implications for COVID-19 Pandemic: A Social Constructivist Perspective” konulu YÜKSEK LİSANS Tezinin Sınavı, Tekirdağ Namık Kemal Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim Öğretim Yönetmeliği uyarınca 17.02.2021 günü saat 13.00’da yapılmış olup, tezin kabul edilmesine OYBİRLİĞİ ile karar verilmiştir.

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ABSTRACT

Institution, Institute : Tekirdag Namik Kemal University, Institute of Social Sciences.
Department : Department of Globalization and International Relations (ENG.)
Thesis Title : The Rise of Populism and Nationalism and its Implications for
COVID-19 Pandemic: A Social Constructivist Perspective
Thesis Author : Mert CETIN
Thesis Adviser : Assoc. Prof. Hakan CAVLAK
Type of Thesis, : MA Thesis, 2020
Year
Number of Pages : 151

The rise of populism and nationalism has recently become highly observable. It has caused systemic changes in political, social and economic fields. Populist and nationalist political movements achieve varying success around the world. Populist and nationalist discourses, such as anti-immigration and anti-multiculturalism, intensify. Besides, conspiratorial thinking has become prevalent. The rise of populism and nationalism also shows its implications throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. There has been a populist resistance against mask wearing and social distancing. Moreover, several conspiracy theories have been prevalent. Finally, xenophobic and racist incidents take place, and orientalist rhetoric against Asian communities resurfaces.

This thesis aims to reach conclusions that will provide a better understanding of the impact of rising populism and nationalism on COVID-19 pandemic with the help of social constructivism. As an idealist theory, social constructivism is convenient for understanding populism and nationalism, identity-related phenomena.

Keywords: Populism, Nationalism, COVID-19, Social Constructivism

ÖZET

Kurum, Enstitü : Tekirdağ Namık Kemal Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
ABD : Küreselleşme ve Uluslararası İlişkiler (ING.) Anabilim Dalı
Tez Başlığı : Popülizm ve Milliyetçiliğin Yükselişi ve COVID-19 Pandemisi
Üzerindeki Etkileri: Sosyal İnşacı bir Perspektif
Tez Yazarı : Mert ÇETİN
Tez Danışmanı : Doç. Dr. Hakan CAVLAK
Tez Türü, Yılı : Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2020
Sayfa Sayısı : 151

Popülizm ve milliyetçiliğin yükselişi son zamanlarda oldukça gözlemlenebilir hale gelmiştir. Bu durum politik, sosyal ve ekonomik alanlarda sistemik değişimlere neden olmaktadır. Popülist ve milliyetçi siyasi hareketler dünya çapında çeşitli başarılarla ulaşmışlardır. Göçmenlik ve çok kültürlülük karşıtlığı gibi populist ve milliyetçi söylemler yoğunlaşmaktadır. Komplocu düşünce yaygınlaşmıştır. Populizm ve milliyetçiliğin yükselişi COVID-19 pandemisi boyunca da etkisini göstermiştir. Maske takmak ve sosyal mesafeye uymak gibi davranışlara karşı populist bir direniş vardır. Dahası pandemi ile alakalı birtakım komplo teorileri yaygınlık kazanmıştır. Son olarak yabancı düşmanı ve ırkçı hadiseler yaşanmış ve Asyalı toplumlara karşı oryantalist söylemler gün yüzüne çıkmıştır.

Bu tez, yükselen popülizm ve milliyetçiliğin COVID-19 pandemisi üzerindeki etkisini sosyal inşacılık teorisi yardımıyla açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. İdealist bir teori olarak sosyal inşacılık, kimlik ile ilişkili kavramlar olan popülizm ve milliyetçiliği anlamak için oldukça uygun bir teoridir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Popülizm, Milliyetçilik, COVID-19, Sosyal İnşacılık

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The rise of populism and nationalism has recently become highly observable. It has caused several changes in the political, social and economic fields. Accordingly, populist and nationalist political parties succeed around the world. The ideas against globalization have become generally accepted to prioritize the national identities, and hence anti-immigration and anti-multiculturalism intensifies. There is also an increase in demand for promoting national industries, rather than the global production networks.

The rise of populism and nationalism also shows its implications throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Populist resistance has emerged against the most basic behavioral, such as mask wearing and social distancing. The conspiracy theories about COVID-19 have become widespread. Moreover, many xenophobic and racist incidents take place. Orientalist habits against Asian communities also resurface.

This thesis aims to reach conclusions that will provide a better understanding of the impact of increasing populism and nationalism on COVID-19 pandemic with the help of social constructivism. As an idealist theory, social constructivism is convenient for understanding populism and nationalism, phenomena related to identity.

I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to my supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hakan CAVLAK, for his guidance and support. His unique contributions have been the main factor for the emergence of this thesis.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my mother, Ayse AKAR, for her support and patience. I am grateful to her for sharing my excitement and determination.

**MERT CETIN
TEKIRDAG, 2021**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>page</u>
ABSTRACT.....	i
ÖZET.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
METHODOLOGY.....	5
1. THEORETICAL DEBATES.....	8
1.1. The Social Constructivist Theory of International Relations	9
1.2. The Idealist Philosophy.....	15
1.3. German Idealism and its Consequences.....	17
1.4. The Norms and Ideas.....	22
1.5. The Idea of Identity.....	29
1.6. Identity Construction: The Self and Other	32
1.7. Identity as a Macro Norm.....	33
1.8. Summary	38
2. THE RISE OF POPULISM AND NATIONALISM.....	40
2.1. The Rise of Populism.....	41
2.2. The Rise of Nationalism.....	44
2.3. The Populism, Nationalism & 2008 Global Economic Crisis.....	53
2.4. The Populism and Nationalism during Previous Outbreaks.....	56
2.5. Summary.....	67
3. THE RISE OF POPULISM, NATIONALISM, AND COVID-19.....	69
3.1. Race and Ethnicity.....	69
3.2. Religion.....	73
3.3. Social Class.....	78
3.4. Generation.....	83
3.5. Gender.....	88

3.6. Two Upper Identities: Globalism and New Patriotism..... 91
3.7. The Resistance to Masks: Behavior Patterns..... 101
3.8. Racisim and Xenophobia during the COVID-19 Pandemic.....106
3.9. The Role of Social Media and Infodemics..... 110
3.10. Summary.....117
CONCLUSION..... 119
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....121



ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	:Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BLM	:Black Lives Matter
CDC	:Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
COVID-19	:Coronavirus Disease of 2019
DPIC	:Death Penalty Information Center
DROC	:Democratic Republic of Congo
ECDC	:European Center for Disease Prevention
EU	:European Union
FBI	:Federal Bureau of Investigation
GDP	:Gross Domestic Product
HIV	:Human Immunodeficiency Virus
PGP	:Preferred Gender Pronoun
SARS	:Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
UN	:United Nations
UNESCO	:United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	:United Nations Fund for Population Activities
US	:United States
WHO	:World Health Organization
WW2	:World War Two

INTRODUCTION

The rise of populism and nationalism in the international system has become highly observable in recent times. Identity-related politics prevailed around the world, a significant percentage of issues has become to be evaluated from the framework of identity and behaviors of actors have been more identity-oriented. Accordingly, populist and nationalist political parties, such as True Finns, Golden Dawn and Jobbik, achieved various successes across Europe, Donald Trump unexpectedly won the Presidential election in the U.S. and populist and nationalist leaders came to rule of several countries as well (Norris & Inglehart, 2019, p. 294; Kaushal, 2018, Introduction; Jacobson, 2017, p. 9-10). Moreover, ideas against globalization have been more generally accepted to prioritize the national identities, and hence anti-immigration and anti-multiculturalism increase. There is also an increase in demand for promoting national industries, rather than the global production networks.

In social terms, conspiratorial thinking rises on a global scale, anti-vaccination has been the most evident symptom of this rise during COVID-19 pandemic (Carmichael & Goodman, 2020). The populist beliefs that COVID-19 is an artificial disease to control people or reduce the world population have become widespread. The decisive influence of social media on these beliefs has been particularly striking. In this regard, rapid distribution of all kinds of information over social media has led to novel debates about misinformation and infodemic. There have been other developments demonstrating the impact of rising populism and nationalism on COVID-19. First of all, there has been a global wave of racism and xenophobia against East Asian Community around the world (Human Rights Watch, 2020). The traditional media misleadingly disseminates orientalist habits and frames China to associate impurity, death and chaos (Qin, 2020). A similar trend has been seen on social media as well. In the same way, conspiratorial thinking and distrust against international organizations have been quite common. Accordingly, populist and conspiratorial resistance has emerged against the most basic behavioral changes, such as mask wearing and social distancing (Baker et al., 2020, p. 361). These health behaviors have been unexpectedly evaluated from the identity framework.

Politicians in chief positions, such as Donald Trump and Jair Bolsonaro, participated in this behavioral resistance. They don't take the COVID-19 in earnest from the first moment of the pandemic. They even made statements against vaccines and masks (France24, 2020). Undoubtedly, these approaches made it difficult to combat the pandemic.

At the high politics level, identity-oriented rhetoric has been common during COVID-19 pandemic. Instead of COVID-19 pandemic, terms as the “*Chinese virus*” and “*China virus*” are used persistently by high-level governmental officials (Moynihan & Porumbescu, 2020; Bredemeier, 2020). The similar rhetoric is carried to discussions about the World Health Organization (WHO) (Kopecki, 2020). These behaviors and reactions are the results of certain beliefs and ideas which are constructed through social interaction. Moreover, they are identity-related phenomena. Accordingly, social constructivism is a well-known international relation theory discussing these concepts. Conventional international theories substantially leave out identities, norms, ideas and beliefs. Indeed, the construction of identities, norms, ideas and beliefs are important processes to understand the rise of populism and nationalism. Therefore, it will be more promising to address the issue in the framework of social constructivism.

Social constructivism is an idealistic theory, it goes back to Plato and German idealism, similar to other idealistic theories. Nevertheless, social constructivism entered the science of international relations as a system theory, with the article by Alexander Wendt, *Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics*. Wendt argued that the international system is a social phenomenon, shaped by constructed beliefs, ideals and norms. He also placed a special emphasis on the concept of identity, the acquisition of identities and the maintenance of identities, unlike conventional international relations theories (Wendt, 1992). Furthermore, Peter Joachim Katzenstein and Martha Finnemore also discussed the concept of norms, ideas and beliefs and their implications for actual global politics (Katzenstein, 1996a, 1996b, 2009; Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Finnemore, 2003, 2014). It should be remembered that Karl Deutsch, Kenneth E. Boulding and Nicholas Onuf had been pioneering scholars who brought beliefs, ideas and norms into the literature of international relations at the individualism

level, before Wendt (Onuf, 1989; Deutsch, 1953, 1961, 1984; Boulding, 1959). However, it was Wendt who presented social constructivism as a system theory for the first time by studying anarchy. Accordingly, the rising populism and nationalism are systemic changes. It has a decisive top-down effect, and every actor in the system is affected by this change.

The literature of populism and nationalism is longstanding. Margaret Canovan defined populism as prioritizing the mass of people against a small but privileged group in society or established structure of power (Canovan, 1999, p. 3). Accordingly, there is a growing dissatisfaction with established structures and elites both at the national level and global level nowadays. This trend showed itself much more after the 2008 Global Economic Crisis. The impact of insecurity is reflected against international organizations, multicultural values and beliefs, and all kinds of phenomena that come across national borders. At the national level, this impact manifests itself as dissatisfaction with the national elites who have deep-rooted relations with international and multicultural institutions. On the other hand, nationalism refers to the idea that a particular nation is superior to other nations for certain historical, social and racial reasons (Tamir, 2019, p. 71). In the present day, nationalism has gone beyond its traditional meaning. The new type of nationalism is more close to the patriotic ideology. It appeals to a wider civilization basin, is embellished with religious elements and carries counter-beliefs against globalism. It may be said populism and nationalism are productions of constructed beliefs and ideas. Accordingly, social constructivism is an appropriate theory to research the rise of populism and nationalism.

In summary, the aforementioned concepts that social constructivism has brought to international relations may be quite convenient to discuss the impact of populism and nationalism throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The rising of the identity-related phenomena, populism and nationalism, in the international system has begun to affect the behaviors of actors considerably. The COVID-19 pandemic, which poses a global threat, also seems to be affected by this change. However, there is little research into identity and pandemic affiliation, else existing studies approach the problem via conventional international relations theories. They leave out identity, norms, ideas, beliefs, interest

construction and how they relate to address the pandemic. Essentially, this is the research problem of this thesis.

In compliance with the research problem, the research question is what is the role of increasing prominence of identity-related phenomena, populism and nationalism, on political and social addressing of COVID-19 pandemic? Accordingly, the independent variable is the increasing prominence of identity-related phenomena, populism and nationalism, and the dependent variable is the variety of social and political addressing of COVID-19 pandemic.

The main argument of the thesis is that the affiliation of dependent and independent variables let the identity-related phenomena, populism and nationalism, come to fore further during the COVID-19 pandemic, e.g. racist and xenophobic incidents, the framing ways of global media and the proliferation of misinformation via social media, political debates about the global health governance among great powers and social and political responses to the pandemic in general.

The purpose of the thesis is to reach conclusions that will prove the impact of increasing populism and nationalism on COVID-19 pandemic with the help of social constructivism. The COVID-19 pandemic, as the biggest global crisis in recent history, seems to be a preferred research topic among social sciences for a while. It is also possible that international relations scholars will also evaluate the COVID-19 pandemic through traditional issues, such as its impact on the international system and actors. Besides, populism and nationalism are already widely held research topics for international relations and several other social sciences. However, there are not adequate studies in the literature about the relation between populism, nationalism and COVID-19 pandemic. In detail, there is little research into populism, nationalism and pandemic affiliation, else existing studies approach the problem via conventional international relations theories. They leave out identity, norms, ideas, beliefs, interest construction and how they relate to address the pandemic. Therefore, in this thesis, the impact of increasing populism and nationalism on the COVID-19 pandemic will be examined to reach efficient explanations

and fill the shortfall in the literature. In doing so, the concepts that social constructivism has brought to international relations will be utilized. The prominence of identities, ideas, beliefs and norm construction during the rise of populism nationalism, and the observable effect of these constructed phenomena on pandemic-related issues will be debated.

METHODOLOGY

This thesis will use qualitative research methods, document analysis and case study, in order to reach results which are met the purpose of the thesis. Document analysis and case study are frequently preferred research methods in international relations. Document analysis refers to accessing printed or computer-based documents, analyzing them and reaching new-fangled empirical knowledge. The accessed documents may contain knowledge on a wide range, such as books, journals, letters or maps, and they exist without intervention of the researcher who examines them (Bowen, 2009, p. 27-28). This thesis will reach new-fangled empirical knowledge by evaluation of previously written books, articles, theses and newspapers with the help of document analysis. It will be appropriate to use document analysis due to both its relevance of the thesis topic and the nature of international relations. At this point, media sources will be important, as the COVID-19 pandemic is a recent and ongoing crisis. Moreover, books, articles and theses will be the most imperative documents, especially for evaluating the theory of social constructivism and the concepts of populism and nationalism properly. As for access to resources, there will be no disruptive problems. Although there are certain restrictions due to COVID-19 pandemic, internet-based archives have rich contents. Indeed, throughout the pandemic, opportunities of home research have been more obvious. While existing possibilities are re-discovered, new possibilities also emerges. Accordingly, internet-based databases have been made available for COVID-19 studies, and the prominence of social, political and economic examination of the issue has also raised.

According to the well-known definition of Robert K. Yin, case study is a research method that endeavors to explain a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2003, p. 13). In terms of level of analysis, the case study means a systemic/holistic analysis of a single or several phenomena (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 232-233). As it

turns out, the case study is the method of explaining the developments/events that have a systemic effect by selecting and examining an appropriate system element, since it is impossible to examine the systemic effect on each element respectively. It may be said that due to its functionality for level of analysis, case study is one of the most preferred research methods in international relations. Accordingly, this thesis will examine the effect of the increasing populism and nationalism, which is a systemic change, on COVID-19 pandemic, a system element.

There are also various discussions about the types of case study, such as explanatory case study, descriptive case study or single case study and multiple case study (Yin, 2003, p. 4; Gustafsson, 2017, para. 1). As in its definition, there is no consensus on the classification of the case study. Nevertheless, it may be said that this thesis will prefer an explanatory-single case study method for the reason that the question of how will be answered, instead of the question of what. Evidently, various definitions have to be made while examining how events occur. In this context, this thesis will be in an effort to define the new type of populism and nationalism. However, the concept of pandemic will not go beyond its existing definitions. Indeed, as an international relations thesis, it will not deal with the definition of virus and pandemic as they are the subjects of virology and medical science.

In the first part of the thesis, theoretical debates on social constructivism will be made. Accordingly, the introduction and application of social constructivism to international relations terminology will be debated, together with its current position, and alongside traditional international relations theories, neo-realism and neo-liberalism. In this context, neo-realism, as the dominant theory of international relations, will have a special position for the reason that it may be unproductive to discuss social constructivism without neorealism. After, the evolution of social constructivism and its idealist properties will be discussed. It was an important touchstone that social constructivism brought idealist elements into international relations which was dominated by materialist theories before. Idealist theories discuss beliefs, ideas and norms and how actors' identities and behaviors are shaped by them. Accordingly, the emphasis will be on how social

constructivist contributions have altered the traditional concepts of the international relations, such as actors, self-help and anarchy. Social constructivist phenomena, such as identity construction and norm construction, will also be the subject of this thesis. Finally, German idealism will be discussed in order to understand the orientalist thought that resurfaced during the COVID-19 pandemic. German idealism also plays an important role in the development of an idealist theory of social constructivism (Rockmore, 2016, p. 167-174). In other words, German idealism is important for understanding the theory of social constructivism, and the concepts of nationalism and populism.

In the second part of the thesis, increasing populism and nationalism will be debated within the framework of social constructivism. Each concept will be evaluated within itself for the reason that populism and nationalism are largely dissimilar concepts, although they appear to be linked. Also, the impact of the 2008 Global Economic Crisis on increasing populism and nationalism will be discussed. It may be said that the 2008 Global Economic Crisis is widely accepted as the most important trigger of the increasing populism and nationalism by a wide range of academic circles (Funke & Trebesch, 2017, p. 7-8). The wave of populism and nationalism following the 1929 Great Depression has a great impact on this way of thinking. Pandemics are also non-economic crises which have economic, political and social impacts. Pandemics may lead massive spill-overs towards various human and even nature-related issues. In this context, populism and nationalism during previous epidemics and pandemics will be discussed in the second part of the thesis to understand relevance of outbreaks and aforementioned concepts.

In the final part of the thesis, the impact of increasing populism and nationalism on the COVID-19 pandemic will be debated. In doing so, identity elements, such as race, gender, religion, will be examined under separate headings. It is observable that increasing populism and nationalism brings various identity elements to the surface and adds new meanings to them. Moreover, the tension between globalism and new patriotism will also be examined. In accordance with the argument of the thesis, globalism and new patriotism are synthesized with previously mentioned identity elements and become new-type upper identities.

In summary, the independent variable and dependent variable of the thesis will be debated in two different chapters after mentioning theoretical debates. The third chapter will also be the part where the case study applied. It is assumed that with mentioned methods and plan, the main argument of the thesis will be achieved.

1. THEORETICAL DEBATES

Alexander Wendt's groundbreaking book, *Social Theory of International Politics*, is based on two main debates. The first debate is about scientific research capabilities of international relations and social sciences in general, i.e. ontology, epistemology and method (Wendt, 1999, p. 47-90). In epitome, he claimed to find a via-media between the "*realist philosophy of science*" and "*post-positivist*" or "*anti-realist*" theories. He discussed empiricism among mainstream international relations theories. In other words, he discussed the tendency among international relations scholars to stay within the scope of observable (tangible) phenomena and their anxiety to be unscientific. Neo-realism, the main theory of international relations, carries this tendency. According to an instance given by Wendt, the concept of "*national interest*" was claimed to be unscientific in the 1960s because it was unobservable (Wendt, 1999, p. 48). Today's conventional international relations' scientific philosophy also suggests to disregard unobservable phenomena, such as ideas and beliefs, for the reason that invisible things cannot be known scientifically. These deliberations show the fundamental contradiction of international relations as international relations have the basic concepts, such as state and anarchy, which are not observable according to empiricist philosophy. These debates are actually known as the "*the third debate*" of international relations (Wendt, 1999, p. 47-48). Accordingly, Wendt studied the differentiation of neo-realism and social constructivism in terms of scientific philosophy.

The second main debate of the book is about the division between neo-realism and social constructivism over the main concepts of international relations. Above all, Wendt introduced the idea of cultures of anarchy into the literature (Wendt, 1999, p. 246-308). In doing so, he built social constructivism as a system theory. As it turns out, social constructivism cannot be addressed without mentioning neorealism for the reason that

social constructivism is largely built on neo-realistic concepts. Accordingly, in this chapter of the thesis, the main arguments of social constructivism and its current position among mainstream international relations theories will be discussed by referring to basic arguments of neorealism.

1.1. The Social Constructivist Theory of International Relations

When theory of social constructivism entered into international relations, it questioned the most basic concepts of international relations as well as brought new concepts to literature, such as ideas, norms and identities. The novel concepts enabled the discussion of current prevalent phenomena, for instance, populism and nationalism which are the concerns of this study as well. On the other hand, social constructivism emerged by way of the assertion to be a system theory, in other words, it has a more structuralist position on the prolonged the agent-structure problem. This endeavor enabled social constructivism to explain structural changes in the international system. The rising of populism and nationalism is also a structural change. Simultaneously, populism and nationalism are relatable concepts to ideas, norms and identities, herewith, they are directly the subjects of social constructivism.

Social constructivism has recently arrived in international relations. When Alexander Wendt published his renowned article, *Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics*, social constructivism entered international relations literature as a system theory in 1992 (Wendt, 1992). In fact, Nicholas Onuf, Karl Deutsch, Ernst Haas, Kenneth E. Boulding and other noteworthy scholars also contributed constructivism and international relations earlier (Onuf, 1989; Deutsch, 1953, 1961, 1984; Haas, 1958, 1964; Boulding, 1959). Nevertheless, a system theory could not be revealed until Wendt.

Before Wendt, Nicholas Onuf introduced social constructivism as a term to international relations in the late 1980s (Onuf, 1989). Before him, Karl Deutsch had discussed the concepts of norms and socialization, in general collective identity (Deutsch, 1953, 1961, 1984). Ernst Haas and the neo-functionalism have been comprehended as the

European integration bureau of earlier social constructivism (Haas, 1958, 1964). Ernst Haas affirmed his liaison with social constructivism by bringing “*pragmatic constructivism*” into international relations literature in early 2000s (Haas & Haas, 2002). Finally, Boulding, has to be mentioned exclusively for the reason he gave a decent instance for earlier social constructivism in 1959 by saying that “*it is what we think the world is like, not what it is really like, that determines our behavior.*” (Boulding, 1959, p. 120). As it turns out, social constructivist debates in international relations is not new-fangled at the individualist level.

In order to comprehend what Wendt did in a different manner from his pioneers, it is essential to talk about structuralism and individualism, i.e., level of analysis. It is well-known that there are two levels of analysis in international relations which are agent level and system level (Hollis & Smith, 1990, p. 7-9). While agent level of analysis examines units, system level of analysis examines structures (Wendt, 1999, p. 12). The different approaches, individualism and structuralism emerged according to their priorities in this logic. Individualism follows the bottom-up method, emphasizes the importance of units and their internal structures (Putnam, 1988). On the other hand, structuralism points to the effect of the system on the units, and urges that top-down methods should be priority (Hollis & Smith, 1990, p. 7-9). In contrast to his predecessors, Wendt examined constructivism as a structural theory by studying anarchy, the system itself (Wendt, 1992; Wendt, 1999, p. 12). He offered an alternative explanation to neo-realist anarchy.

Individualism and structuralism have been imperative epistemological distinctions not only in international relations, but also in other social sciences. The actual point of discussion has been mainly focused on the existence of the system. According to individualism, there is not a system or there is a system, however, has limited effect on units (Singer, 1961, p. 80-89) Individualism meets with a repulse in international relations essentially. Individualist theories have been criticized for their reductionist approach and apprehensive to the existence of the system (Waltz, 1979, p. 36-37; Wendt, 1999, p. 99). It is not a revelation that the main consensus in international relations, largely hypothesized by Kenneth Waltz’s *Theory of International Politics*, is that there is a system

and this system has a significant impact on the behavior of the units, i.e., states (Waltz, 1979, p. 103-128). International relations is noticeably structuralist. This may be attributed to its American character (Onuf, 1989, p. 9-10). Political science, in contrast, is prone to individualism and it has a European appearance. The U.S. represents post-war period World order, as embodied by the United Nations, and not a coincidence that the U.S., champion of globalization, bred international relations within herself (Hoffman, 1977, p. 47). Without a doubt, international relations and political science are highly interrelated sciences. However, international relations, as a relatively novel science, is distinctive from political science at its level of analysis. It is important to point out the divergence between them to perceive the development of international relations and the impact of non-conventional theories as social constructivism.

Wendt tried to falsify structuralist and materialist explanations of Waltz with structuralist but idealist arguments. In other words, Wendt is also a structuralist and has put forward a system theory and sought explanations for one of the main inquiries of international relations, anarchy, similar to Waltz. As Wendt said, social constructivism is seen as “*structural idealism*” in that sense (Wendt, 1999, p. 1). Neo-realism has to be structural-materialism, already known as structural realism, suit with Wendt’s definition. In a nutshell, the debate of idealism and materialism stated the divergence of Wendt from Waltz. Although Wendt said he sought to find via-media between neo-realism and rigid constructivism, it is clear that he has achieved results beyond that by making constructivism a system theory (Wendt, 1999, p. 110). Thus, he went beyond traditional explanations of the international system.

Even though it has recently increased in the number of post-modernist studies, there is no doubt that neo-realism is still the fundamental theory of international relations. As in the preceding time, understanding the principles of neo-realism is essential for international relations students. In fact, the ultimate debate of post-modernist theories of international relations is how to overcome this hegemony. The problem of overcoming neo-realism is common among neo-Marxist and feminist scholars as well. There are

renowned assertions that neo-realist hegemony restricts the development of international relations. Hence what is neo-realism?

Neo-realism is a theory that refers to an anarchic system in which states, principle actors, interact with each other (Waltz, 1979, p. 102-128). Epistemologically, neo-realism is a materialist and positivist theory. It is based on rational choice theory of economic sciences, although Waltz refrains from using it, it is decidedly affected by natural selection of Darwinism as well (Wendt, 1999, p. 318; Mearsheimer, 2009, p. 241-242). Above and beyond, neo-realism has a predecessor, thus it was founded on classical realism. Classical realism is a theory that was advanced by classical period scholars, mostly by Machiavelli, Hobbes and Rousseau. In the post-war period, Hans Morgenthau and Edward Hallet Carr introduced classical realism to international relations (Morgenthau, 1948; Carr, 1939). Thus, basic pillars of international relations were established.

The differences between neo-realism and classical realism have been set to different specifications. One of them is that while neorealism defines states as status quo seeker, classical realism defines them as revisionist (Wendt, 1999, p. 104-105). According to classical realism, states are aggressive, prone to merely destroy each other and always seek opportunity to change the existing balance in their favor. Therefore, neo-realism has put forward balance of power, as an attempt of states to maintain the status quo against revisionist powers, and claims that unipolar and bipolar systems are more stable which is an indication for lenience of states to existence of stronger states (Waltz, 1979, p. 103-128). Last but foremost, while both define states as selfish and survivalist, neo-realism explains that by the system's anarchic character, classical realism refers to human nature (Morgenthau, 1948, p. 13-14). Essentially, this is the fundamental division between neorealism and classical realism.

In fact, both theories have a tendency to humanize (anthropomorphize) states, nothing but it is clearer for classical realism. The humanizing state is a problematic issue in itself yet it is highly practical since making it easier to build connections with rational

choice theory (Wendt, 1999, p. 221-224). It is certain that this connection makes things easier for realism, in general for realpolitik explanations.

As Wendt argues as a counter social constructivist argument, if states are human beings, they should be expected to not only display selfishness but also unrequited goodness. There are numerous examples of self-sacrifice and unrequited aid initiatives in human history (Wendt, 1999, p. 105-106). While such benevolent actions are not considered rational by neo-realism, they are considered as rational choices in microeconomics, due to their group-belonging motivations (Becker, 1976, introduction; Gigerenzer & Selten, 2002, p. 1-12). For neo-realism, there is an opposite trend. If states are individuals, they should have entire features of *Homo sapiens* on them. The rational choice theory is basically built on human consumption preferences and it is problematic to use it for states by taking only useful aspects to understand the international system. States are abstract phenomena and humanization may be problematic, albeit useful. Here and now, the ultimate question emerges, waiting to be clarified: What is state?

Max Weber defined state in terms of “*monopoly of violence*” (Weber, 1921/1946, p. 396). The monopoly of violence is essentially an alpha plus term to understand the concept of sovereignty and an efficacious way to separate state from other institutions ontologically. However, the monopoly of violence has become increasingly problematic, due to increasing visibility of non-governmental armed groups, such as private security firms and other non-state armed groups (Wendt, 1999, p. 206). In fact, neo-liberalism has often addressed this issue as most known, however, cannot go beyond being twin theory of neo-realism (Onuf, 2013, p. 31). Since it has been highly attached to neo-realist rhetoric, it continues to describe states as principle actors, categorize international organizations as secondary actors in the system. As distinct from neo-realism, neo-liberalism is more open to the role of international organizations in inter-state relations, and also assert them as instruments of cooperation (Keohane, 1986, p. 20-21). Nevertheless, the general belief is that neorealism and neoliberalism are identical theories at least on an epistemological level.

One of the imperative arguments of neo-liberalism is that the concept of sovereignty is not able to reproduce itself in a Weberian sense, which social constructivist scholars agree with. According to social constructivism, sovereignty is socially constructed, just like anarchy (Wendt, 1999, p. 206-209). It has better be noted that the social construction of a phenomenon does not mean that it is not practiced or does not exist at all. It means that the aforementioned phenomenon is produced in the culture in which it belongs and it is constantly reproduced. The process of reproduction indicates that the phenomena, even though to be perpetual, may be subject to change, such as sovereignty and anarchy. The same applies to states and identities themselves.

As a matter of fact, neo-realism, similar to other materialist theories, does not address that the international system is social. The neo-realist international system is duplicate to the space/time concept in physics, strictly adhering to the laws of mathematics, in which the same actions cause the same conclusions. The main reason for this analogy is desire to reach general-passable and falsifiable results, aka epistemological anxiety, which are carried out by most of social sciences, also by international relations (Wendt, 1999, p. 48-49). However, not only materialistic, but idealistic explanations also can lead to scientific conclusions for today's epistemological understanding. The principal fact to keep in mind that the international system is social, consisting of ideas, and if the units that make up the system choose to behave inversely or to change common belief, the system changes. Equally, the units differ when they choose to be different.

It is immobile by experiences that states cannot be reduced to politicians or their institutional branches. States go beyond the lifespan of their governments, and survive around the definition of sovereignty, which means monopoly of violence in parallel with Weberian thinking. However, endowed state system is still a product of a shared culture, called the Westphalian system and it is unsettled (Albert et al., 2001, p. 26). In other words, the system that Weber explained is actually a product of collective knowledge (Mattern, 2005 p. 4). Moreover, sovereignty is a European-origin term and nothing more than a mutual commitment of nation state system, that is, culture and civilization are also involved. Until recently, recognition and acceptance of states by the international society

was simply dependent on their degree of Europeanness. At the present time, change has taken place and the right to use legitimate force within geographical limits (sovereignty) is granted to a state only by common knowledge of all states in the system, irrespective of their Europeanness (Strang, 1996, p. 31-33). A short time ago, even the geographical limits were essentially indistinguishable as well. The concepts of border and border security were quite different between American natives and European explorers, Ottoman Empire and her neighbors or in countries that were controlled by the Mongolian Empire and in ancient Mesopotamia. The state boundaries is a modern concept, was perceived differently in the past, and is likely to be perceived differently in the future.

The phenomenon, called the state, known as nation state, itself is a social institution and a production of ideas as well. The Weberian state exists at present. Nevertheless, possibly it will not be in the future. The degree of transfiguration depends on idealistic elements rather than materialistic elements. Idealistic elements are the forms that the mind perceives from raw information in parallel with its experiences. In other words, ideas are more about interpretation of the mind than what is really there in the physical world. Interpretation of raw information, essentially, is the only thing that mind can achieve.

As it turns out, social constructivism contributes novel meanings to severe basic concepts of international relations. Besides, as Wendt claims, it has emerged as a systemic theory, just like neo-realism. Therefore, social constructivism is quite worthwhile in explaining the systemic conversions that will be discussed in the next chapters.

1.2. The Idealist Philosophy

As it is known, social constructivism is an idealistic theory. Therefore, understanding the idealistic philosophy may be quite beneficial to understand social constructivism. The general tendency is to begin idealism from platonic philosophy and introduce German idealism as a chief touchstone. Idealism is a theory that is re-remembered by social sciences recently. Materialism has come to the fore instead of idealism for a long time. In the present day, idealism has come to fore again along with

other postmodernist theories. Accordingly, social constructivism represents the international relations foot of the return of idealism to social sciences.

Philosophy of idealism begins with Plato. Plato argued that the truth knowledge could never be known in *statu nascendi*. He assumed that there are two worlds, the noetic (intelligible) world and the world of appearance (Jaspers, 1957/1962, p. 30). He explained the difference between the noetic world and the world of appearance by using plurality and singularity: man against people, horse against horses or silhouette against silhouettes (Jaspers, 1957/1962, p. 30). In this way, he basically refers to the differences in perception. He pointed to the language and symbolism in general, which largely miscarries to recognize the true form of the object. According to Plato, there was an outside entity, however, the outside world was in constant change. Therefore, truth knowledge was difficult to reach (Allegory of the Cave).

The Platonic philosophy is complex, involves dialogues, poetic descriptions and metaphors. It is also quite personal, reflecting not only the character of Plato, but also Socrates. Besides, it appeared in the political turmoil of Ancient Greece, thus Plato pursued the ideal republic, the ideal politician, and the ideal human in general. In fact, he found the idea while searching for the ideal.

As Platonic philosophy points out, idealism is realist for ideas which means that idealism does not reject the entity, namely, it is not a direct antithesis of philosophical realism (Dunham et al., 2011, p. 4). The difference between idealism and philosophical realism is related to difference in the explanation of the relationship between the mind and the outside-world. Even so it should be noted that there are also estimations which reject the outside world as a whole among idealist scholars, known as "*subjective idealists*", however, this trend is not prevailing (Dunham et al., 2011, p. 12). While trying to avoid classification as much as possible, idealism may be divided into two branches as subjective idealism and objective idealism. Subjective idealism argues only the existence of the mind and does not accept the outside world. It is largely associated with George

Berkeley. However, in rough terms, it is still mainly disregarded; it did not affect central arguments of German idealism, which has a major impact on contemporary idealism.

1.3. German Idealism and its Consequences

The German idealism is quite significant in two respects. Firstly, German idealism formed the theoretical groundwork of social constructivism and today's understanding of idealism. Secondly, German idealism is important to understand the increasing populism and nationalism as it constructed the Western identity, the relationship of the West with the other cultures, as well as the non-Westerners' perspective on themselves. In this context, a thorough association may be established among populism, nationalism and German idealism.

German idealism has preserved platonic philosophy, does not carry the main principles of subjective idealism to a large extent, au fond (Dunham et al., 2011, p. 149). The recent tension between postmodernism and modernism led scholars to rediscover German idealism all over again. German idealism has been the cornerstone of idealism, even so the re-discovery of German idealism has been challenging so far because it is a well-known allegation that German idealism is essentially thought-provoking to comprehend and open to disproportionate interpretation. Even claims are embodied in Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel himself, the most recognized name of German idealism (Russell, 1945, p. 730). Also, novel debates arose in international relations after the rediscovery of Hegel.

Hegel wrote his magnum opus, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, in order to gain a chair in Jena as a salvation to his financial problems, under deadline pressure by his publisher. Due to high pressure, it is known that he was not even sure of the title, there had been editions with different titles, such as “*Science of the Experience of Consciousness*”, and “*Science of the Phenomenology of Spirit*” (Hegel, 1807/2018, Introduction). The turmoil of the book as it appears has been sustained by the readers as well. The book has been regarded as divine comedy, tragedy, theological analysis or history of philosophy (Hegel,

1807/2018, Introduction). In fact, the diversity of meaning also made the book exceptional.

One thing is certain that the book of Hegel and also Hegel himself was decidedly idealist (Kain, 2005, p. 17). Hegel discussed the long-term philosophical dilemma of the mind and its relations with the outer world by the term “*phenomenology*” in his book. According to Hegel, phenomenology is actually a voyage, which prosecutes the ways in which objects appear to mind, spirit or “*geist*” (Kain, 2005, p. 2). It would be the right choice to prefer mind as the equivalent of *geist*. Hegel used the word *geist* in the sense of spirit or mind according to context. It is appropriate to use the mind instead of *geist*, since it is agreed that *geist* is an active perceiver rather than inanimate matter (Hegel, 1807/2018, p. 71). The using of spirit and mind synonymously in Hegelian terminology may be explained by the intertwining of theology and philosophy in Hegel’s era. That is to say, Hegel studied the state of mind in the way it appears to itself. Although there is controversy about Hegel’s position in the existence of the material world, it is undisputed that he attaches more importance to the mind/idealistic world. According to Hegel, the mind is something that perceives, evaluates and above all, constructs the outside world.

In Hegelian literature, the mind is actually able to perceive the true nature of the reality, however, to do that, it has to go through certain stages. Accordingly, the stages of mind are the stages of consciousness and this gradual approach is a matter to be addressed (Hegel, 1807/2008, p. 63). Today’s philosophy of science accepts the order of the universe, the evolution of species or history of the human kind as results of a series of coincidences. Mankind is a mammal, who is relatively intelligent due to evolutionary accidents, from a small planet in a remote corner of the universe that is open to all kinds of spatial accidents or man-made accidents. Most of today’s students will agree with that assumptions, however, Hegel disagreed. Hegel argued that historical chronology is a necessity, rather than a series of coincidences. Moreover, human consciousness goes through stages inevitably to achieve its ultimate goal, freedom. In fact, the only reason for the occurrence of events in history is to liberate man. The concept of freedom had been the common subject of Hegel and his contemporaries because of the atmosphere of the

French Revolution. Hegel argued that freedom can only be achieved by reaching a certain state of consciousness and he basically divided them into three stages (Siep, 2014, p. 72-86). The first stage is when the mind takes information without processing it, that is, when they first met. At this stage, the mind does not construct the raw information and it is only affected by it, so red is just a kind of light (Siep, 2014, p. 72-76). The second stage is the categorization of rough information, according to universal law. At this stage, the red has become a color rather than a shape of light, and it is placed in a certain category according to universal laws. It is now practically useful for daily needs. It allows the person to relate to the outside world (Siep, 2014, p. 76-80). The last stop of consciousness, force and understanding, is the stage where the mind constructs the external knowledge with subjective values other than universal values (Siep, 2014, p. 80-86). So at this level, the red denotes anger, passion or love.

According to Hegelian philosophy, self-consciousness needs experiences for the reason that each self-consciousness needs other self-consciousness to position itself (Pippin, 2011, p. 60). In fact, this is an issue Wendt was focusing on, individuals need another individuals to identify themselves. The actions of the individual are determined according to the individual's position against others, such as enemy, friend, debtor or holder. The material means, contrary to the claim of neo-realism, are largely conclusive tools which are determined by the adjective of the individual.

It is attention-grabbing that Hegel forecasted conflict in the encounter of self-consciousness, just like political realists. Hegel defined the struggle of self-consciousness for positioning as combative because they tend to alter other self-consciousness, if they cannot, they tend to destroy others (Pippin, 2011, p. 62-64). This conflict arises from a basic need: recognition as an equal individual (Pippin, 2011, p. 61). The desire of states to be recognized as equal actors may also be evaluated in this context. In the current Westphalian international system, an emerging state must first prove that her sovereignty is ensured by her hard power in a particular territory, which is usually against a sovereign state, and that right to sovereignty by hard power must be recognized by other states. Nevertheless, there have been some nonaggressive instances, such as the division of

Czechoslovakia and the dissolution of the USSR, which indicate that universal laws that explain international politics have not been reached (Wendt, 1999, p. 86). However, there are still obvious domination of power politics in the international system.

As mentioned above, Hegel discussed the issue of being an individual, or actor, through the phenomenon of consciousness. Briefly, he argued that freedom was realized by socialization of mind, by recognizing itself through raw information from the physical world and then other consciousness. In other words, for him, the raw information was not important, but just an instrument, not materials, but the ideas were the only reality around. At that juncture, it is worth noting that the stages of mind were not a series of coincidence, but necessity. Accordingly, if the revolution did not happen in 18th-century France, but 22th-century Poland, the mind would pass on to the same stages eventually. According to Hegel, freedom was a necessity brought by history. In other words, contrary to orthodoxy international relations, for Hegel, the development of the mind goes parallel with flow of history, which consists of necessary incidents.

As well as Hegelian historical determinism, the Hegelian cultural characteristics, which are decisive over development of conciseness, are also important to contemporary identity studies. After the Second World War, identity studies used to be abandoned not only for political science, but also for anthropology and sociology until the 1980s. This is also related to abandonment of German idealism and the idealism in general due to destructive German totalitarianism. Accordingly, it is often suggested that Hegel paves the way for German totalitarianism. Karl Popper is the best known of this argument. (Popper, 1945, p. 29). It is accurate that Hegel argued freedom could only be realized in German constitutional monarchies, specifically Prussia, and had a well-nigh pure orientalist stance against non-European cultures, similar to Kant. According to Hegel, Chinese culture was not capable of rational thinking, or reason. Chinese culture was under the influence of family cult and needed to be governed by a totalitarian ruler who was a patriarchal figure. (Heurtebise, 2017, p. 178). Hegel did not accept Confucius as a philosopher, but a moral thinker, and did not accept China as a part of History (Bernasconi, 2003, p. 36; Tibebu, 2011, p. 235). He considered the same assumptions for the Persians

as well, and interpreted the encounter of the ancient Greeks and Persians as the encounter of the two different world views. However, Hegel still argued that history started with the Persians for the reason that there were limited regulations over Persian despots, hence Persians bore the seeds of free consciousness. However, Persians were inadequate. He found the ancient Greeks inadequate as well for the reason that although ancient Greeks did not have a physical despot, they were tightly tied to their pagan traditions which determined their actions. Hegel attributed the execution of Socrates to his representation of the reason/logic, which was not found in Athens in the strict sense (Williams, 2003, p. 68; Hegel, 1837/1991, p. 289-230). In other words, the execution of Socrates was a result of the inadequacy of ancient Greece.

Hegel argued that Roman Empire had to practice Persian despotism, due to its over-multicultural nature. However, he put great emphasis on Roman law as well. He emphasized that the tension between individualism and collectivism separated the Romans from Persians and Ancient Greeks. In this tension, the losing side was individualism until the Christianity came on the stage of history. Christianity was a special religion, abolished slavery and gave man a spiritual dimension away from the material world and made him reached to god (Hegel, 1837/1991, p. 301-314). However, the unique features that were offered by Christianity lasted for a short term because the Vatican put a barrier between God and the man all over again, and emerged as an institution to overcome. On the other hand, the reform movements of Germanic states enabled each person to reach God without intermediaries, by their own self, which was actually an earlier stage of self-consciousness. He also saw the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars as historical events that should have happened due to the idea of individual liberty attained and settled in the Germanic states (Hegel, 1837/1991, p. 364-458). In other words, historical determinism had revealed exceptional Germanic states, mainly Prussia.

In Hegel's rhetoric, cultural identity has a great importance and it has largely built around ideas and norms. As a comparison, Kant's view of identity is mostly based on classification according to the law of nature. Besides, it is even claimed that Kant was the inventor of the term of race, as a natural result, Kant had sharper racial descriptions

compared to Hegel (Mikkelsen, 2013, p. 47-49). Hegel viewed ethnic and racial identities by more idealistic elements, however, he laid the foundations of orientalism with his historical determination for the reason that he gave special importance to the Western culture. Briefly, although his certain orientalism, Hegel built his philosophy on identity, mostly social but not natural classifications.

The influence of German idealism and Hegel in today's Western thought is quite prominent. It may be observed from the West's treatment of the rest of the world and characteristics of its handling critical events. As will be examined in following chapters, the responses of the West from the first moment of COVID-19 have been shaped within the framework of the Western identity, built by Hegel and German idealism in general. Although this phenomenon manifests itself mostly in racist and xenophobic incidents, it has been also pretty obvious in other elements of identity. Besides, norms and ideas are also important for understanding idealist identity and also social constructivist approaches.

1.4. The Norms and Ideas

Contrary to general recognition, social constructivism is a challenging field for the reason that it requires orientations from diverse philosophical debates, as well as different disciplines. The philosophical dimension of the social constructivism has been already discussed in this study, however, the phenomena of norms and ideas need to be deliberated in a different title in the light of more recent considerations.

Ideas express beliefs, values and norms in general. Ideas are mostly beliefs and value systems, they represent the assessment of mind to the materialistic outside world (Parsons, 2002, p. 48). In this context, norms are the collective expectations that are set by values with given identities (Katzenstein, 1996a, p. 11). The norms are the main regulators. They are outcomes of values and beliefs that regulate social relations. Social relations are shaped by the decision-making mechanisms of individuals' because they are the source of actions. While making decisions, individuals are influenced by various factors, the most important among them is norms. As a natural result, norms are generally

discussed on the basis of behavior logic. The impact of norms on the behavior logic of individuals has been a major problem among scholars of international relations.

According to mainstream international relations theories, the behavior logic in the international system is illuminated by rationalism. The idea of rationalism has influenced the science of international relations mightily for a long time. On the other hand, social constructivist scholars introduced logic of appropriateness to literature and brought an alternative to rationalism. The logic of appropriateness suggests that actors determine their actions according to social expectations/norms which are differentiated by identity (Hoffmann, 2017, p. 8). This new behavioral explanation is quite a significant pillar for social constructivism.

The logic of appropriateness is essentially based on the long-term agent-structure problem. It is a structuralist approach and emphasizes on collective-identity. Since it is structuralist, it suggests that identities and behaviors are determined in accordance with the dominant norms and collective identity in the social environment (Shannon, 2000, p. 297). As it turns out, identity is essential all over again. According to logic of appropriateness states' identities have been determined by different norms over time. Nowadays changes in the characteristics of norms in the system is an issue that may be observed on a global basis. The identities of states have begun to take shape more from the framework culture, civilization and identity. The identity has become a norm that the actions of states should comply in any political issue or international crisis. The relevant normative change is observable both in characteristic of societies or national public opinions and international politics.

However, it would be hardy endeavor to falsify the basic hypothesis of rationalism and claim that states do not act in accordance with power and interest. Simultaneously, the logic of appropriateness criticizes the basic hypothesis of rationalism implicitly. It claims that the efforts of states to be appropriate is their fundamental way of action and they pursue power and interest as secondary purposes. In other words, the logic of appropriateness carries the basic arguments of rationalist theory, but as secondary

factors. It claims that following the power and interests might contradict the concept of survival, which is inconsistent with rationalism, since pursuing power and interests may ground norm-breaking behaviors. According to rationalist behaviorism, the most effective option for survival is to pursue power and interest, whereas for logic of appropriateness, being out of norm (practicing norm-breaking behavior) means increasing sanctions and exclusion from the international society in today's international system. The exclusion from the international society endangers the principle of survival. Germany and Japan during the Second World War, and so-called rogue states Iraq and North Korea may be given as instances in this respect.

The norms, on the other hand, are important phenomena that social constructivism brought into international relations literature. International norms are regulated within the framework of power, interests, identity and culture. Different factors may be effective on the same issue at the same time or only one factor may be effective on a single issue. For example, the actions of states in the issue of Israel-Palestine are increasingly becoming relevant to the framework of identity, meanwhile, energy security or arms trade are secondary degree factors. In other words, the Israel-Palestine issue itself is shaped in an identity perspective. Actors, who are parties to the issue, have also reduced the material elements into secondary tools and have made idealistic tools to their main instruments (Abu-Laban & Bakan, 2020, p. 81-108). A similar observation may be seen in the immigration crisis in the European borders. The globalist and inclusive European identity is increasingly being replaced by an exclusive and introverted European identity due to the emergency of identity as a norm. Specifically, because of rising populism and nationalism in the international system. Austrian police patrol on the border of Turkey-Greece and anti-Islamic laws in France may be interpreted in this context (Greek City Times, 2020; Akyol, 2020). During the 1990s, practices that restrict religious freedom in Turkey used to be object of criticism from Brussels and other European capitals, however, analogous laws are also implemented by the EU members at the present time, despite obvious contradiction of their previous criticism against secularist policies of Turkey (Birdisli & Kacar, 2017, p. 11-13). As another example, the most significant social

construction project of the Cold War, the European integration, has been also the object of the normative shift towards identity (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 887). In the meantime, it should be noted that there has been a change in Turkey as well, identity oriented discourses and politics begin to dominate both domestic and foreign policy in Turkey. There has been a return to the forgotten Ottoman identity and pro-European policies have been visibly abandoned.

The emergence of identity as an international norm is relevant with the life cycle of the norms. The international norms are generally emerged after domestic norms gain international character (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 893). For instance, the abolishment of capital punishment become an international norm after it used to be a domestic norm of European countries. Global civil society, globalization and previous settled norms have big impacts on this diffusion. Even if many states of the U.S. do not make legal changes to abolish capital punishment, they prefer not to apply capital punishment in accordance with the logic of appropriateness (DPIC, 2019, p. 2). The main motivation for this behavior is to desire to be accepted by the community. In terms of international relations, to be a recognized actor in the international system.

However, it should be noted that counter-arguments about the pro-capital punishment also still endure. There is still a possibility for a normative shift to in favor of capital punishment for the reason that it is not fully internalized. Contrary to popular belief, norms do not provide democratization, a more peaceful environment or emancipation at all times. This is better understood if controversial abortion laws are examined. There is a wave of laws for restricting women's access to safe abortion in the U.S. According to study by Guttmacher institute, 58 abortion restrictive laws were enacted in 17 states, while 25 of them were anti-abortion laws only in 2019 in the U.S. (Nash et al., 2019). Until the 1980s, the issue of abortion was seen as a norm that discussed in the context of Women's rights and was regarded as an innate right to women, an opposite tendency emerged in the U.S. recently. Anti-abortion may also become an international norm as the foundation of anti-abortion is the right to life which is also another international norm. The right to life is a highly settled and widespread norm. The spread

of abortion laws are seen as reactionary steps by a significant part of international civil society, consequently, it is not factual that norms are always progressive. The previously established norms have an important place in the life cycle of a norm. Therefore, the issue of abortion has always been controversial because it is in the midst of the norms of body integrity and right to life.

The life cycle of the norms is important for comprehending the change mechanism in the international system. Finnemore and Sikkink explained the formation of a norm in three stages: Norm emergence, norm cascade and internalization (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 898). Norm entrepreneurs, or domestic civil societies, play a major role in the emergence of the norms, these entrepreneurial communities either create a subject matter or reinterpret an existing issue through framing (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 897). Indeed, popular entrepreneurs have great influence in the rise of identity-based thought. If nation-wide debates in the U.S. are considered, such as the Second Amendment and healthcare debates, it is noticeable that certain surnames come to fore.

In accordance with Finnemore and Sikkink's terminology, norm entrepreneurs have significant effect on the society through both traditional media and social media. For example, norm entrepreneurs frame personal armament as personal freedom and free health care as an anti-free market in media vehicles. As it turns out, the norm entrepreneurs use the framing as a method quite frequently. Addressing the issues only through the lobby activities or trade competition may be restrictive. The fact that identity based thinking has become the international norm triggers norm entrepreneurs to evaluate the issues through identity window. Therefore, they especially focus on identity politics and identity-related issues (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 893-894). Accordingly, it is seen that norm entrepreneurs come to fore in social media and traditional media and they have a great impact on the rising of nationalism and rationalism, which are elements of identity.

The question to be answered while examining the first stage of norms formation is why norms are necessary? Or why do norms arise? This need might occur as a result of a crisis or external threat that generally affects the people. It is known that the most

international norms appear after tragedies and crises. Accordingly, there are many studies that build connections between the rise of populism, nationalism and 2008 Global Economic Crisis (Funke & Trebesch, 2017, p. 7-8). Indeed, it may be said that job losses, decreasing wealth among occupants in developed countries, and increasing migrant flows have great impacts in the rise of populism and nationalism. With the 2008 Global Economic Crisis, the increase in the prices of basic needs, such as food and shelter, in developing economies also led to the prominence of identity in general (Kienle & Louer, 2013, p. 12). Norm entrepreneurs are premises who sense the problem and produce solutions at an early stage. The solution they find against the economic pressure is the remembrance of so-called forgotten national-religious values in general. They have the means to put them on the agenda of political will. The issue of means is quite imperative because whether there is not enough resources, potential norm entrepreneurs will stay at the level of being symbol figures of the non-norm issues. Non-norm issues often have a limited effect and they don't have regulatory ability. Moreover, even since norm entrepreneurs are dealing with a non-norm issue, they can only be evaluated as activists.

The second stage of the formation of the norms is the norm cascade (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 897). At this stage, the norm acquires an international property. This diffusion happens through global civil society and international organizations. The transformation of a domestic norm into an international norm requires decisive support of global civil society and international institutional workload that could span over multiple years. As the best known example, the settlement of sovereignty as an international norm has been realized through several international conferences and long-term institutional efforts, such as the League of Nations and the United Nations.

Transformation of domestic norms into international norms also requires an association between domestic civil society and global civil society. The prevalence of international norms is highly related to the development of non-governmental global civil society. However, as a different way, as with sovereignty rights, the issue may become inter-state when the respective domestic civil society guides its own political will and contribution of global civil society might be limited. In this case, a certain state or group

of states can lead to the internalization of a norm. Besides, the global influence of the respective state or group of states should be decisive. In terms of the identity and culture, the issue is a bit more related to debate of domestic and foreign policy. The current phase of the identity as an international norm is the stage of domestic norm to become international norm. In other words, both governments and global civil society have critical roles for the internalization of identity as an international norm.

As Finnemore and Sikkink argue, states might be in a critical position during the formation of the international norms (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 901). For example, if the border security is considered, several countries have criticized the increasingly intensifying border security measurements while certain countries demand intensive border security. The states with large diaspora and have an economy that is dependent on neighboring countries, such as Mexico and Morocco, have generally opposed intensive border security. The border security has turned out to be a matter of international affairs by domestic norm entrepreneurs. They convince their political will in accordance with the stages of the norm formation in favor of tightening border security.

The third stage of the norm formation is internalization (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 904). The complete internalization of norms occurs when norms are not received any criticism from different interest groups. Furthermore, actions against respective norms should be considered as norm-breaking actions and undergo various sanctions. The complete internalization of norms is a rare phenomenon. Internalization of a norm requires persuasion of international public opinion, compliance with former international norms, strong political will, long-term institutional exertion, technical regulations and long-term experimentation, alongside major humanitarian crises in some cases. When a norm is internalized, states and other actors adapt their behaviors in accordance with the norm and justify their norm-breaking actions within the framework of the international law.

If complete internalized norm of prisoners of war is taken into consideration, even norm-breaking actions against prisoners of war are legitimized in accordance with international law and similar legitimate reasons. In other words, actors do not admit their

norm-breaking actions. In fact, the norm-breakers feel the norm pressure for the reason that their survival priority is in danger. The mentioned pressures were investigated as logic of appropriateness in previous chapters. This observation manifested itself in recent conflicts, such as Syrian Civil War. During the Syrian Civil War, the Damascus regime has committed severe war crimes while they have made up many excuses based on international law to not have the norm breaker label (The Telegraph, 2012). Every actor in the international system is experiencing similar pressure, including terrorist organizations.

The internalization of the prisoners of war norm has resulted from a series of requirements mentioned earlier. The long history of war crimes, especially during World Wars, have been decisive for the internalization of the prisoner of war as a norm. In addition, intensive inter-institutional work was also experienced. The norm of prisoners of war was first mentioned in the 1929 Geneva Convention, then 1949 Geneva Convention and Additional Protocol of 1977 (Meron, 1987, p. 350-365). Before that, it was also discussed within the framework of bilateral agreements and conferences. Besides, long-term institutional initiatives were accompanied by intensive technical labor. Finally, long-term propaganda and confirmatory studies in the academy are also required for international consent construction. It is well known that the two basic methods for consent construction is humanization and securitization. While the prisoners of war norm is internalized by humanization, the border security is internalized by securitization. The identity and civilization-related norms are internalized largely through securitization.

1.5. The Idea of Identity

Today's academic understanding of identity exists around norms and ideas since recently. However, the phenomenon of identity has been handled out of norms and ideas in social sciences after being rediscovered. As mentioned previously, identity was largely an abandoned phenomenon until the 1960's. Firstly, Erik Erikson made identity one of the important issues of discussions in social sciences by introducing the term "*identity crisis*" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 2; Erikson, 1968, p. 17-18). After Erikson, the identity has been studied in many ways, such as individual, social, political, institutional, ethnic,

gender, cultural and civilizational. The apparent diversity in defining the identity highlighted the ideas that identity should be examined by avoiding normative or definitive concerns (Abdelal et al., 2006, p. 695). Problems related to the definitions in identity studies have been attempted to be solved by constructivist scholars by falsifying exclusive and singular definitions. Identity is not really a static phenomenon, also not a product of mutual interaction and subjective self-definition. Lebow argued that there are three dimensions of defining ourselves: physical, social and reflective (Lebow, 2012, p. 269). The physical dimension is related to the person's physical appearance, physical abilities and limitations. Nevertheless, limited physical and material conditions have a limited impact on self-definition in their pure form. The physical dimension moves beyond the physical measurements as of the moment it gains a social meaning because the meaning we give to the physical world depending on the norms and ideas. As said by Lebow, the reflective dimension is a result of consciousness which helps to identify and understand the position by self-comparison (Lebow, 2012, p. 269). Lebow argues that this self-definition stage is prone to change depends on social conditions thus there is not a persistent identity. The three dimensions are actually conditions that determine the degree of change. He also emphasized Hegel and the struggle of the person to achieve the status of self-consciousness. The idea that identity will not take shape without socialization is reasonable for Lebow (Lebow, 2012, p. 82). By socializing, actors gain identities and they tend to maintain their identities.

Wendt also argued that identity is constructed during social interaction and tends to change depending on social conditions. He also claims that identities are maintained through social interaction (Wendt, 1992, p. 404). From the moment it is produced, the identity tends to reproduce itself as other social facts. Besides, social facts are not prone to change, therefore they are perceived as objective, persistent and permanent phenomena. First of all, society uses mechanisms against actors to maintain their identities for the maintenance of the situated order and actors maintain their identity to survive or simply exist. Identity cannot be sustained without social interaction. Wendt calls this produce and

production reaction chain as “*self-fulfilling prophecy*” (Wendt, 1999, p. 186). In other words, actor’s identities are formed during socialization and sustained by socialization.

As mentioned before, society and the actors have mechanisms for acquisition and maintaining identity. These mechanisms may be both external and internal restrictions. In other words, they may be subjective or objective. The well-known identity crisis of Erik Erikson may be evaluated from this point. According to Erikson, if the actor fails during the identity acquisition phase, the identity crisis happens which entails social conflict and harmful actions (Erikson, 1968, p. 185-186). There is no doubt that Erikson explained the individual identity, not political identity, as a psychologist, however, an anthology is appreciated in international politics. Accordingly, if states cannot accept the identity presented to them in the current international culture, they tend to revisionist policies. In this case, they might be punished by other states most probably. Germany after world wars and the First French Empire are the best examples of such states. After the improvement of penalty mechanisms, such as international law, economic embargoes or political isolation, the visibility of the revisionist states has decreased. Therefore, states tend to achieve their interests of not going beyond normal with the help of internal and external restrictions due to escape foreign punishments.

Moreover, another motive of internal restrictions is the state's enthusiasm for positive distinctiveness. It can be said that positive distinctiveness has become one of the basic concepts of international relations. The positive social identity provides individuals high prestige and increases their chances to benefits from in-group opportunities (Turner, 1982, p. 34). Therefore, every state prioritizes the acquisition of identities that provide positive distinctiveness. Although democracy indexes offer quite reliable and analytical statistics, every single state in the world claims to have highest democratic values, including vibrant apartheid regimes, regardless of what democracy indexes indicate. In a sense, identity is a label of actions which enounce stable behaviors and shared expectations. In other words, identity determines the actions of states against each other. It may be said that the belief that identity determines actions become collective knowledge.

Thus far, the role of identity in international politics, and its position in the international system have been investigated. As mentioned earlier, social constructivism is a system theory that investigates anarchy and the modern state system by taking identity as a main variable. It is important to utter that identity is determinant as a key variable in the modern state system. Besides, identity is also determinant for international politics that are not directly related to the systemic level of analysis, such as domestic politics, foreign politics, regional integration or international crisis. Identity is multilayered and multidirectional. The nation state represents sovereignty, stable behaviors and shared expectations, and these properties represent its identity. Essentially, the identity of nation state become the main source for conflicts and cooperation.

1.6. The identity Construction: The Self and Other

Populism and nationalism are mainly identity related concepts. Moreover, identity construction is also a prominent instrument during the rise of populism and nationalism. The many phenomena that were not previously present in international politics, emerged after increasing populism and nationalism as implements of identity construction. The construction of novel identity elements is also related to the identity construction process.

The identity construction and its alteration have been the main topics of debate of International Relations in the past two decades. There are two distinct approaches about how the self and the other emerged. The first approach is that self and other have not a direct connection. The self meets the other at a late stage of self-building and the other has not a significant effect on the Self. Meanwhile, according to the second approach, the individual cannot self-build before encountering the other. The social interaction is necessary for self to occur. The second approach is basically social constructivism (Zahavi, 2014, p. 241). Social constructivism has acquired this understanding from earlier idealist theories.

As a prominent social constructivist, Wendt also explained self-building by dividing it into stages. To begin with, the concept of role identity requires social

interactions. If the student and teacher case of Wendt is considered as civilized and uncivilized countries, it is claimed that the roles are acquired according to existing social structures and attitudes of other identities (Wendt, 1999, p. 227). In other words, the civilization level of a country is determined by the civilization level of other countries. The roles of states depend on the characteristics of the contemporary system and the relations between other states in the system. As mentioned earlier, the desired change in the relations between the West and the rest of the World requires change in the actions of all parties. Moreover, while the production of identity is relatively mechanical and tranquil, the differentiation of identity is equally difficult and requires intervention, in other words, reform. This difficulty leads to belief that identities are permanent and congenital.

Moreover, the change of economic relations can be quite a decisive regulator in the formation or alteration identity by itself. The alteration of identity is a challenging progress, however, change in economic relations may lead to immediate changes in line with Marxism (McLellan, 2000, p. 550-551). The relation patterns and role perceptions between the West and the rest of the world emerged the moment they first met, just as in identity building approaches. Social constructivism claims that identity needs other identities to get the characteristic features that will help to form an identity. Briefly, the West owes its existing features to other cultures, the same goes for non-western societies. The identities gained by the Western and non-Western societies have been continuously reproduced and maintained for centuries and it's harder to replace than it is expected.

1.7. Identity as a Macro Norm

As it is known, different methods are used to classify norms. The categorization of norms as international norms and domestic norms is one of them (Cortell & Davis, 2000, p. 73). The domestic norms and international norms were examined in previous chapters. Another categorization method utilizes their functions, such as regulative norms and constitutive norms (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 891). While norms are categorized, their regulatory abilities have been generally circumvented. In this context, there is a need to analyze norms in terms of their regulatory ability. In this section, two

different types of norms will be proposed to categorize norms in terms of their level of regulatory abilities: macro norms and micro norms in accordance with Wendt's model of structures (Wendt, 1999, p. 143). Wendt's model is quite convenient for understanding the functioning of norms.

Before going into details, it has to be said that there are alternatives for identifying macro norms such as macro factors, regulators or rules. The reason why the term of macro norm is preferred in this study to provide ease of meaning since macro norms are highly connected with other structural regulators or factors in the international system.

Macro norms cover and affect micro norms to a large extent. They simply regulate the international system and they determine the influence and regulatory ability of micro norms. Besides, macro norms allow us to comprehend international politics and the international system in general (Wendt, 1999, p. 150-156). The identity may be considered as a macro norm because it regulates the relations between actors in the system, as well as micro norms, such as border security. The power may also be considered as macro norm due to it regulates micro norms, such as use of chemical weapons and proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is unblemished that power is a decisive macro norm as mentioned in numerous international relations theories (Lake, 2013, p. 55-77). The phenomenon of power is subject of the third debate (Constructivists vs Rationalists) (Aalberts & Munster, 2008, p. 720). The social constructivist scholars suggest that the regulatory ability of power is decreasing and rather it is only an instrument.

The internalization of the norms, which was examined in the previous chapters, may be misleading (Kelley, 2008, p. 232). This study argues that internalization is not decisive for the macro norm and micro norm categorization. Micro norms might be fully internalized, on the contrary, macro norms might not be internalized. As an example, during the Peloponnesian War, power was fully internalized by the sides of the war. Relations patterns among the competitors were largely determined by power, such as alliances or hostility. Also, other macro norms such as identity had diminutive impact. In

terms of comparison, contrary to the Peloponnesian War, the elements of the power in today's Europe have lost their efficiency, such as the distribution of weapons and interests. As another example, the de-mining is highly internalized by international actors as a micro norm. The main factor that separates the micro norms from each other is related to the macro norms they are affected by. It should be noted that the means for their internalization are also imperative, whether the methods are securitization or humanization.

Another problem that comes to mind is whether the difference between micro norms and macro norms is related to agent-level interactions and structural effects. It may be said that micro-norms have only agent-level impact and macro norms have systemic effect. However, this would not be an accurate observation because micro norms can also have systemic impact. In this context, if considering anarchy (a micro norm), anarchy has long-term systemic influence on actors. Its features are corresponding to the description of Katzenstein for international norms, "*to describe collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors with a given identity.*" (Katzenstein, 1996a, p. 3). In accordance with the definition, anarchy gives states a certain identity and allows them to act in accordance with their given identity, aka collective expectations. Anarchy is a feature of the international system but also performances as a micro norm. As reviewed in previous chapters, international norms are revealed by collective expectations. The same phenomenon applies to micro norms as well.

As witnessed in the instance of anarchy, both micro norms and macro norms act on two different levels. Nevertheless, micro norms may not go beyond the domestic level and endured in the second formation stage (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 893). In other words, micro norms may not reach systemic level. For example, anti-abortion laws that have turn out to be domestic norm in the U.S., still does not have a systemic effect. Meanwhile, nuclear disarmament is a micro norm with a systemic impact. The regulatory ability of norms is a completely different phenomenon than their level of influence. The effect intensities of norms are not directly related to their regulative abilities. The regulatory abilities of micro norms are limited. Abortion is a micro norm is regulated by

the macro norm of identity. The anti-abortion movement may be evaluated as the domestic value of the U.S. The right to life regulates anti-abortion as a decisive macro norm. In itself, the right to abortion diffused until the 1980s, however, it has been outdated with the emergence of the identity (the macro norm) and anti-abortion (the micro norm). The same goes for the Second Amendment, which is the domestic value of the U.S. However, the Second Amendment is relatively easy to both securitize and humanize, it has been the subject of intense debate in the U.S. public. The reason for intense debates in the U.S. public about the Second Amendment is the efforts of different norm entrepreneurs from different political views to securitize and humanize the Second Amendment. As mentioned earlier, there is a need for humanization and securitization to internalize a norm. The Second Amendment is subject to securitization efforts, however, these efforts contradict efforts to humanization which is directly related with the right to life.

Macro norms are distinguished by their regulative ability (Bailey, 2008, p. 291). Macro norms regulate micro norms, identities and relations among actors. They have decisive systemic impact. Macro norms are fully internalized and embedded international norms. Actors usually do not question the legitimacy of macro norms, they regulate their actions in accordance to macro norms. Out of norm behaviors are labelled as norm-breaking behaviors and they have been subject to sanctions. Macro norms have always had international character. This does not apply to micro norms which might not go forward from domestic level. In this context, micro norms may be divided into two different categories: domestic micro norms and international micro norms (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 893-894). Meanwhile macro norms do not have domestic character.

Identity is a macro norm. First of all, it is internalized by all actors and has a systemic impact over all actors. There is no actor who is not regulated by identity in the system (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 10). Identity, which is the most important property of actors, is determined by the concept of civilization, aka culture. As mentioned before, identity determines actions of the states. There are behaviors that are expected from states, while states expect specific behaviors from other states in accordance with their given identities. The expected behaviors are determined by the identities of states. It would be

misleading that a state behaves contrary to the identity in which it has. It has been a deceitful phenomenon that a state behaves to break the identity of the macro norm.

Furthermore, not only dissatisfaction, but also the element of stigma is essential (Erving, 1963, p. 10-11). The value and belief oriented judgments and socially constructed realities cause states to perceive certain behaviors as out of reality. The behaviors that disrupt the perception of reality are similar to the reaction of the individuals when they witness socially unsuitable actions. This confusion is called social stigma in sociology terminology. The stigma grounds norm-breaking individuals to be excluded from social community or even the individual's existence is completely terminated. Essentially, the wicked fate of abnormal is a quite common incident that is repetitive through history. Nevertheless, rehabilitation attempts may have occurred like post-WW2 Germany and Japan.

Secondly, the identity has a decisive impact on micro norms. The identity regulates micro-norms such as border security and capital punishment, mentioned earlier. Border security is a micro norm which is regulated by sovereignty and identity. Sovereignty regulates micro norms as a macro norm, as well as border security. Border security is fully internalized by states and its violation is framed as norm-breaking behavior, aka violation of international law. One of the main reasons is that border security is regulated by the most decisive macro norm in the international system, sovereignty. Border security is also regulated by identity through securitization (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 23-26). If there is no securitization in this context, the concept of border security is not applicable because border security requires social consent and high and constant motivation, similar to other security concepts. The same can be applied for potential micro norms that are attempted to be included in the system by norm entrepreneurs, such as anti-abortion and gun control norms. As identity is increasingly decisive, its regulatory ability increases in discussions about possible future micro norms. The regulatory ability of other macro norms such as power also decreases. The identity's regulatory ability over micro-norms shows that it's not a micro norm. Its regulatory ability is observable in all relation

patterns in the system. It enhances its impact not only in traditional power and interest relationships but also dealing with international crises.

It may be assumed that identity is more challenging to observe in comparison with a long-lasting and established macro norm, such as power. It is especially accurate for phenomena, such as international crises and disasters due to their idealistic properties are great and their materialistic properties are truncated. Also, international crises and disasters are not regulated by power, but the impact of identity is comparatively more. Accordingly, the materialistic properties of viruses remain at the base level. Moreover, viruses and other public health issues are phenomena that are currently managed by international organizations. Indeed, health management has been more a matter of civil society from its beginning. The emergence of the Red Cross and similar organizations are results of individual initiatives and dominated by non-state elements. As a natural consequence, health management is very suitable for norm studies.

1.8. Summary

The main purpose of this chapter was to present a theoretical framework. At the beginning, the theory of social constructivism was debated. While doing this, social constructivist concepts and the position of social constructivism on the main arguments of international relations were under consideration. Accordingly, although social constructivism is a theory in itself, which is quite different from mainstream international relation theories in terms of philosophy of science as an idealist theory, it still cannot be discussed without neo-realist arguments due to certain dominance of neo-realism in international relations. In this context, it would be a preeminent method to generate a discussion within the framework of neo-realistic concepts, such as anarchy, states and sovereignty. The position of classical realism and neo-liberalism were also debated for a better understanding. In summary, although social constructivism basically confirms the existence of basic concepts of international relations, it argues that the meaning of these concepts are not independent from ideas and beliefs. In other words, they are the concepts that are constantly changing in line with the change of ideas and beliefs. Besides, social

constructivism does not offer alternatives to the state or anarchy, but it claims that they are underestimated epistemologically and ontologically.

In the rest of the chapter, the development of social construction as an idealist philosophy was discussed. While doing so, the platonic philosophy and German idealism, were discussed. They provided the basic arguments of social constructivism. The main output of Platonic philosophy is the phenomenon of idea and the idealistic explanation of the relationship between the outside world and the mind. In the meanwhile, although German idealism discussed the same problem, it is also important as it deeply influenced Western orientalism. Accordingly, Hegel laid the foundations of modern-time idealism in his book, *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Besides, along with his other works, he formed the main pillars of European exceptionalism.

The rest of the chapter examined social constructivist concepts, ideas and norms. These two concepts are imperative for social constructivism, hence they have been the subjects of numerous studies of social constructivist scholars. Norms are social phenomena with life cycle. Accordingly, norms are expected to emerge, survive and disappear. Norms determine actors' actions, norm-breaking behaviors jeopardize actors' will to survive within the scope of the logic of appropriateness.

Finally, at the end of the chapter, the concept of identity was debated. The emergence of identity was largely associated with social interaction. The identity is also maintained through social interaction. Identity is an important concept for understanding populism and nationalism. Populism and nationalism cannot be perceived without elements of identity and its formation process. Moreover, it would be an accurate approach to evaluate identity beyond its materialistic elements. Accordingly, identity is a phenomenon beyond physical properties.

The next chapter will examine the rise of nationalism and populism in the light of social constructivist concepts and arguments that have been clarified so far. In doing so, the reasons for rise of nationalism and populism will be sought. Besides, it will be

understood whether populist and nationalist incidents are specific to COVID-19 pandemic by examining former epidemics and pandemics.

2. THE RISE OF POPULISM AND NATIONALISM

The rise of populism and nationalism in the international system has become decidedly evident in recent times. Populism and nationalism come into prominence even during the most unrelated events. Identity-oriented politics triumphed, a noteworthy percentage of political and social issues has become to be subject to identity. Populist and nationalist political parties, such as True Finns, Golden Dawn and Jobbik, achieved various electoral successes across Europe, Donald Trump unexpectedly won the Presidential election in the U.S. and populist and nationalist politicians came to rule of several countries as well (Norris & Inglehart, 2019, p. 294; Kaushal, 2018, Introduction; Jacobson, 2017, p. 9-10). The increasing nationalism and populism has widespread reflections.

The wave of populism and nationalism is not limited to the Western hemisphere, countries like Saudi Arabia, India also goes through similar metamorphosis (Peker, 2019, p. 23-24; Hubbard, 2020). In essence, metamorphosis is a suitable term since many countries have reinterpreted their historical narratives and national myths and came up with novel versions. In doing so, most countries reject their founding historical narratives and construct new types of nationalism. For example, partisans of Hindutva (Indian nationalism) attempt to create a completely new understanding of history (Truschke, 2020, p. 1-10). This tendency to rewrite history creates confusion and more social polarization. Moreover, ideas against globalization have been more generally acknowledged around the world. There are populist movements to prioritize the national identities instead of transnational identities, and hence anti-immigration and anti-multiculturalism spread. In terms of economy, there is also an increase in demand for promoting national industries, rather than the global production networks.

In this part of the thesis, increasing populism and nationalism will be debated. The impact of the 2008 Global Economic Crisis on this increase will also be evaluated.

And finally, the nationalism and populism waves in previous epidemics and pandemics will be debated to better understand nationalistic and populist incidents during COVID-19 pandemic.

2.1. The Rise of Populism

Populism, by definition, means giving priority to the interests of masses instead of a small but privileged group or established structure of power (Canovan, 1999, p. 3). Populism can occur in many different ideologies, different governmental systems and even the smallest social issues because it is not an ideology in itself (Moffitt & Tormey, 2013, p. 3-4). As an example, democracy is a system of government that demands the will of the people to be priority instead of the will of aristocracy, as a natural result, democracy is a populist form of government. Along with this, populist ideologies that emerged against pedigree regimes (kings), have altered in parallel with the variety of ruling circles. In other words, although the monarchies gave their place to parliaments, the populist movements continue to exist by adapting. Accordingly, since the 20th century, many totalitarian regimes have come to power with the help of populist rhetoric and democratic means (Reid et al., 2019, p. 16). In modern times, populist movements have been seen against elected groups and capital owners as in the totalitarian regimes of the 1930s. Therefore, the harmful aspects of populism and the necessity of control mechanisms are frequently discussed issues. Populism gained a negative meaning and lost its positive meaning unlike the periods when it was pointing to monarchs. Today, populism is addressing elites, even if they are democratically elected, without any political, ideological or economic restrictions. In many parts of the world, discourses that prioritize the large masses of people against elites are rising (Canovan, 1999, p. 4). These discourses are mostly formed around nationalist and religious myths (Vaishnav, 2019). However, populism was not nationalist and religious as of its emergence. It was a discourse that prioritized the majority against monarchies. Moreover, populism is widespread among leftist and globalist at the present time (March, 2017, p. 3-5). In summary, populism is not necessarily linked to nationalism and religiousness. The most common form of populism in Western democracies during the Cold War was related to social classes and economic

concerns. The objective of populism has always been the ruling elites, regardless of the ideology they have.

Nowadays, the ruling elite is also the addressee of populism. Hence, in the vast majority of the world, there is resentment against the ruling elite (so-called corrupt establishment) (Inglehart & Norris, 2016, p. 6). The belief that the ruling elite has unchecked power prevails around the world, not only at the national level but also at the global level (Engesser et al., 2016, p. 4). The rise of populism may be attributed to the increasing income inequality and decline of welfare following the 2008 Global Economic Crisis. The secondary factors such as the rapid acceleration of interaction, the increase in the circulation of information and the easing of access to knowledge are also significant (Engesser et al., 2016, p. 5-6). Accordingly, the secondary factors reveal two important phenomena that distinguish contemporary populism from the earlier populism: infodemics and conspiracy theories. The infodemics cause numerous misleading information to circulate without restrictions, that is, fabricated political agendas and personal views spread easily around the world, especially in times of crisis. The term infodemic was first used due to information pollution during the SARS epidemic (Rothkopf, 2003). Therefore, with the power of social media, any individual has a chance to spread his/her worldview to the rest of the world effortlessly. This world view may be derived from an unfounded book, limited personal experiences or videos circulating on social media. As an example, it was recently revealed that the so-called commander of a global hate group, the Feuerkrieg Division, which was received serious attention by FBI of the U.S., was a 13-years old Estonian child. This 13 years old boy even contacted U.S. soldiers in order to attack a synagogue in the U.S. He ordered many people around the world to realize his fascist agenda (Simone, 2020). As it turns out, the time for personal ideas to turn into global ideas is quite narrowed. The increase in the visibility of conspiracy theories may be evaluated in this context.

There are explanations about the causes of conspiracy theories. If summarized, the conspiratorial thinking has three main motivations: Epistemic motives, existential motives and social motives. The epistemic motives basically express the desire of

individuals to access the accurate information to understand the world. When information is inconsistent and unreliable or when events are so random, individuals are directed to information that seems more confident, clear and easier to understand as a defense mechanism (Douglas et al., 2017, p. 538-539). In such events as the COVID-19 pandemic, the flow of accurate information may be problematic. There may be information pollution. For this reason, people turn to conspiracy theories that give a quite safe and confident impression, rather than skeptical and insecure scientific knowledge in appearance. Secondly, the existential motives express that when individuals feel threatened because of a challenging situation, they approach information that will conform them even if the information is misleading rather than reflecting the true conditions (Douglas et al., 2017, p. 539-540). Thus, after the 2008 Global Economic Crisis, many people demand alternative explanations to overcome the psychological burden of financial difficulties. Finally, the social motives refer to desire for acceptance by a certain group (Douglas et al., 2017, p. 540). The socialization efforts have emerged as one of the basic elements of conspiratorial thinking, as rising importance of being popular on social media platforms.

Moreover, nationalism has emerged as a useful tool for populism. The immigrant flow following the 2008 Global Economic Crisis triggered many people to impute the economic problems on immigrants. This reaction may be evaluated within the scope of existential motives. The idea that a privileged elite promotes multiculturalism and immigration spreads substantially around the world after the 2008 Global Economic Crisis. Moreover, individuals tend to develop a kind of defense mechanism by blaming foreigners or invisible and plotter privileged elites. In this respect, embellished with some religious and nationalist aspirations, immigration became a suitable instrument for populism (Fitzi et al., 2019, p. 39). It may be said that alongside populism, a version of patriotic consciousness begins to form rather than the traditional sense of nationalism. This is why it will be useful to examine sources of nationalism to understand how national myths and perceptions against non-Westerners became realities of a large part of the world in the light of COVID-19. Also, to understand why nationalism is rising.

2.2. The Rise of Nationalism

Nationalism is an ideology expressing a socially constructed belief in which people are divided by identities called nations (Lawrence, 2014, p. 3). The nationalism emerged during the age of empires and represents the idea that every nation has the right to self-determination (Mayall, 1999, p. 478-481). However, it also expresses the idea that a particular nation is superior to other nations for certain historical, social and racial reasons (Tamir, 2019, p. 70-71). Today, nationalism carries these two different meanings together. Although the number of empires are dwindling today, people have recalled national values increasingly because of the transnational pressures related to globalization. Moreover, it may be said that nationalism has come to represent a wider civilizational concept. In other words, citizens of the same country from different racial and ethnic backgrounds tend to resist globalization together with the unity brought by concepts, such as religion and homeland. In this context, nationalist groups from different countries with different national myths that are totally contradictory to each other can organize joint demonstrations across Europe, and even organize under the same organizational roof. For example, Poland's Independence Day became the annual show of European ultra-nationalism (Taylor, 2017). It may be argued that the new type of nationalism is more close to the patriotic ideology, in contrast to the old type of nationalism. As a result of the prevalence of patriotism, nationalist groups can more easily convince people from the same civilization basin. As an example, Eurosceptic/nationalist groups of France, are able to support Greek nationalists against the so-called Turkish threat (Smith, 2020). A similar cross-national integration exists among Muslims as well.

The increase of nationalism became more observable after the 2008 Global Economic Crisis. At first, the wave of nationalism was seen in Europe. The continents/regions as North America, South America and the Middle East seemed immune from nationalism for a while. The Norwegian Progress Party, the Danish People's Party, True Finns of Finland, the Golden Dawn of Greece, the Fidesz and Jobbik Part of Hungary and others have been successful in European elections (Norris & Inglehard, 2019, p. 294; Kaushal, 2018, Introduction). They have significant economic, social and political

influence over people. Alongside with the ultra-nationalist parties, numerous political movements that could be named patriotic have also caused social polarization in Europe. The patriotic movements have certain features in common with ultra-nationalist groups. Firstly, both groups are anti-immigration. According to popular acceptance, after the 2008 Global Economic Crisis, immigrants are believed as offenders for economic problems (Billiet et al., 2014, p. 136). In this context, Donald Trump's 2016 election campaign was about building a wall on the Mexican border in accordance with popular demands (Norris & Inglehart, 2019, p. 16). Also, during the Brexit Campaign, the claim of the forthcoming European Union membership of Turkey and possible wave of Turkish immigrants came forward decisively. However, as it is known among Brexiters, Turkey's European Union membership has become a utopian goal in recent years (Boffey & Helm, 2016). Essentially, there are more decisive issues between Britain and the European Union than Turkey's unfeasible membership. Secondly, the globalist ideas become the main concerns of ultra-nationalist and patriotic groups, such as LGBTQ+ activism, feminism, environmentalism and multiculturalism. Indeed, it may be said that ultra-nationalist and patriotic movements are highly responsive to these ideologies. Finally, ultra-nationalist and patriotic movements demand the promotion of national industries, rather than the global production networks. There is a popular claim that job losses after the 2008 Global Economic Crisis is related to the shift of the production line to developing countries where labor is cheaper, such as China and Mexico (Katz, 2016, p. 36-37). For this reason, re-nationalizing the production networks of national firms has become a functional election promise. In addition, ultra-nationalist and patriotic groups are skeptical against international organizations and advocate the protection of the right of sovereignty. However, the main difference between ultra-nationalist and patriotic movements is that patriotism has not carried an extreme discriminatory approach, specific to the 1930s, and they tend to accept the broader concept of civilization and religious elements. At the same time, for patriots, love of the homeland is in the foreground instead of race and ethnicity.

The increasing nationalist environment causes many issues to be evaluated within the framework of identity. Accordingly, individuals and countries view the issues from

the perspective of identity. They evaluate not only from the perspective of their own identities, but also from the stereotypes presented by the Western thought. Due to its cultural hegemony, the West has been the origin of stereotypical ideas and beliefs about many cultures. Therefore, the reactions after COVID-19 have been mostly production of Western origin beliefs.

Orientalist thinking has resurrected since the COVID-19 pandemic's first emergence. Thus, from the beginning of the pandemic, the disturbing images allegedly coming from China served to the social media. They reflected the orientalist perceptions about the East in the mind of the West. At the same time, it also showed the East's view on itself. After COVID-19, the food and cooking videos (Mukbang videos) from Asian countries have been deliberated on both traditional media and social media for months (Palmer, 2020). The images from China were framed by the media as the Orient's ordinary chaos, crisis and death scenes (Victor, 2020; Yuan, 2020; Lajka, 2020). Many conservative politicians, such as Donald Trump, have consistently referred to the pandemic as the Chinese virus (Moynihan & Porumbescu, 2020). Moreover, there have been many discriminatory and racist incidents against Asian communities. On the contrary, when pandemic reached European countries, it was considered with more empathy and goodwill. Also, it was framed as tragedy, rather than chaos when it was in Europe. In today's world, where intercultural interaction is quite high, the evaluation of non-Western cultures with fear, pollution, poverty and other stereotypical elements reminds orientalist habits. Orientalism is an important concept to understand rising nationalism. For this reason, it will be useful to examine the subject of orientalism in order to understand nationalism as a Western origin ideology.

Edward Said is the scholar who examined the concept of identity and identity-based perceptions among different civilizations in relatively early years in his well-known book, *Orientalism*. Said came up with orientalism which represents the way of thinking, based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction, separating the orient from the occident (Said, 2003, p. 2). Said claimed that the West has the intention of gaining advantage during the power relations by providing pre-accepted superiority against the

East. Indeed, it is unblemished that the West is perceived itself as the side that should not lose due to its pre-accepted superiority during its bilateral relations with the rest of the world regardless of actual power distributions in the field.

There is no reservation that the Orient and Occident are broad concepts and they have undergone major alterations since their emergence. Such as, the borders of the Western civilization have changed constantly. While being Western meant North-Western Europe during the 18th century, it has covered Australia and even Israel nowadays.

Furthermore, not every Western society judges the East with identical values. Such as France, which has a long and deep-rooted colonial history with the East, and Spain, which has direct pre-colonial connections with the East through Al-Andalus, have not identical value perspectives with each other. Likewise, there is not a single whole concept for the East. Until the middle of the 18th century, the European aristocracy could not distinguish between Greeks and Turks and they did not know about today's Balkan nations. For 17th century European aristocracy, today's Balkan geography was the beginning of the East (Ortaylı, 2014, p. 23). The borders of the Ottoman Empire were where the East began.

The expansion of the Western culture may be interpreted as a natural result of dominance of the Western culture. The political and military expansion of the West meant spreading of the Western judgement and worldview. Moreover, the spread of knowledge through the West led many cultures to know each other without direct communication, but indirect recognition with western origin information. In other words, the Egyptian knowledge of Chinese culture had largely been filtered by the Western though. Likewise, the positioning of many cultures in the world was determined by their association with the West. Nevertheless, the cultural expansion of the West has tended to hesitate due to the increasing protectionist identity of non-Western civilizations recently, or at least this phenomenon has been interpreted by some scholars in this direction, such as Samuel Huntington. Huntington examined the concept of identity from the structure of power politics. The *Clash of Civilizations* interpreted the East and the West as Cold War blocks,

put forward the hypothesis that the concept of civilization would come to the fore after the Cold War and the Eastern Civilizations, who had deep differences, would unite due to their anti-Western sentiment. Although he did not mention a single Eastern bloc, he claimed the “*Asian and Islamic*” civilizations as most anti-Western (Huntington, 1996a, p.102). However, Edward Said has been a well-known critic of Huntington. Said associated Bernard Lewis’ *The Roots of Muslim Rage* and Huntington’s study in his article *The Clash of Ignorance* in the Nation Magazine. Said claimed that there were prolonged and seated historical and sociological ties of the West and Islam and also noted to uselessness of creating artificial fault lines between the West and the East (Said, 2001; Lewis, 1990). Undoubtedly, the West and the East cannot be thought of without each other. These two cultural blocs are facing each other constantly, also determining each other's identities.

Bernard Lewis, as the best known orientalist, represents the academic field of orientalism, which has a long-established academic background and institutional structure in the Western thinking. Orientalism has greatly influenced the Eastern image in the West as an academic field. Furthermore, the European arts, such as painting, literature or cartoons have been largely influenced by the studies of orientalist scholars (Said, 2003, p. 118). Most Western art depictions were created by artists who have not really visited or experienced the East. Furthermore, the East did not only represent backwardness or technical deficiency for the West, it has been also a magical world that is untouched and waits to be discovered (Said, 2003, p. 55-56). At this point, the quote, “*The East is a career*”, from Benjamin Disraeli that Said quoted at the beginning of his book helps explain the produced Eastern image of Western consumers with the dynamics of capitalism and consumerism (Said, 2003, Introduction). The East has always been desired as a world is waiting to be explored. The involvements of European explorers are valuable goods for European consumers. This supply and demand relation is not only a 19th century trend, it is still ongoing and observable in the popular books such as the one thousand and one nights, in Disney movies such as Aladdin or the hippie movements of the 1970s which are closely related to motivation for exploring the Orient.

It is accurate that studying the West and the East as cold-war like blocks is problematic. As mentioned earlier, the geographical boundaries of the East are controversial. In fact, where the East begins is a challenging problem. After the Cold War, with the rising of identity, the boundary-setting discussions escalated about the concept of civilization. The most accepted idea had been that the West is the European Union and NATO during the Cold War. At the same time, the borders of the West and the East were relatively clear during the Cold War, the East was largely represented by the Soviet Union and it was subject to ideological definitions. Nevertheless, although the East was represented by Moscow, it was continued to represent backwardness, pauperism and authoritarianism among the so-called free world.

While it is difficult to identify physical boundaries, the perception of Easterners on the basis of ideas, beliefs and norms has been quite clear in the Western philosophical thought. As Roger Sandal claimed, *“like it or not, some cultures succeed and others fail because some are better able to provide law, security, order, prosperity, freedom, and the institutional pluralism that people in the year 2000 expect. Deny this is to deny the facts of life”* is a common way of thinking of the Western philosophy since German orientalism, shaped by Hegel (Sandall, 2001, p. 134). Roger linked the so-called Western superiority to its technical capacity at most, as well as the unique European political environment as Hegelian Philosophy. The comparisons he made between Chinese and Western technology are remarkable. According to Roger, although papermaking had been known in China for hundreds of years, it was Europeans, who were acquainted with papermaking, made it functioning with the help of mechanization. After European engineers developed the printing press, Chinese Emperors had to restrict it for political reasons (Sandall, 2001, p. 135). The idea that technological products cannot be developed without European correction is one of the main manifestations of orientalism.

The emphasis on the Western innovation is indeed constantly highlighted in academic community. Accordingly, it is mutual to believe that the Eastern origin inventions cannot actually be regarded as fully invented unless they are corrected or improved by the superior Western technology (Escosura, 2004, p. 2). The absence of the

Western historical determination in non-western civilizations is put forward as a main reason for this understanding. The historical determinism, which Hegel emphasized, was also highlighted by a wide range of scholars, including Karl Marx. As it is known, Marx claimed that the Revolution would take place in the Capitalist societies with class consciousness (Gilbert, 1979, p. 524; Jost & Jost, 2007 p. 315). In other words, Marx actually claimed that Western societies possibly would reach a status of a specific consciousness due to their historical experience. Roger continued this understanding as well, which is the main element of deep orientalism in Western philosophy. In general terms, the unique and exclusive Western advancement myth occupies a significant place for the idea of Western exceptionalism.

It is controversial that the advancement of the West is truly unique. After the Chinese miracle in the last century, this argument has been the subject of discussions between historians and sinologists. First of all, China has her own renaissance, *au fund*. The concept of renaissance is variable, there is not a single concept for renaissance. From the early 19th century, the renaissance has expressed rapid social, cultural and political change, i.e. modernity, in Europe. But today it also means individual emancipation. Over and above, in terms of power politics, renaissance corresponds to the rise of the West (Maissen & Mittler, 2018, p. 83). In other words, it is the period when the west differed from the East.

Indeed, the concept of renaissance gained a novel meaning recently as a result of studies of Michelet and Burckhardt, which is a “*self-discovery of the individual*” (Maissen & Mittler, 2018, p. 85-86). The approach of Michelet and Burckhardt suggested that individualism, which is claimed to be identical to Western societies, also emerged during the renaissance period. The tendency to position individualism as a Western value against to the Eastern collectivism has been one of the basic elements of orientalism. This positioning appears in the political field as an endless question, democracy versus authoritarianism.

The perception that the West is special and unique forms the basis of orientalist thought, and the European renaissance is the logical basis of this idea. The philosophical source of orientalism may be found in German idealism and Hegel's historical determinism as well. In summary, orientalism is an idea that the West is in a special position because it has overcome certain historical stages/obstacles and it perceives the world in line with its superiority. With the COVID-19 pandemic, because of the emergence of the pandemic in China, it has been revealed that the orientalist habits still continue.

The generally accepted claim is that European modernization (basically secularization) is unique and there is no alternative for supposedly backward societies (Germani, 1992, p. 64). It has been a convention tool for power relations between the West and the rest of the world. However, this belief has also constructed the basic pillars of the relationship between the West and the rest of the world.

In a nutshell, the Western exceptionalism, embellished with modernization theories, has been produced in the Western academic thinking, maintained by literature, theatre, cinema and painting and nourished in economic relations. The Western exceptionalism is largely constructed on the so-called uniqueness of the European renaissance, on the other hand, it does not indicate exceptional features with other modernization movements on the basis of basic principles. The mentioned hierarchical pre-acceptance produces a long-term dependency between the West and the East. The development theory has been used as important tools to maintain the dependent relationship between the West and the East after the collapse of the colonial system. This deep orientalism depends on ideas, beliefs and norms. In addition, the basis of these ideas is the framing of the East as backward, unstable and poor.

So where is the globalization, Westernization and cultural sameness or reduction of differences in the discussion? If cultural differences are diminished by today's international system, why do orientalist habits resurrect during COVID-19 pandemic? One of the main reasons for the generally accepted idea that globalization produces a

single global culture is superficial materialist approaches. Samuel Huntington mentioned false perception, and - put it out the “*Coca-Colonization*” which attributes the mistaken idea that modernization leads to Westernization (Huntington, 1996b, p. 28). The Coca-Colonization predicts that non-Western cultures are keen to change their consumption preferences due to the prevalence of the Western goods and services, however, economic preferences does not lead to deep cultural alterations (Huntington, 1996b, p. 28-29). In other words, when alternative non-European products are available, people’s preferences will also change.

The optimism in the West after the Cold War has raised the ideas that the world is in the end of history and completely Westernized. However, it became observable that the consumption habits does not cause structural changes, only affect the cultures superficially, and also don’t have the observable effect to role conceptions both in the West and in non-Western civilizations. The self and other categorization is mostly related to non-material variables, not economic statistics. In short, the West is not a civilization that represents the whole sphere, but a civilization with quite protective and specific features in itself. Populist and nationalist reactions to COVID-19 should also be evaluated in this respect.

In a nutshell, when the West evaluates the rest of the world, it acts on the idea that it is pioneering, advanced and exceptional civilization. This is why socially constructed belief prevails in the West that the East is backward, chaotic and prone to chaos. Moreover, the East is under the influence of Western thought while dealing with other cultures. The increasing trend of nationalism resulted in the re-emergence of orientalist stereotypes that had settled in most of the world. When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in China, these socially constructed beliefs have been quite decisive. Therefore, Orientalism has been determinant in the relationship between rising nationalism and its implications for COVID-19 pandemic. The next section will look for the sources of rising populism and nationalism in the 2008 Global Economic Crisis, which has been widely accepted as the main reason of the rising populism and nationalism.

2.3. The Populism, Nationalism & 2008 Global Economic Crisis

The general belief in political science and international relations is that populism and nationalism tends to be in the ascendant after the crises, especially economic crises (Caiani & Graziano, 2019, p. 7-11). The basis of this belief lies in the populism and nationalism wave and the subsequent tragedies once the great depression of 1929. Nevertheless, despite the tendency to emphasize two global crises, the world has survived more than two global economic crises since the great depression of 1929, such as Latin American Debt Crisis, Early 1980s recession, Black Monday of 1987, Asian Crisis of 1997 and early 2000s global recession (Anderson, 2013). Moreover, so many countries experienced national economic crises, such as the Chilies Crisis of 1982, Japanese Asset Price Bubble of 1986-1992 and Turkish Economic Crisis of 2001 (Demirgunes & Ucler, 2017, p. 348) In this sense, it would be assertive to say that the economic crises directly led to populism and nationalism for the reason that most of the economic crisis did not lead populism. As an attention-grabbing example, Turkish Economic Crisis led to democratic openings on long-lasting taboo issues, such as the Kurdish and Armenian issues (Ulusoy, 2010, p. 71). Meanwhile, it is also right that crisis situations may reduce the credibility of established institutions, due to desire for alternatives and highlight charismatic figures. Accordingly, other factors must also be included for mentioned changes along with the economic crises. The other factors (or secondary factors) consist largely of cultural, idealistic factors, they are related to the fault line between globalism and new patriotism. Therefore, there are also factors that are economic, but not crisis-related, such as China shock, income inequality and automation (Passari, 2020, p. 18). As the concept of Industry 4.0 suggests (put forward by German economists), the world has gone through a new industrial revolution that puts labor behind, but highlight robotic engineering, artificial intelligence, sensors and 3D printing (Fuchs, 2018, p. 280-283). The disappearance of traditional industries causes the high amount of unemployment, when globalization-oriented migration enters the equation, it is inevitable to rise of populism and nationalism across the world. The term of revolution indicates the pressure on individuals and institutions due to the instability factors as seen in all revolutions. The

agrarian revolution also lead to prolonged famines and other humanitarian crisis as claimed by the well-known anthropologist Claude Strauss (Levi-Strauss, 2016, p. 36). The first industrial revolution also caused severe social crisis, such as labor abuses and child labor (Humphries, 2010, p. 366-373). In short, the change in the established economic order leads to social and political crisis. However, crises also brings solutions, as social democracy solved the problems of the first industrial revolution.

The 2008 Global Economic Crisis, triggered by the bankruptcy of the financial service bank Lehman Brothers in 2008, has had major impacts until today. It has particular importance in recent history, as the severity of the crisis was as great as the Great Depression of 1929 (Verick & Islam, 2010, p. 20). The intensity of the crisis, combined with the economic and cultural factors as mentioned above, caused the wave of populism and nationalism to spread over the world. The relative decrease in income level and quality of life in Western countries has greatly increased the longing for the past when immigration was low, domestic production was high and the Western world was unrivaled. Meanwhile, the serious increase in the prices of basic necessities, such as food and shelter in developing economies caused a similar populist wave. The popular movements in developing countries, such as the Orange Revolution of Ukraine and Arab Spring, may be evaluated in this context. In fact, the wave of instability created by populist movements in developing countries further triggered the wave of immigration to Europe, and populism and nationalism in Europe was further prompted.

Before Donald Trump, who is believed as a populist figure, populist and nationalist politicians had already begun to occupy decisive positions in government staff in Europe. The members of Jobbik Party of Hungary, Golden Dawn of Greece, National Front of France, and Alternative for Germany achieved various successes in elections (Kaushal, 2018, Introduction). While writing this chapter, French President Emmanuel Macron declared a serious struggle against Islam and Islamic values. French officers ordered offensive Charlie Hebdo cartoons to be projected on government buildings and Macron made various humiliating statements against Islamic values (Cuthbertson, 2020; Aljazeera, 2020b). The thought-provoking issue is that he was presented as a moderate

candidate during the presidential election against populist and nationalist politician Marine Le Pen who has a controversial ideas about Islam (Wesel & Sanders, 2017). In Europe, populism and nationalism are concepts that have been discussed for a long time as important parts of European political life. Europe, which emerged as a more globalist and liberal bloc against the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, has become a much more exclusionary and anti-liberal with some exceptions (Hoffman, 2003, p. 13-20).

Moreover, populism and nationalism are not limited to the Western world, but spread to most of the world. For instance, pressure on Muslims is ascending in India in parallel with the size of the status of the Indian national heroes (Peker, 2019, p. 23-24). In Brazil, Trump fan Jair Bolsonaro makes populist statements in favor of deforestation of Amazon and downplayed COVID-19 (Stewart et al., 2020, p. 7). In Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Salman emerged as a charismatic figure by trying to get over his father's relatively passive policies (Hubbard, 2020). Meanwhile, in Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu managed to adopt his policies by predicting the wave of populism (Judah, 2018). Accordingly, politicians, who were moderate or liberal in the early years of their political life, adapted their ideas and policies according to populism and nationalism. It is also claimed that Donald Trump and Prince Salman take Vladimir Putin as a role model, while Russian Democracy emerges as a global model (Hearst, 2018; Myers, 2016). The main reason for these speculations is the pressure on countries due to the increasing prominence of populism and nationalism on a global scale. The idea that many politicians and electorate cannot avoid being populist and nationalist means to pursue state interests. This pressure causes the states to delegate similar political figures; the most obvious examples are Donald Trump and Boris Johnson. As it is understood, populism and nationalism have become the real phenomena of many countries rather than a short-lived trend. As discussed above, the 2008 Global Economic Crisis, together with the combination of other economic and cultural factors, has been the root cause of this change. However, another issue that comes to mind is whether populism and nationalism, which started after the global economic crisis, will be replaced by democratization in case of global enrichment and prosperity. When considering this problem, it should be remembered that the West

has not been able to realize the enrichment curve of the last four centuries anymore. In parallel with the 21st century being considered as the Asian century, wealth and capital are shifting to Asia. Moreover, the West is forced to share its wealth due to migration, although its growth has slowed. The China Shock that has been experienced by the West will avert the end of populism and nationalism (Feenstra & Sasahara, 2018, p. 1054). China's economic growth is causing political and social crisis in the Western world. In this context, Donald Trump's election campaign was largely based on targeting China, and when he elected, he immediately started a trade war with China. It was a desperate attempt to target China's economic growth.

2.4. The Populism and Nationalism during Previous Outbreaks

Contrary to popular acceptance, the visibility of epidemics and pandemics is quite high. They have existed as inseparable elements of human history. The epidemics and pandemics have shaped history by directly affecting critical events. Besides, the discriminatory and false beliefs and practices were experienced during epidemics and pandemics. Therefore, epidemics and pandemics may be considered as decisive historical crises that cause rise in populism and nationalism. The populist and nationalist events experienced during the COVID-19, had been experienced in previous outbreaks as well.

First of all, viruses have an exceptional position in the realm of ecosystem. They are not animals, plants or bacteria. They are not even considered as organisms because without other creatures they cannot demonstrate metabolic ability. Viruses can attach to all living organisms, including plants. They use the properties of the cell, such as cell walls due to their lack of cell properties (Oldstone, 2010, p. 10; Rogers, 2011, p. 119). Viruses can develop a symbiotic relationship with the host cells and they may not damage the cell. However, viruses may exhibit the ability to mutation and become lethal for the hosts, especially during switching among different species. For example, a virus of simian monkeys was transmitted to humans, it became HIV and caused AIDS. The virus that did not show any signs of sickness in the Simian monkeys, turned into an infectious disease that targets people since mutation through interspecific transition (Oldstone, 2010, p. 11-

12). The debates about mutations have also been quite prominent throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The distinctions between epidemic and pandemic, *inter alia*, must also be recaptured before moving on to the subject. Epidemics are outbreaks that spread over one or two countries. They may also take place in a group of countries, referring to a geopolitical region, such as the Balkans, Latin America or the Middle Asia. Meanwhile, pandemics are global outbreaks (Morens et al., 2009, p. 1018). Accordingly, they are expected to be approved by WHO. As examples, COVID-19 is a pandemic, the yellow fever is an epidemic.

In a nutshell, when viruses spread among organisms, they cause epidemics, if epidemics cause infections on a global scale, they are called pandemics (Porta, 2014a, p. 93-94; Porta, 2014b, p. 209). Epidemics and pandemics have an imperative place in the history of known civilization. Contrary to popular belief, they are quite common and it would be misleading to consider them as an infrequent crisis. Epidemics and Pandemic ought to be treated as earthquake-like natural phenomena (Hays, 2005, p. 473-477). Accordingly, medical facilities should be designed to be rapidly transformed into counter-epidemic facilities since their foundations. As known, this obligation has been revealed in the latest COVID-19 pandemic. The health facilities have been insufficient because they are designed in accordance with the interim periods when outbreaks are not decisive. It should be known that epidemics and pandemics will not disappear in the near future due to factors, such as the mutation abilities of viruses and the special place of them which is vital for sustaining earth's ecosystems.

As mentioned earlier, epidemics and pandemics have significant impact in social and political relations from the beginning of history. There are arguments that epidemic diseases have a historical determination. That is, some arguments claim that epidemics and pandemics are the main factors that determine the course of history (Ranger & Slack, 1992, Introduction). More notably, epidemics and pandemics are also vital periods in which populism and nationalism are on the rise. It may be said that populism and

nationalism that manifests itself during the COVID-19 is not an exceptional situation. Moreover, many disease prevention measures have also been experienced before COVID-19 pandemic. The outbreak restrictions and discussions about them are not new either.

One of the most prominent infectious diseases to be examined in terms of quarantine and travel ban is yellow fever which causes intermittent epidemics from the 16th century to the 20th century. While yellow fever was a West African origin disease, it was transported to the Americas and to Europe by largely inter-continental slave trade (Oldstone, 2010, p. 104). The most notable yellow fever epidemics of the Americas were seen in Philadelphia and New York. During the 1793 yellow fever epidemic, Philadelphia was the capital of the United States, and George Washington, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson witnessed the epidemic and epidemic-induced quarantine (Oldstone, 2010, p. 105). They also witnessed social and political problems that were caused by quarantine measures. However, the first country to implement the quarantine was not the U.S.

In fact, it is believed that the quarantine measures were first implemented by Venetian Republic in 1374. The Venetian Republic also established the first health commissions. Therefore, the word quarantine comes from an Italian word, quaranta. At that time, quarantine was both a measure to halt the disease and a kind of punishment. That is, it was the combination of punishment and medical precaution. Accordingly, the penalty for breaking the quarantine was usually capital punishment (Oldstone, 2010, p. 112; Ranger & Slack, 1992, p. 15). The purpose of the quarantine is to reduce human contact or prevent it altogether to limit spread of epidemic diseases. After COVID-19 pandemic, the prominence of quarantine has been remembered which is a measure that has been applied for centuries.

Substantially, yellow fever is not a human-to-human disease, then a fly-related disease (Bell, 2010, p. 4). Officials attempted to halt the epidemic with quarantine measures due to they thought it was transmitted among people. The misunderstanding caused severe unnecessary actions and tragedies. Accordingly, during the yellow fever, similar incidents occurred as the early phases of COVID-19. As a popular instance,

Alexander Hamilton, the Secretary of the Treasury of the U.S., was denied to enter into New York since he had yellow fever. He was forced to stay in escorting armed guards at his father-in law's house in New York's countryside. His belongings were burned, and his employees were disinfected (Oldstone, 2010, p. 106). Actually, the measures were unnecessary due to the fact that yellow fever is not transmitted among people. As it turns out, the lack of scientific studies and misinformation during the pandemics may lead to undesirable incidents.

The yellow fever is largely limited through vaccines. Nevertheless it is possible for *Aedes Aegypti* mosquito to cause new yellow fever epidemics again if its living space expands (Oldstone, 2010, p. 133). The possibility of new yellow fever epidemics increases gradually especially due to global climate change and globalization as well. These two phenomena cause both the *Aedes Aegypti* mosquito and human kind to interact more easily on a global scale.

Measles is another imperative disease in terms of social and political impact. Measles is a disease with a vaccine, when the vaccine is applied twice, it provides a great amount of protection. In addition, those who have survived from measles develop immunity. Although measles is a largely limited disease, it was still the reason for the 140.000 death in 2018. Therefore, measles is subject of debate today due to the anti-vaccination movement (Oldstone, 2010, p. 135-136; Roberts, 2020). The reappearance of forgotten diseases is highly correlated with anti-vaccination.

Anti-vaccination is a rapidly spreading movement. There are several motives for anti-vaccination. Many of these motivations are identity-related. Accordingly, the rising populism and nationalism is a decisive factor on the subject. The several common features may be listed to understand the rising anti-vaccination movement; mistrust tendency against governments and international organizations, conspiratorial thinking and infodemics, over protectionism and the rise of alternative medicine (Poland & Jacobson, 2011, p. 98). The correlation may be made with anti-vaccination and nationalism and populism as well, which are highly influenced by identity.

The epidemics mentioned until now are, in a sense, success stories due to they are largely constrained through vaccination and other restrictive measures, such as quarantine and isolation. However, the visibility of virus-origin epidemics has increased recently. The similar success stories cannot be claimed for new-generation viruses: such as Lassa fever, Ebola, Hantaviruses, SARS, West Nile, Chikungunya, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and finally COVID-19 (Oldstone, 2010, p. 199). The main reasons for this increase may be listed as globalization, human mobility via air and sea transportation, opening animal habitats to human settlement, transforming forest into agricultural activities and melting glacial areas (Oldstone, 2010, p. 200). As it turns out, most of them are of human origin.

The first infectious disease that came to mind before COVID-19 might be Ebola which is already quite active. Ebola has been a major disease without a vaccine, affecting global health for a long time. It was first seen in Zaire in 1976 in which 318 people were infected and 88 percent of those passed away. Then it reappeared in Kikwit, Zaire for the second time in 1995, infected 244 people, and caused 77 percent demise (Oldstone, 2010, p. 214). Ebola is a highly virulent disease.

The events in Kikwit were similar to those experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kikwit was quarantined with army accompaniment, citizens were forbidden to leave the city as similar to Wuhan city. Besides, panic and social hysteria were experienced since the necessary public information is not provided by the government. Accordingly, despite strict measures, the Ebola epidemic spread to the area around Kikwit and 90 percent of patients passed away (Oldstone, 2010, p. 214-215). Similar to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were speculations about reliability of governmental figures during the Kikwit's Ebola epidemic. The patients' attempts to reach the treatment in rural areas instead of city centers due to concerns about government-based information may confirm these speculations. It is highly possible that the government of Zaire had hidden the figures because of economic and political concerns (Oldstone, 2010, p. 216). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the same claims were made especially for the non-Western countries, such as China, Turkey and Indonesia. However, economic and political

concerns about COVID-19 have been common in all countries, such as there have been allegations that pandemic-related casualties are hidden in Japan in order to prevent cancelation of Olympic Games (Yamaguchi, 2020). Most countries take a similar stance in crisis situations.

Ebola outbreaks continue in Africa until at this time. In 2007, the epidemics in Democratic Republic of Congo (DROC) and Uganda put Ebola back on the public agenda. Today it still causes heavy losses especially in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone (Okoror, et al., 2020, p. 36). The concern that Ebola would cause a pandemic is shared by both in public and the scientific community. Although Ebola's spreading rate is relatively low, it is a fatal disease, compared to COVID-19 (Bavinger, et al., 2020, p. 417-418). That's why Ebola has caused an enormous social crisis.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and the HIV-related Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) have caused decisive social and political debates since their first emergence. They have a significant impact on global public health. HIV and AIDS are seen in a quite wide geography compared to other infectious diseases. By 2019, the HIV was infected to 75.7 million people and 32.7 million passed away due to HIV-related diseases. Besides, approximately 38 million people live with HIV/AIDS at the present time (UNAIDS, 2020, p.1). The numbers are remarkably high.

HIV passes through sexual intercourses, exchange of body fluids and pregnancy from mother to infantile (Oldstone, 2010, p. 273). There have been a great deal of debates about its transmission, treatment methods, for the reason that in most cases patients are excluded from society. Therefore, controversy arose regarding the reporting of HIV/AIDS to the authorities and bringing patients into society. In general, HIV and social life have been a great debate of matter.

HIV was first described in 1981. According to the first determinations, it caused major outbreaks since its first appearance. Indeed, it spread quite quickly and relentlessly. HIV is a dangerous virus due to the absence of observable symptoms in analogy to COVID-19. An estimated, between 25 percent and 50 percent of infected people live

without knowledge that they have carried HIV. An average patient might not receive treatment for 10 years after the infection without noticing the disease. Treatment efforts become quite challenging because of the late diagnosis. In addition, diagnosis is also tough for newborns. Children with HIV/AIDS mostly get the disease from their mothers during pregnancy (Oldstone, 2010, p. 252; Sepkowitz, 2001, p. 1764). The late diagnosed AIDS significantly reduces the change of long-term and qualified life expectancy.

Although HIV/AIDS is not a disease that can be treated, patients are likely to have a long-term quality life. HIV/AIDS patients are able to access lifelong treatment, especially in Western states. Approximately \$25,000 for a year is required for a quality life (Oldstone, 2010, p. 255). High costs make access to treatment challenging. It is more challenging for regions that do not get enough share of global prosperity.

While HIV/AIDS causes major social and political crises in severe regions around the world, it affects some countries more. HIV/AIDS led to a major social and political crisis in South Africa. The long-term HIV/AIDS treatment is challenging compared to Western states in South Africa. Besides, as in other African states, South Africa is quite vulnerable to epidemics. Accordingly, African women, not only in South Africa, are three and four times more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. The protected Sex is not common in Africa for cultural and economic reasons. Also multiple women take care of babies in contrast to western-style nuclear families and health systems are not adequate as known. It has also claimed that unnecessary denials, misunderstandings and inappropriate policies are common about HIV/AIDS by the South African government as a complicating factor (Oldstone, 2010, p. 279-280). In other words, debates about governments and disease management are not new-fangled.

As mentioned before, the social and political effects of HIV/AIDS have been abundant. Firstly, patient safety has come to fore. The patient safety is “*the absence of preventable harm to patients during the process of health care and reduction of risk of unnecessary harm associated with health care to an acceptable minimum.*” (Runciman et al., 2009, p.19). The fact that HIV/AIDS is a sexually transmitted disease and its

transmission to homosexuals as of its first appearance cause false perceptions (Sepkowitz, 2001, p. 1764). Also, it sparked controversy over protected sexual intercourses. As a natural result, new approaches emerged about the issue. After HIV/AIDS, the awareness raising activities, advertising and television programs, early age sexual education and patient follow-up by health institutions carried out nationally and globally. The mandatory testing and patient follow-up has also been the agenda (Jonsen & Stryker, 1993). HIV/AIDS has different features than measles or smallpox. HIV carriers may survive longer compared to other diseases. At the same time, HIV/AIDS patients have exposure to mandatory follow-up and other restrictions, such as not being able to donate blood or organs, not able to join the armed forces, not getting life insurance cover or not visiting some counters (National Health Service, 2018). It is a challenging task for authorities to develop a balanced and sustainable approach between patient safety and public health. In this respect, HIV/AIDS offers important lessons to overcome confusion during the COVID-19 pandemic because of rising populism.

It has also been an important issue that inclusion of HIV/AIDS patients in society, that is, as not the lepers were treated. Therefore, it is necessary to be educated that HIV is not transmitted by handshake and other related close contacts. It has been repeated frequently on many platforms that there is not any effect in being in the same workplaces and same social environments with HIV carries, that is, perception construction projects have been carried out. There is an awareness about HIV/AIDS nowadays in comparison to the times when the disease first appeared. Nevertheless, it is clear that there are still more workload for HIV/AIDS-related issues. Accordingly, education, information and appropriate public relations may be useful to avoid information pollution about COVID-19 as well.

Finally, the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) virus, which has precise similarities with the COVID-19 pandemic, caused a research worth outbreak at the beginning of the 21th century. SARS was first seen in November 2002 in Southern China, spread to 33 countries until it was taken under control in 2004, infecting 8.000 people and

causing 774 deaths (Oldstone, 2010, p. 226). SARS was quite similar to COVID-19 in its mode of spread.

SARS is an infectious disease which is triggered by the Coronaviruses. The actual name of the type of virus that leads to SARS disease is SARS-CoV. Coronaviruses got their names from their crown-type looks. SARS has several signs with COVID-19, that is, ground loss of function not only in the upper respiratory (mouth and throat) but in the lungs and sometimes further vital organs. The most obvious symptom of SARS is respiratory distress and cough just like COVID-19. While the mortality rate of SARS has been ten percent, the elder patients and people with pre-existing diseases have a higher mortality rate. Again as COVID-19, SARS can also cause permanent damage to lifetime. Nevertheless, contrary to COVID-19, the incubation period of SARS is between four and six days (Oldstone, 2010, p. 227-228; Hui et al., 2004, p. 373; Chorba, 2020, p.2302). The short incubation period of SARS was an advantage for the fight against the pandemic.

Since SARS is a China origin disease, it sparked social and political controversies by means of COVID-19. The discussions about the Chinese food culture and well-known bat soup speculations extend to SARS. When SARS first appeared, it was revealed that an important number of patients were associated with the livestock market of China. Initial studies pointed to the masked palm civet, which is widely held in the livestock market (Wang et al., 2005, p. 1860). Nevertheless, it is still vague whether the masked palm civet is a natural reservoir or limited spreader due to most people in contact with masked palm civets not infected with SARS. Indeed, many people with SARS have not contacted masked palm civets. Nevertheless, early studies were interpreted adequately to ban masked palm civets officially in Chinese livestock markets.

The findings that removed masked palm civets from suspect animals have been revealed in late studies. First of all, it turned out that masked palm civets also suffer from SARS. This is against the principle of reservoir animals for the reason that reservoir animals do not develop sickness due to viruses they carry (Oldstone, 2010, p. 228-229). This discovery was quite significant.

Because of the findings that masked palm civets also suffer from SARS, they were removed from reservoir animal suspects. However, it was claimed that it could be an amplifying host since its high sensitivity to the virus (Wang & Eaton, 2007, p. 334). After it turned out that palm civets were not guilty, bats were addressed as the reservoir animal. (Li et al., 2005, p. 676). Bats are consumed in the Chinese pharmaceutical market and food market as well. According to several studies, SARS antibodies were seen in eighty percent of bats in support of these claims. Moreover, they found that bats were not affected by the SARS virus. Actually, bats are thought to infect SARS-like diseases previously when considering many other animals in the Chinese countryside that consume fruit residue of bats. Indeed, bat waste is known to be consumed by other animals, including masked palm civets. The mentioned findings make bats the most important candidate for the SARS reservoir, however, there is still no clear determination (Oldstone, 2010, p. 230). In short, the issue of reservoir animals is a highly controversial issue and it may be misleading to target Chinese cuisine for epidemics and pandemics due to rising populism and nationalism.

SARS pandemic is also decisive as an early rehearsal of COVID-19. SARS caused controversy about government transparency when it first appeared as COVID-19. The Beijing government attempted to secure the early outbreak due to its economic and political insecurities. China's influence on WHO was relatively limited at that time, therefore, securitization efforts have failed. Many opposition movements were seen both within China and the global public. Later, China switched to new policy and accepted the SARS epidemic, admitted its mistakes and tried to control the crisis in cooperation with WHO and became more transparent (Stanway, 2020; Frost et al., 2019, p. 6-8). Similar scenarios took place in South Korea and Japan as well, they were more affected by SARS than China.

As COVID-19 demonstrates that China took lessons from SARS. First of all, China has been determined in quarantine measures, setting an example for many Western countries (Wu & McGoogan, 2020, p. 1241). Secondly, China has been also successful to lead its facilities to produce protective and therapeutic equipment. While many developed

countries have equipment problems, China has even managed to assist abroad in terms of anti-pandemic equipment (Kuo, 2020). Therefore, China has informed WHO since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (Wu & McGoogan, 2020, p. 1241). Accordingly, it was realized that WHO and China preferred the same rhetoric. At that point, the dense coordination of China and WHO caused some criticism, especially from the U.S. President Donald Trump (BBC, 2020d). The criticisms may be understandable against WHO which is a strategic international organization for the reason that WHO acts against the Western rhetoric during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is obvious that after the SARS pandemic, there was a change in WHO's budget in favor of China (Collins, 2020). After the change manifested itself during COVID-19 pandemic, Donald Trump threatened WHO to withdraw the U.S.' contribution to its budget. It is not necessary to remind that the U.S. is still an essential contributor to WHO and may have a significant impact on its mode of operations (Jacobs et al., 2020). It may be said that WHO which is a significant actor for global health governance, is at the center of power policy between two global powers.

The similarities between SARS and COVID-19 pandemics are not limited to those described above. First of all, the SARS pandemic raised concerns about the safety of healthcare workers as well. Majority of healthcare workers have suffered from disease since the first appearance of SARS in China. A similar scenario took place in Canada as well (Knobler et al., 2004, p. 262). In fact, it was unexpected for health workers to be effected excessively. The safety issue of healthcare workers made management of pandemic thought-provoking. The problem still exists during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ensuring the safety of healthcare workers is a quite important issue. It prevents pandemic-induced humanitarian crises. The struggle of healthcare professionals affects their families and close circles as well. This might lead to long-term psychological and social glitches. The same applies to employees of other pandemic related industries, such as mask and other protective equipment manufacturers and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

The second issue that comes to the fore after SARS is confusion about treatment methods and vaccination studies. It should be remembered that SARS is an incurable disease. The conclusion of the SARS pandemic was not the result of vaccination, but a

natural contaminant. In other words, SARS had been an infectious disease which naturally appeared and mysteriously disappeared (Gorvett, 2020). Accordingly, much speculation regarding the treatments, including vaccination and traditional medicine, has been made from the beginning of both SARS and COVID-19. WHO and national governments have not been effective in controlling complexity about treatment methods. The more single-centric approaches might be more effective because pandemics affect all nations equally. The establishing safe facilities for vaccination studies are also important for the reason that vaccine researchers have been suffering from SARS as well as health care workers.

The third issue that came to the fore after the SARS pandemic was the inadequacy of facilities, such as emergency services, hospitals in case of the high patient numbers. The state of hysteria also makes the pandemics more challenging. 315,000 calls were recorded to emergency services during the relatively less intense SARS outbreak in Toronto (Oldstone, 2010, p. 233). There have been similar scenes during the COVID-19 pandemic as well. In this context, it can be said that for emergency situations, such as pandemics, backup mechanisms are needed.

Although the effects of populism and nationalism during the SARS pandemic were not easily observed compared to COVID-19 pandemic, the discussions and crisis were not much different. The SARS and previous outbreaks have led to short-lived populism, xenophobia and racism, social crisis and trust issues. In today's world, populism and nationalism affect nearly every aspect of society. There were no similar political polarization as SARS and other mentioned outbreaks. However, the lessons from SARS and previous epidemics and pandemics may be used to provide more rational approaches against COVID-19.

2.5. Summary

In this chapter, the whys and wherefores of the increasing populism and nationalism were debated. First, increasing populism was debated in a separate title. It turned out that there is a clear difference between the meaning of populism when it first emerged against monarchies and its present meaning. The general collocutor of today's

populism is the intangible, highly globalized, wealthy and highly connected elite. The fact that this new and unusual elite conception is quite abstract compared to monarchies, whose pedigree, title, wealth and belonging are clear and well-registered. This difference led the today's conspiratorial thinking. Accordingly, conspiratorial thinking is highly correlated with the concept of the invisible malevolent elite. It was concluded that conspiratorial thinking has three motivations: epistemic motives, existential motives and social motives. These motivations provided explanations for understanding the rise of today's populism and its relation with conspiratorial thinking.

In the following part of the chapter, increasing nationalism was debated. Firstly, the impact of rising nationalism was questioned after clarifying hitches about definitions. The course of the debates led study to the concept of orientalism. The relationship between nationalism and Orientalism was essential for the reason that many orientalist habits have reappeared since the COVID-19 pandemic. As the dominant culture in the global sense, the West has been the primary cradle for the formation of the ideas among different cultures. It is also an important source for a culture's way of defining oneself. In accordance with the construction of identity, identity is largely an output of the socialization. As a result, the orientalist thoughts of the West have been the root cause of the discriminatory incidents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

After that, the impact of the 2008 Global Economic Crisis on increasing populism and nationalism were deliberated. The 2008 Global Economic Crisis seems to be the most central trigger of the increase of populism and nationalism for the reason that many populist and nationalist movements are associated with economic crisis-related motives.

Finally, populism and nationalism during previous epidemics and pandemics were discussed. It turned out that pandemics may increase social crises. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has a different position than previous epidemics and pandemics, as it emerged in an environment where populism and nationalist are already on the rise. Accordingly, in the next part of the thesis, the impact of increasing populism and

nationalism on the COVID-19 pandemic will be debated. In doing so, identity elements, as race, ethnicity, religion, generation, gender and social class will be examined.

3. THE RISE OF POPULISM, NATIONALISM AND COVID-19

The rising populism and nationalism in the international system is directly related to already existing identity elements. The best known of these elements are race, ethnicity and religion. However, social class, gender and generation are also becoming quite visible. Besides, the two upper identities have also emerged: globalism and new patriotism. These two upper identities are highly determined by generation, gender, social class, and also race, ethnicity and religion. Therefore, neither upper identities nor identity elements may not be evaluated on their own. They are highly intertwined and complex components as the idea of identity they construct.

In this part of the thesis, the impact of increasing populism and nationalism on the COVID-19 pandemic will be debated. In doing so, identity elements, as race, ethnicity, religion, generation gender and social class will be examined under separate headings. It is observable that increasing populism and nationalism brings various identity elements to the surface and adds new meanings to them. Moreover, the tension between globalism and new patriotism will also be examined. Undoubtedly, growing populism and nationalism arise through constructing severe identity elements all together. This chapter examines how this construction process takes place.

3.1. Race and Ethnicity

The race and ethnicity have been quite evident from the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in consequence of xenophobia and racism wave around the world. As expected, the main motivations of xenophobic and racist incidents have been beliefs and ideas about race and ethnicity. In accordance with general acceptance, the prominence of race and ethnicity has decreased due to globalization, but they manage to resurface in the moment of the pandemic. This incident has brought the relations between racism, xenophobia and global crises into question. In fact, the rise of populism and nationalism is directly related to the recall of ethnic and racial identities.

Moreover, because of high mortality rates and apparent vulnerability of minority groups, unconventional controversies about ethnic and racial identity arose. The greater losses of minority groups led to a loss of trust in central governments. This tendency may have stimulated the already existing fault lines among different races, ethnicities, regional governments and central governments.

The well-known criteria for virulence of COVID-19 pandemic include different factors, such as age, gender, health habits and medical history. There are also claims that ethnic background is also determinative. Accordingly, since the pandemic appeared, there have been a lot of speculations which claim COVID-19 affects Black and Asian people more or less (Sze et al., 2020, p. 2; Mututwa & Metsilele, 2020, p. 3-4). The supporting reports about ethnicity and COVID-19 connection appear as the pandemic spreads. One of them was Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (CDC MMWR report). According to the report, 45% of the COVID-19 patients were white Americans and 55% were from other ethnic communities. Meanwhile, 33% of non-white patients were consisted of African Americans. Although the statistics seem to be compatible with the distribution of the U.S. population, unexpected results were reached when disease rates were included. As stated by the CDC, according to another report of the city administration of New York, the number of COVID-19 losses for African Americans was 92.3 per 100.000 people, meanwhile 74.3 for Hispanics, and 45.2 for Whites and 34.5 for Asians. As statistical studies confirm, it has been revealed that principally African Americans, a well-known minority group in the U.S., are more vulnerable to COVID-19 along with Hispanics (CDC, 2020). In other words, minority groups are more vulnerable.

In the statement made by the CDC about the subject, it was specified that the obvious difference among different ethnic groups is triggered by social and economic inequalities. It is known that the difference between the social and economic opportunities grounds various barriers for accessing medical resources and facilities. First of all, people from different ethnic communities may reside in areas where the human interaction is intense (densely populated), due to obvious discrimination in the real estate sector.

Secondly, neighborhoods where ethnic minorities reside may be far from major facilities, such as markets and hospitals. The distance to the facilities makes COVID-19 treatment and the prevention of spread of the disease quite challenging. The impact of multi-generational households are also decisive. The coexistence of different generations makes isolation and protection of elders challenging. Finally, as the CDC points out, it is accurate for the U.S. that minority groups are gathered in precarious places, such as prisoners and other penal institutions. Residential conditions are the first factors that determine the lethality of COVID-19 in the days when stay-at-home campaigns are gaining global prevalence (CDC, 2020). The unsuitable home conditions are immense handicaps during pandemics for minority groups with low income.

The working conditions also provide decisive explanations for the connection between COVID-19 and virulence. The minority communities occupy jobs that require more labor-intensive efforts, as a natural result, they cannot carry out their jobs from homes. In addition, deficiency of paid sick leave is also decisive. As the CDC notes, Hispanics are insured three times less than White Americans and African Americans. They are insured two times less compared to other ethnic groups. Moreover, the language barrier and social interaction problems, distrust of governmental institutions and existing chronic diseases may also be determinative (CDC, 2020). As it turns out, work environments and other social factors are quite determinant.

If the term of ethnicity is considered, it is tacit that ethnicity is a social phenomenon that consists of social constructions, culture and various behavioral patterns alongside genetic structure (material base) (Peto et al., 2020, p. 1421). In other words, ethnicity is a socially constructed reality that includes material features. Ethnicity is an idealistic phenomenon with a material base like every other social phenomenon. The genetic classification is an important data for the functioning of natural sciences and studies of public institutions. However, it may also be quite misleading and contains restrictive information as it ignores social factors.

Meanwhile, the liaison between ethnic identities and infectious diseases is mostly determined by social factors, ethnic backgrounds have still great importance in the fight against COVID-19 in countries where intense ethnic discrimination occur. Indeed, Myanmar is a fairly accurate case to investigate this issue. Myanmar suffers lasting social turmoil due to enduring ethnic tension among different ethnic identities. The armed groups control certain areas of Myanmar which is making control of the pandemic more challenging (Wilkinson et al., 2020, p. 1). At the same time, Myanmar is one of the few countries in the world that still maintain the apartheid regime. In order to be considered an allowed citizen, it is essential to have Bamar and Buddhist identities. Individuals who do not belong to the mentioned ethnic (and religious) identities are evaluated in the category of immigrants or basically guests. The Rohingya people are the well-known victims that are discriminated by Myanmar government, and they are considered as stateless. Buddhist-exceptionalism has shown itself in the fight against COVID-19 as well. The government's handling of the issue has been mostly based on belittling the pandemic by blessing the unique Buddhist/Myanmar diet, lifestyle and geography (Wilkinson et al., 2020, p. 3). It is no coincidence that Muslims are even exempted from Buddhist blessing. According to Buddhists religious, Muslims will die from COVID-19 because they do not currently adopt the Buddhist diet. The self-healing myth in Myanmar Buddhism harms both Buddhist and Muslim population. Myanmar is a proper case for understanding ethnic and racial identities that stand out due to increasing populism and nationalism, and how they are supported with religious elements.

The ongoing Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, which is concurrent with COVID-19 pandemic, may be evaluated as another case to understand rising populism and nationalism. Indeed, there have been criticism against Donald Trump about his ignorance of the vulnerability of minority groups during the pandemic (Ray & Gilbert, 2020). It may be said that minority groups feel more helpless and excluded during the pandemic. The minority groups have similar feelings not only in the U.S., but in the rest of the world. The emotional state of minority groups that are combined with other problems, such as police brutality, may help them to develop group consciousness and

lead to various public unrests. At the same time, BLM-like movements lead to counter movements as All Lives Matter and Blue Lives Matter that lead to an endless circle of populism and nationalism.

In this section, it was discussed how ethnic and racial identities came to fore during COVID-19 pandemic. However, ethnic and racial identity is insufficient to understand today's populism and nationalism. In particular, the new type of nationalism (patriotism) benefits from religious identity and other identity elements as well. In other words, the populism and nationalism and its implications will be better understood with the inclusion of other identity elements.

3.2. Religion

For a significant part of the world, religious and ethnic identities are inseparable. It becomes even more evident after the increase of populism and nationalism. As a striking example, since the end of the Cold War, islamophobia and so-called Islamic terrorism have been quite prominent phenomena, perhaps the most prominent. The emergence of religion as an ideological element has brought different religious identities to the fore. In this context, the number of individuals and nations that define themselves in religious terms are greater than before. For American nationalism, Indian or Armenian nationalism, ethnic identity and religious identity are quite intertwined. However, there have been also severe cases where religious identities are self-regulating.

After the beginning of social distancing practices due to COVID-19 pandemic, the mass prayers, which have been carried out for years, had to be suspended. For example, the pilgrimage was restricted by Saudi Arabian authorities. The touching the Kaaba was prohibited and only limited amount of local pilgrimages were allowed to circumambulate around Kaaba by adhering to social distance (Aljazeera, 2020a). In addition, compliance with social distancing during Friday prayers caused extraordinary scenes (Reuters, 2020c). The Christian world also had to adapt to social distancing. In churches, Sunday services performed via video conference (Parke, 2020). In India, thousands of years of religious traditions, festivals, rituals are either postponed, canceled or held with hardly any

attendances (Sherwood, 2020). However, there are also issues which religious identity and social distancing practices clash with. In Iran, shrines visiting is insisted on by large groups of people, mainly due to the belief in the religious/sacred healing (Middle East Monitor, 2020). In South Korea, Christian communities with millions of members become COVID-19 spreading centers after they insisted on mass worship (Tong-Hyung, 2020; Baker et al., 2020, p. 360). In the U.S., severe Christian congregations sue state and federal governments on religious freedoms (Baker et al., 2020, p. 366). The most notably, funerals have become central social issues. (Millar et al., 2020, p.5). It may be said that the relations between state and religion, which seems to be solved in a big part of the world, become a matter of discussion again. Accordingly, there have been requests for reopening religious buildings by a serious number of people. However, there is an opposite attitude among governmental institutions (Baker et al., 2020, p. 359). Even the strictest theocratic countries chose to postpone religious ceremonies.

While religious identity may not be considered as a stand-alone independent variable, it has become highly determinative by interacting with other identity elements on the basis of COVID-19 and behavioral patterns (Baker et al., 2020, p. 360). In this context, religious identity, combined with other identity elements, become a determinant for the basic behavioral changes, not only for social distancing, but also other practices, such as mask wearing (Baker et al., 2020, p. 360-361). Moreover, the influence of religious identity on anti-vaccination and conspiratorial thinking have also been prominent (Baker et al., 2020, p. 362). The suspicion of established scientific thought is particularly one of the basic elements of religious fundamentalism. The flat-earth theory and anti-vaccination are natural consequences of this doubt. Accordingly, as a German-based company announced their achievement in COVID-19 vaccination, microchip conspiracy theory spread on the internet rapidly (Goodman & Carmichael, 2020). The anti-vaccination is nothing new, but when combined with conspiracy theories about COVID-19, it has gained a novel dimension.

The Christian fundamentalism affects other cultures through technology and globalization as one of the most decisive source of anti-science thinking (Dein, 2014, p.

1-4). In other words, anti-scientific conspiratorial thinking, such as anti-vaccination and flat-earth theory spreads to the non-Western nations from the West. This intercultural collaboration is accelerating a global wave of populism and nationalism further. For example, the idea of God given freedom, inspired by American Protestantism/Evangelism, causes resistance against behaviors, such as mask wearing and staying at home (Baker et al., 2020, p. 361). Accordingly, severe Christian groups strongly resist behavioral changes because they want to protect their God given freedom. Moreover, islamophobia emerges as a useful justification for this resistance. Through various references to hijab and burqa, it has been claimed that mask wearing is the first step in forcing non-Muslims individuals to dress in Islamic-code (Sadeque, 2020). It is a common misconception to associate the religion of Islam with authoritarianism and oppression, and the present Christianity as the epitome of individual freedom. As it is known, the roots of this belief may be traced back to German idealism and Hegelian philosophy, but it has recently re-emerged as the main element of Islamophobia. Even a behavior that is easy to apply, mask wearing, become difficult to enforce due to the increasing populism and nationalism embellished with Islamophobia. The similar tendencies are observed, not only in the Christian world, but among all kinds of socio-economic groups (Mahzam, 2020). Although these ideas are stemming from Christian fundamentalism, the problem is not about belief systems, but about the individual fears, ideas and beliefs that are socially constructed.

As mentioned earlier, healing through worship and the protection of God are decisive pillars of the American Protestantism. These beliefs have been one of the main obstacle for complying with social distancing and mask wearing (Klassen, 2011, p. 2-3). The similar trend is found in the Shia faith of Islam as well (Javaheri, 2006, p. 172-173). The belief of healing through worship in the Shia sect of Islam, particularly through shrine visiting, touching and kissing shrines, have accelerated the debates about COVID. There have been difficulties in applying social distancing in Iran due to resistance to closure of shrines. Religious leaders played a significant role for the behavior patterns of congregations and believers in general. In countries, as Iran, where the political, economic and social impact of religious leaders are enormous, even ordinary comments of clergy

can cause huge crises (Al-Rousan & Al-Najjar, 2020, p. 5815-5817). In fact, even about health matters that are not directly related to religion, individuals, who have attained religious authority and charisma, can embellish their personal views with religious elements and give excuses to various conspiracy theories and adverse events (Baker et al., 2020, p. 362). In order to prevent unfortunate events, educational activities to increase trust in healthcare professionals, instead of religious authorities, may be quite effective.

Moreover, it is also possible that religious identities will change after the pandemic. The congregation prayers may become less frequent and home-based prayers may stand out (Baker et al., 2020, p. 362). The social activities that were previously thought to be essential to carry out through gathering, might be carried out from homes even after the pandemic.

The alteration of religious practices will also have some consequences. Firstly, it can lead to the prominence of religions that already focus on individual worship. In other words, communities and religious organizations that can adapt to technological developments will have an advantage. It may also lead to the prevailing irreligion tendencies (secularization) that is already on the rise. Secondly, some social changes may occur with the weakening of religious communities, which have considerable influence in the most societies. Also, social and political conflicts may occur if the weakened religious communities will develop defense mechanisms (Baker et al., 2020, p. 362-363). Finally, after the weakening of social worship, group consciousness among religious groups may be weakened and the visibility of conspiratorial thinking, populism and nationalism may decline. As a contrary possibility, the economic and social crises that are deepened by the COVID-19 pandemic may also lead to an opposite tendency and lead to further attachment of people to their religious and nationalist beliefs.

The affiliation between religious identity and social class may also manifest itself after the cessation of social and economic aids that are provided by religious communities (Baker et al., 2020, p. 365). An important number of low-income individuals are heavily dependent on aid from religious organizations. Besides, there is an increasing public

disturbance against %1 of the world among a wider mass of people. Throughout the U.S. Presidential elections, between Trump and Biden, previously Clinton, corporate tax has been a major debate (Tankersley, 2019). While poverty is gradually increasing, the share of %1 from welfare is also gradually increasing. (Hardoon et al., 2016, p. 2). In these conditions, the dependence of religious charities of the public upsurges. The religious institutions come to fore further because of worsening economic conditions and insufficiency of governmental bodies. As economic problems deepen, combined with other social and political issues, the demand for psychological and financial support increases.

Finally, the impact of religious identities, which come to the fore due to increasing populism and nationalism are also seen in the political field during the COVID. Under the leadership of French President Emmanuel Macron, the deep tension occurred between France and the Muslim world, due to Charlie Hebdo at first sight. However, this tension is deeper than an issue of cartoon magazine and freedom of expression. The French press, governmental institutions and the public in general have deeply internalized Islamophobia. The framing of the French press on Islam, the numerous anti-Islam statements made by French Presidents, anti-Hijab laws and the voting patterns of the French public indicate that islamophobia is highly internalized in France (Abdeslam, 2019, p. 11-12). France's policies that are targeting Muslims during the COVID-19 are quite dangerous in terms of the management of the pandemic, which is quite stumbling in France. In combating the pandemic, it is necessary to aim for international cooperation, rather than targeting a certain religion. Accordingly, it may be said that in a world where populism and nationalism are on the rise, it would be beneficial to calculate that religious identities can be brought to the fore for the purpose of various wicked intentions and it would be reasonable to take steps to prevent these attempts, especially in times of global crisis as pandemics.

In summary, religious identity has been decisive in several ways throughout the COVID-19 pandemic as an important element of increasing populism and nationalism. As it is understood, religious identity, combined with ethnic and racial identity, become one

of the main contributors of populism and nationalism, such as conspiratorial thinking, islamophobia, racism and xenophobia. The increasing religious sensitivities may be clearly observed not only in the U.S., but also in countries as India, Armenia and France. At the same time, religious identities are directly affected by pandemic and undergo various changes. The natural resistance to these changes causes many legal, social, political and economic crises. As a result, including religious identity in the equation can help both understand and solve pandemic-related issues and be quite helpful.

3.3. Social Class

When COVID-19 pandemic first emerged, the general belief was that it mostly affected wealthy people from the upper class. The reason for this was that people from the upper class are more socialized as they travel more, or simply they are more globalized (Paez & Perez, 2020, p. 604). However, as the pandemic spread to the masses, the lower class people with low-income began to be the most vulnerable. Accordingly, the first person to die due to COVID-19 in Brazil was a 63-year-old housekeeper who got the disease from her employer, who returned from a trip to Italy (Slattery, 2020). This dimension of the disease reminded the various discussions about social classes, and social class came to the fore as an identity element. The social classes express the hierarchical order within society. The most accepted social classification method is based on economic power because social class is largely a Marxist term (Poulantzas, 1996, p. 213). In addition to economic parameters, education, family, vocation, race, religion and gender also affect the social hierarchy. Weber also took an approach in this direction regarding social classes (Gane, 2005, p. 213). However, as is known, economic parameters have often been useful to show individuals' statuses, regardless of what social factor provides them. In this context, during the COVID-19 pandemic, income and capital has been quite determinant in terms of the course of the pandemic.

The increasing income inequality has already prepared the ground for the formation of social class identity before the COVID-19 pandemic. While homelessness, unemployment, low income and health insecurity increases among the majority of society, the welfare of a small part of the population, called %1, increases gradually. The problem

of income inequality in capitalism, which deepened after the 2008 Global Economic Crisis, has been one of the main reasons for the rising populism and nationalism. After the COVID-19 pandemic, populism and nationalism may rise further, with both the deepening economic problems and surfacing of the already existing income inequality. Therefore, social class emerges as an identity element and it may be more prominent during the pandemic.

Firstly, social class determines whether individuals will comply with the key behavioral changes which are highly desired throughout COVID-19. A certain level of economic well-being and work conditions is required to adapt to basic behavioral changes, such as social distance (Hatef et al., 2020, p. 6). The conditions of the occupied profession must be suitable, it is necessary to have social insurance, if it is preferred not to work, it is necessary to have a certain amount of savings or have opportunities, such as unemployment benefits. It is clear that the essential (Key) employers do not have many of the mentioned requirements. They do not have the opportunity to work from home, especially in times of crisis, and even their great efforts are required to alleviate crises. The low-income essential employers are also under an economic burden. In many parts of the world, low-income essential employers lose their jobs. They have been deprived of unemployment benefits and compensation. Also, employees without health insurance are highly vulnerable to COVID-19. At the same time, some business lines suffer great damage and go bankrupt. These unfortunate events cause severe social, political and economic crisis (Martin et al., 2020, p. 453-455). These crises may cause social divisions that span several years.

The already unemployed and homeless individuals, as well as low-income and essential employers, become more vulnerable after COVID-19. As mentioned earlier, home conditions have been determinant in maintaining social distancing. The low-income individuals' residents are often overcrowded and three generations live together in these houses (Patel et al., 2020, p. 110). Therefore, seniors are vulnerable to COVID-19 because of the youth family members who do not get the chance to work from home. Also, domestic violence and substance abuse is more common in low-income homes due to

growing psychological, social and economic problems in the age of social distancing (Singu et al., 2020, p. 2). As it turns out, implementation of stay-at-home campaigns is not easy as it seems.

The neighborhood is also quite determinant. The areas, where low-income individuals reside, are located away from central places, such as pharmacies and markets (Shadmi et al., 2020, p. 1). Moreover, they experience many infrastructure problems, such as power, roads and other government services. In the regions, called ghettos, crime rates are high and trust in governmental institutions is relatively low (Berry et al., 1991, p. 357-358; Bajar, 2018, p. 7). Accordingly, throughout COVID-19, it may be quite difficult for citizens and government agencies to cooperate in ghettos. It is clear that low-income essential workers need serious social, economic and psychological support. If support and trust cannot be constructed between governmental agencies and the society, social crises may occur nationally and even globally.

The imposing curfews, closing businesses and schools during COVID-19 have caused various social unrest across the population as well due to economic concerns (Gostin & Wiley, 2020, p. 2137). Many businesses are in danger of bankrupt by reason of COVID-19 measures, working parents experienced a nursery crisis, many school-related businesses collapsed as a result of the closure of universities, travel agencies came to the brink of bankruptcy and workers lose jobs (Blundell et al., 2020, p. 298-309). Therefore, protests against COVID-19 restrictions are held in a significant part of the world and similar demands are brought to the agenda on social media platforms (Wong, 2020). It is clear that many people who depend on daily earnings, suffer from the COVID-19 prohibitions. On top of that, the loss of earnings will cause economic problems at the national and global level. It may be said that the economic crisis will cause further instability and more instability means the further rising of populism and nationalism. However, it should be added that many people also felt that governmental measures are inadequate. In terms of social class, upper class people, healthcare workers and people who work from home, share this opinion. This new fault line in society may contribute to increased polarization around the world.

Throughout COVID-19, celebrities' promotion for stay-home campaigns and their discriminatory comments against people who have to earn money traditional ways, also sparked controversies. It is usual for celebrities to have an inability to empathize with the majority of society. They have large capital, possibly staying in large mansions with more than one servant, with the opportunity to take a break from work and have access to expensive healthcare services (Hess, 2020, p. 1). Similarly, it is normal for the people who are the direct victims of the pandemic to react negatively to celebrity messages that would normally be perceived positive. There is no doubt that pandemics are extraordinary times when the public may react extraordinarily. Nevertheless, it may be said that before pandemic, there were already a certain distrust against popular and famous people who represent a more metropolitan and globalist worldview. During the 2016 U.S. Presidential race, it was alleged that there is a distrust among the U.S. public against Hollywood. Accordingly, Donald Trump reached victory, despite the huge and open support of Hollywood to Hillary Clinton (Adrian, 2016, p. 192). Moreover, conservative and nationalist voters creates their own celebrities and distance themselves from former celebrities who do not conform to their worldview. In this respect, many celebrities either adopted the new environment or lost their reputation. Also, some of them become activists by choosing to resist to the new emerging political environment. Accordingly, as a result of the increasing populism and nationalism, the impact of the statements of celebrities have been determined in accordance with the worldview of owners. In fact, this has been one of the determining causes of information pollution.

As COVID-19 endures, 1% continues to get richer (by %27), but does not make sufficient donations to fight against COVID-19. This occasion sparks another topic of discussion (Read, 2020). Although several billionaires made donations, such as Jeff Bezos' 100 million dollars donation to American food bank (1/1000 of his total wealth), their efforts still deems unsatisfactory. The general belief is that they own their wealth to the expenditures and labor of the low and middle class (Liao, 2020; Sainato, 2020; Forbes, 2020). Besides, some billionaires, such as Elon Musk, prefer to be skeptical about COVID-19. His suspicion is allegedly related to economic concerns, such that there are

allegations that Tesla Employees were fired for their pandemic-related complaints. In fact, Elon Musk announced that the COVID-19 tests were “*bogus*” on his Twitter profile. His description of his sickness as “*moderate case*” of COVID-19 sparked further criticisms (Jankowicz, 2020; Siddiqui, 2020). Some social media users even called Elon Musk “*Space Karen*” (Vega, 2020). They were referring to Elon Musk’s conservative attitude towards the pandemic.

However, it is interesting that there is also prejudice against the obvious benevolent initiatives of the rich. Accordingly, previous global health initiatives of Bill Gates already met with bias. It is well-known that increasing populism and nationalism has caused conspiracy theories and suspicions against high class individuals. In this context, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s long term fight against epidemics and Bill Gates’ personal warnings against infectious diseases have caused false anxieties (Evanega et al., 2020, p. 10). At this point, anti-vaccination emerged as the most evident production of conspiratorial thinking. Before COVID-19, there was an increase in the incidence of epidemics due to various environmental, technological and demographic factors, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is one of the international organizations which has worked to solve this problem (Walgate, 2003, p. 915-916). However, the conspiracy theories about vaccines and their roles, which are the most important pillars of the fight against infectious diseases, harm the activities of many organizations. These theories are mainly related to side effects and secret plans, such as interfile and mental retardation and chip implantation. In other words, the belief that upper class individuals use vaccines to reduce the world’s population, make the masses stupid to control and make profit over them is more common than it seems (Jolley & Douglas, 2014, p. 1-2). Certainly, it should be added that mentioned speculations are both results of the conspiratorial thinking that is driven by populism and nationalism. After the COVID-19 pandemic, the lethality of infectious diseases are remembered. Although there is a certain amount of positive attitudes to vaccination, the opposite attitude remains. In the short term, accurate public relations policies may be useful to solve this problem. In the long term, more systemic reforms are needed.

3.4. Generation

After Greta Thunberg's dramatic speech at the 2019 United Nations Climate Action Summit, it turned out there is an emerging polarization among different generations (NPR, 2019). The emergence of generations as prominent identities is not a new phenomenon in itself. Essentially, one of the ways that individuals define themselves have always been the periods that they live in since the beginning of the history. These periods differ from each other by the decisive events. Accordingly, individuals who witnessed the Second World War define themselves in this direction and other generations also define themselves in the same way (Alwin, 2002, p. 42). Nevertheless, there are studies on how individual's behaviors, values and beliefs are shaped according to the period they live in and the important events they witness during their lifespan (Mannheim, 1952; Buahene & Kovary, 2003, p. 9). Thunberg disclosed an emerging fault line related to intergenerational differences. Greta Thunberg gave useful hints about the environmental side of mentioned intergenerational conflict. Though, this conflict was already observable on diverse issues, such as Brexit, right to bear arms, Black Lives Matter and police violence. Generally, main fault lines among generations are similar to those between new patriots and globalists. As expected, the COVID-19 pandemic also became a novel zone of intergenerational conflict. The older generations have been subject to criticisms of younger generations for not being able to adapt to behavioral changes or to underestimate the presence of the threat. Accordingly, the "*baby boomer*", which is quite popular during the pandemic, has come to fore, alongside with "*generation me*" (emphasizes selfishness) (Rudolph & Zacher, 2020, p. 1). The intergenerational tension has also been quite determinant in terms of increasing populism and nationalism as well. Hence, younger generations create a wave of populism among themselves. They accuse older generations for the spread of pandemic. At the same time, older generations have used the pandemic to justify their conservative arguments.

The issue of generation has become more visible as COVID-19 has a higher lethality rate among senior individuals. There has been a claim that seniors do not take the necessary behavior patterns to combat the pandemic, although it is a direct threat for them.

“The boomer doomer” and *“the boomer remover”* simulations for COVID-19 are reproach indications (Rudolph & Zacher, 2020, p. 2). It is also claimed that the millennials adapt faster to work from home and distance learning in an environment where the meaning of work and education changes. It is also argued that the older generations should retire due to not being productive and they cannot keep up with work from home. Above and beyond, older generations are told not to be in the workplace for the reason that they should avoid physical contact (Rudolph & Zacher, 2020, p. 3). Despite the fact that older generations also have several complaints especially against millennials. Accordingly, Studies have been carried out to show that millennials are financially fragile than the previous generations with the statistics about living with parents or housemates longer than older generations, that is, they don't purchase homes (Rappaport, 2019, p. 18). It is also claimed that they are more educated but their education quality was poor and useless. Furthermore, they were also said to be lazy, shy, so dreamy and less entrepreneurial. They were also claimed to be inexperienced since they did not experience a major global crisis until COVID-19 (Duffy et al., 2017). The mentioned reciprocal rhetoric is actually evidence of an ongoing conflict among different generations.

The intergenerational tension has also come to the fore during the governmental measures to be taken to combat COVID-19. While writing this chapter, in spite of the pandemic, there is an ongoing tension between generation z and the Turkish government due to postponement of the university exam. As most of the students were required to postpone the university entrance exam due to COVID-19, the Turkish government insisted on implementing the given decision for Exam date. Generation z showed reaction through social media in ways that have not been seen before, such as down-voting certain applications in application markets, down-rating on YouTube videos and getting hashtags on Twitter trends (Gundogdu, 2020; DW, 2020). The generation z of Turkey acts together in a way almost acquired class consciousness. As usual, severe interest groups that are based on ethnicity, political orientation, gender and occupation have existed in Turkey. However, the emergence of generation as an interest group is a novel phenomenon.

As a counter argument, it may be said that instant students' interests, not the generation consciousness, is the main unifying factor among undergraduates. Nevertheless, not only students who will take the exam, but also individuals at a close age range have also supported dissenting activities on social media. In addition, the social media posts showed that the issues are mostly intergenerational and they are a sign of future tensions among different age groups. As seen in the example of Turkey, intergenerational conflict is common not only in the U.S., but in the rest of the world.

Turning to the issue of classification of generations, generation z may be said to be in more special position than millennials and generation x. As it is mostly understood, generation z covers those born in 1997 and after, while millennials refer to born in 1981-1996 and generation x refers to the period of 1965-1980. As another decisive generation, boomers refers to those born in 1943-1964 (CNN, 2020). The boomers, who hold the capital and occupy decision making mechanisms of governmental bodies and other institutions, have been the main target of the generation z. Boomers' voting patterns and political preference are also controversial. Younger generations claim that Boomers are guilty of epidemics and pandemics due to ignoring climate change and relevant environmental issues (Godfrey, 2020). Above and beyond, boomers are said to be inadequate to deal with epidemics and pandemics which they are actually responsible for because they are unable to adapt behavioral changes, such as wearing masks (Molloy, 2020; Jenkins, 2020; Whalen, 2020). As it turns out, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a populist wave among generation z. The populist wave may cause various social and political problems among different age groups of society in the same workplaces or even families. Although generation z takes a more caution stance against nationalist speculations about COVID-19, they also seem to have fallen into the trap of a populism which is specific to them. On the contrary, older generations have taken a more nationalistic and xenophobic attitudes towards COVID-19, as previous mentioned. Obviously, their nationalism includes populism elements as well.

The actual term for the intergenerational conflict in the literature is ageism. Only recently, ageism has become a kind of campaign or social movement among generation z

and older generations. However, applying ageism to the current intergenerational tension means claiming that there is a systemic and long-term political or intellectual movement or belief system. In addition, when looking at the issues of intergenerational discussions, it may be observed that the current fault lines are part of a more systemic identity struggle. There were already signs of this mentioned tension before COVID-19. In this context, “*OK, Boomer*” was already a quite common slogan on social media and was even shown on mainstream media outlets among younger generations. Accordingly, on November 2019, 25 year-old New Zealander politician Chlöe Swarbrick responded to older parliamentarians who objected to her proposal on environmental issues by saying “*OK, Boomer*” while complaining of the average age of the parliament (Meisner, 2020, p. 1-2). This way of calling was the first official announcement of generational polarization.

The terminology of ageism is also preferred to enhance negative meaning to intergenerational conflict. In this setting, discussions about ageism are generally emphasized on the ideas that demographic aging is claimed as a social crisis. (Meisner, 2020, p. 3). In addition, the claims that governmental resources are consumed by the elderly and that the elderly are unnecessary part of the society are evaluated within the scope of ageism. However, intergenerational conflict is regulated by idealistic elements in the axis of values and beliefs rather than materialistic values. Besides, intergenerational conflict contains not only disruptive but formative elements.

Another decisive incident during the pandemic has been elderly deaths in facilities, such as nursing homes and care centers especially in European countries and the U.S. Based on reports from European Center for Disease Prevention (ECDC) and the international mainstream media, there is an ongoing crisis of the nursing facilities. Accordingly, more than %40 of COVID-19 based deaths in the U.S. occurred in nursing homes. 954 people died in nursing homes in New Jersey as one of the dramatic events. In line with the previous chapters, it turned out that colored residents in nursing homes in the U.S. have been more vulnerable (ECDC, 2020, p. 1; Roy, 2020). As a cause of this disaster, it has been claimed that the elderly have been seen as unrecoverable by society, official decisions are made regarding the treatment of young people in the intensive care

units before the elderly, especially in Italy. There has been some controversy about the effective use of resources for the reason that COVID-19's lethality among the elderly is quite high (Beall, 2020). In countries, where the understanding of social state is weak, such as the U.S., the failure of the nursery systems is expected. Italy's situation may be related to a shortage of resources because of rapid and unexpected spread. However, nursing home tragedies could be largely avoided if the danger of epidemic diseases is taken seriously. The proper resource distributions and orientation of healthcare professionals may be simple but effective solutions. The nursing home deaths are not primarily a matter of ageism because they are not the results of a direct attitude of young generations towards the elderly, but they are the result of administrative mistakes. However, they may still be considered a reflection of the general discontent with older people indirectly.

It may be said that the generation is an indicator of the rising populism and nationalism. The generations have become a quite significant element of identity. In fact, they are not just age ranges, rather the outputs that decisive events bring on society, aka cohort effect (Rudolph & Zacher, 2020, p. 3). However, the issue of generations is largely controversial because solidarity events have been common among generations, just as during COVID-19. Intergenerational mutual events are more frequent, due to high levels of interaction both at home and at work place. Hence, during the COVID-19, young people went shopping for the elderly, children were cared for by their great parents and people helped each other financially (Rudolph & Zacher, 2020, p. 3). Despite inter-generational aid being a long-established social norm, intergenerational competition has always been an observable phenomenon. In 100 BC, Horaca wrote the following statements: "*The beardless youth...does not foresee what is useful, squandering his money.*" (Catherman, 2020, p. 17). Although the intergenerational conflict is thought to be as old as human history, the identity factor has recently begun to get involved. Greta Thunberg uncovered this situation unwittingly. As is known, identity is a multi-element phenomenon. The most well-known elements are race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, social class, profession, political view and perhaps geography. It can also contain many sub-elements

from individual experiences. The generation/age is an element that has recently come to the fore due to rising populism and nationalism. It is at the heart of the debate on issues as environmental crisis, the race issue, immigration politics, gender and LGBTQ+ rights. In addition to the American presidential elections, it has also become a determinant in hard politics such as foreign interventions and the economy. In the fight against COVID-19, the generation has emerged as a defining element of severe discussions as other elements of identity. In doing so, it also showed rising populism and nationalism on the one hand.

3.5. Gender

The gender and gender expressions are socially constructed identities referring to a person about his/her masculinity or femininity (Morrow & Messinger, 2006, p. 8). Gender has been quite determinant in terms of rising populism and nationalism. It also affects key issues throughout COVID-19 pandemic. First of all, it ought to be said that gender goes beyond biological definitions for a while. The new gender definitions (besides female and male) have begun to appear in various platforms, with a lot of controversy they have brought along (Brubaker, 2016, p. 40-41). The survey question of “*what is your gender?*” evolved to “*What sex were you assigned at birth?*” and “*What is your current gender?*” (Carian, 2019). In other words, gender identity began to be defined with idealistic elements rather than materialistic (biological) elements. While LGBTQ+ movements increase their encouragements globally, they are articulated with longstanding feminist movements. Accordingly, the Me Too (#MeToo) movement, which has made a big impact on social media since 2017, showed that gender will no longer be evaluated as before. The Me Too movement, created by Tarana Burke on Myspace in 2006, was turned to a Twitter viral by Alyssa Milano in 2017 after sexual-abuse allegations against film producer Harvey Weinstein (Harris, 2018). The aim of the movement was to expose the sexual abuses against women and keep women from being embarrassed although they were viciously attacked. As a result, Me Too movement has contributed to a dramatic change gender roles and added severe concepts to everyday discussions, such as mansplaining, rape culture and toxic masculinity. The mentioned concepts have formed

the rhetoric of the populism wave, regarding gender identity (PettyJohn et al., 2018). Gender-centered rhetoric is also embedded in everyday language.

The COVID-19 affects gender debates in a different way. Contrary to their structural privileges, %70 of those who lost their lives due to the pandemic are men. However, women and other genders are politically, economically and socially affected by the pandemic in different ways (Al-Ali, 2020, p. 2). In the long term, it is predicted that women will be more systematically affected by the pandemic. Firstly, Women are at higher risk as they make up %70 of the healthcare sectors and other social sectors. Secondly, Women suffer more from intimate partner violence due to curfews and stay home campaigns (UNFPA, 2020, p. 1). Finally, women are in economic danger, as they have occupied “*unproductive*” and “*unrecognized*” jobs traditionally. As feminist studies reveal, women do not only work in low-paid (unproductive) jobs, but also work unrecognized jobs, such as housework and childcare (Enguita-Fernandez et al., 2020, p. 1). As additional information, it may be said that the more authoritarian international system may disrupt gender equality movements as well (Al-Ali, 2020, p. 7-8). Increasing nationalism and populism will also increase gender-based polarization.

The LGBTQ+ community is expected to experience similar problems during COVID-19. There are studies on curfew and stay-at-home campaigns and potential troubles for LGBTQ+ community. During the pandemic, they have to spend more time with unsupportive family members and there are growing possibility for a surge in domestic violence globally (Fish et al., 2020). The domestic violence incidents against vulnerable family members may lead to prolonged social crises and even further polarization.

Gender, as a quite dominant identity element, causes individuals to evaluate severe issues from the framework of gender. The environmental issues, terrorism, cinema and even infectious diseases have fallen in the gender framework. More importantly, other identities are also related to gender identity. Accordingly, it may be said that the generation z members have a quite intense understanding of gender (Reddy-Best &

Mamp, 2018, p. 2). The voting patterns of generation z are also shape in accordance with women's rights and LGBTQ+ rights (Parker & Igielnik, 2020). This understanding increases the polarization among generations.

The effects of intergenerational conflict are also reflected on the gender issue as well. Generation, ethnicity and gender-related identities are understood to be highly dependent on each other. The domestic disturbances of LGBTQ+ members during COVID-19 also confirms the dependency. Indeed, in a period where new definitions of gender identity are introduced, the COVID-19 pandemic may deepen social fault lines. Accordingly, freedom of travel is a quite necessary and important human right that also protects social balances.

As will be detailed in the following sections, two separate upper identities are formed: globalism and new patriotism. Although the meaning of globalism and new patriotism does not change much, they have experienced meaning expansion by meeting with several original factors. Accordingly, there are different possible equivalents of new patriotism: nationalism, regionalism or new regionalism. The gender identities, as other identity elements, are definitely at the center of two superior camps. According to general understanding, globalists advocate LGBTQ+ movements, while new patriots have more traditional gender approaches (Edenborg, 2018, p. 73-74). During extraordinary crises as pandemics, new patriotism, which has already begun to come to fore, stands out more. In fact, more masculine interventions requests may come from society as well. Accordingly, there were many anti-government and anti-military movements in Lebanon before COVID-19, however the people themselves asked for the military intervention to ensure social distancing practices after COVID-19 (Al-Ali, 2020, p. 8). As a gender-related example, while the pandemic continues its seriousness in Turkey, the Istanbul Convention of Council of Europe, which guarantees women's rights, has been open to discussion by severe conservative groups. Nevertheless, women's right groups, who constitute a significant part of Turkey's civil society, continue their opposing campaigns (Amnesty International, 2020; Santora, 2020). These developments are directly related to the growing wave of populism and nationalism. The wave of populism and nationalism is

quite determinant among wide-ranging issues. Some of these issues are directly related to women and LGBTQ+ community as well.

As seen, gender serves as quite useful data throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The novel gender definitions are at least as important as traditional gender definitions for the reason that the health of the society is directly related to the health of different social groups. In the next section, the two emerging upper identities that have been quite evident along with the COVID-19 pandemic will be discussed.

3.6. Two Upper Identities: Globalism and New Patriotism

The argument that we are in the age of populism and nationalism is constantly being voiced recently. However, although populism and nationalism are discussed comprehensively, there are also certain confusion about main concepts. Firstly, populism and nationalism are not interchangeable terms. While any political ideology may be populist, it is not necessary to be populists to be nationalist. Secondly, it will be claimed in the rest of this chapter, both of the two emerging upper identities in the international system (globalism and new patriotism) are equally populist. In other words, all actors in the international system are affected by increasing populism and nationalism. Finally, in the current international system, nationalism has taken a novel denotation from its traditional meaning, which may be called as the new patriotism.

Globalism and patriotism are not recently invented concepts. Globalism have roots from British imperialism to the post war the U.S. (Adamo, 2001, p. 6-10; Rosenboim, 2017; Magee & Thompson, 2010). Likewise, patriotism basically means the defense of the sovereignty rights and national identities against external influences, also known as nationalism (Breuilly, 1993, p. 2). While using these terms interchangeably may be misleading, it is practical because the self and other consciousness they construct is largely similar. As is known, nationalism has a recognized history as a pioneer ideology in its homeland, Europe, and rest of the world. Its anti-globalist nature strongly influenced today's new patriotism. In this context, Brexit has a great importance in showing the rising wave of populism and nationalism. However, globalism and patriotism have begun to go

beyond their traditional meanings. The most important reason for this change is that globalism and new patriotism have become upper identities recently. Meanwhile, the several identity elements are articulated with globalism and new patriotism. The polarization between generation z and baby boomers or gender-based discussions about Istanbul Convention in Turkey are the scope of globalization and new patriotism. In addition, the pre-COVID-19 issues related to abortion rights and the Second Amendment in the U.S. public are also related to globalization and new patriotism as discussed in previous chapters. As a final and clearer example, Brexit is also a campaign that was shaped around new patriotism's impact in British public. Essentially, recent history of Euroscepticism in Britain is a noble instance of the transformation of nationalism into new patriotism.

Donald Trump's speech at the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly manifests that the international system is on the verge of transformation. The President's speech was a manifesto devoted to globalism and new patriotism. The most interesting and summarizing statements that made headlines were: "*The future does not belong to globalists. The future belongs to patriots.*" (Whitehouse, 2019). The emphasis of patriots was actually related to new patriotism, and perhaps for the first time a U.S. President considered globalization to be a negative phenomenon. Globalists' general criticism of Donald Trump comes within the framework of fascism, such as racism and sexism (Lerner, 2016). At the same time, the President faced various accusations regarding his intelligence level (Barlett, 2020). It is clear that listed accusations have had vicious consequences and missed the fundamental discussions. Accordingly, rather than the traditional sense of nationalism, as seen between the lines of the President's UN speech, a more systemic change was being announced by referring to the economic relations with China, Brexit and prolonged war in Afghanistan. The United Nations General Assembly is a suitable platform to make a manifesto to foreign policy due to its historic mission and importance as the champion organization for globalization. The interesting aspect of the issue is that a U.S. President declared the end of globalization at the United Nations which was founded under the leadership of the U.S. Presidents to

promote globalization. As discussed in previous chapters, there is a correlation between foreign policy and domestic policy.

The President Trump's speech was also an indicator of the change in U.S. public opinion. The change is that the conservative citizens of the U.S. are gradually starting to acquire a new upper identity due to rising of populism. At the same time, an opposite identity emerges by a more metropolitan group. However, it may be said that there is a definitional problems because a slight amount of individuals define themselves as globalists. Besides, only a few people call themselves nationalist or patriots. Although, there are no comprehensive and confirmatory titles at hand, it may not be said that upper identities do not exist. There might be improvements in identification in the future. As with every definition, there is an object/phenomenon at first. In addition, definitions, such as nationalist, patriotic, rightist or conservative, are currently preferred for new patriotism, while leftist are used for globalist.

Even though there are different definitions, it may be said that the two upper identities affect the way individuals handle and react to key events. While traditional definitions of national identity are shaped around known elements (basically race and religion), many additional factors are also involved in today's national identity definitions. For example, there are cases of transnational cooperation between ultra-nationalists of different countries on issues, such as immigration, environment or gender. Accordingly, ultra-nationalist groups have gone through transnationalization especially across Europe. These unexpected cooperation may be interpreted as natural consequence of emerging exceptional European identity. Moreover, it may not be denied that they basically bear the basic characteristic of civil society (Caiani & Kroel, 2014, p. 1). More specifically, the claim that international organizations and civil society are generating more democratic and progressive ideas may be misleading.

As outlined in previous chapters, the aforementioned upper identities have also been highly regulatory during the COVID-19 pandemic with the rise of populism and globalism. First of all, individuals' confidence in the severity of the pandemic has been

determined according to their globalist or new patriotic identity. Their reactions also depended on their previous habits in relation to increased populism and nationalism. Hence, the new patriotic leaders, such as Trump and Balsonaro, questioned publically the reality of the pandemic before it reached thousands of deaths (Simoes & Hjelmggaard, 2020). By the same token, new patriotic media outlets, community leaders and social media influencers claimed that the COVID-19 was simply a scam (Strauss, 2020). The main reason for this claim is that they have constructed an identity self-positioning itself against every circumstance that resembles globalism.

In addition, with the emergence of COVID-19, the established concerns of new patriots have also been effective, such as anti-vaccination. The anti-vaccination movement combined with accusations against the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which has important contributions to fight against infectious diseases, turned into a mass phobia due to rising populism. Some of the known accusations are that vaccines are harmful to human health, they are a means of control and the ultimate goal is to establish a global central government where citizens carry microchip implants. Accordingly, epidemics and pandemics are deliberately produced by the so-called global elite to persuade individuals to carry microchips. Despite its unique efforts to prevent the occurrence of the COVID-19, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is put forward as a leading actor in the global conspiracy (Carmichael & Goodman, 2020). As it turns out, new patriots had established opinions against infectious diseases before COVID-19 and they reacted based on their previous ideas. On the other hand, globalists have more confidence in international organizations and the blessing of modern medicine. Moreover, they are less callous towards infectious diseases and global conspiracies. As they had fewer established opinions on the aforementioned issues, they have been more accommodating towards the official information that came with COVID-19. However, globalists are more defensive against a pandemic that threatens the whole globe, as they have a more metropolitan character.

In terms of behavioral change, which is quite important for the fight against COVID-19, upper identities and rising populism and nationalism have become highly

decisive. As reviewed in previous chapters, the issue of adaptation to demands for behavioral change varied between new patriots and globalists. In this context, mask wearing has become a prominent behavior. Despite scientifically proven vital importance in the fight against COVID-19, new patriots resist mask wearing. The anti-mask movements emerged in the U.S. public by means of parallel reasons with the anti-vaccination movement. Nevertheless, the emphasis on individual freedom as an American value also comes forward (Perry et al., 2020, p. 414). It is clear that there is a confusion among new patriots regarding definitions of personal freedom. The various conspiracy theories have also emerged that the mask is the preliminary step for the obligation of headscarf and Islamization. Likewise, stay home campaigns and similar anti-campaigns occur across the U.S. On the contrary, globalists have been more compatible, or at least not protester, in issues, such as mask wearing and social distancing. Whether the allegations are justified or not, upper identities have been mainly decisive even about medically proven behaviors.

The claim that the upper identities are cold-war-like camps that are polarizing the global public is often made by referencing to the 1930s. A pessimistic scenario may occur when the power relations between globalists and new patriots advance in favor of the new patriots. As a second possibility, without a global war, polarization may conclude as a silent revolutions/global changes, just like the end of the cold war and the collapse of the USSR. As it is known, the main factor that triggered the polarized world of the 1930s was the great depression. In the wake of COVID-19, governments have begun publishing predictions of GDP shrinkage, many businesses have closed, and people are unemployed. However, traditional economic relations have changed considerably, the concept of work at home has come to the fore. Accordingly, it turns out that the major setbacks and changes would cause a massive global economic crisis. It is said that a possible global economic crisis would increase polarization (identity based) and a highly polarized atmosphere would lead to various global crises. As it can be seen, populism and nationalism, which have already increased since the 2008 Global Economic Crisis, have been quite determinant during COVID-19. It may be said that the expected economic crisis and

stagnation after COVID-19 will further ignite the already existing populism and nationalism.

As upper identities, new patriotism and globalism are determined by certain other identities. The ethnic identity, religion, gender, social class and generation identity are of great prominence in the formation of upper identities. If new patriotism is examined primarily, first of all, ethnic identity is more conservationist meaning for new patriots, in line with the traditional ethnic definitions. Contrary to popular belief, ethnic identity is not more central for new patriots than globalists. In other words, for new patriots, ethnic identity means national consciousness and more protective economic/political policies, such as rigid border protection, cultural and religious protectionism, and restoration of sovereignty, strengthening domestic industries and strict police and military control. On the other hand, for globalists, ethnic identity is decisive in terms of social class and gender.

The today's understanding of ethnicity is different from the 1930s', in fact, it may be realized that new patriots with different ethnic backgrounds have similar priorities, contrary to the harsh ethnic division of 1930s. As an example, the BLM mural in front of Trump tower in Midtown has been vandalized by an African American woman several times (Buffa & Villeda, 2020). Unquestionably, there have been cases which persecuted minority members behave in favor of the oppressive groups because of certain rewards and benefits. The reason why an African American woman opposes the BLM movement passionately is that the transformation of ethnic and racial identity of the 1930s into new patriotic identity. In keeping with Trump's speech to the UN General Assembly, minority members believe that patriotism/new patriotism is more accommodating of different ethnic and racial differences. The citizens ignore racial differences among themselves as they are more affected by well-known complaints about globalization. In a sense, it may be said that globalization strengthens national identities and wipe away minority identities. However, the recognition of ethnic identities and the remembering of forgotten cultures also take place at the same time. In short, both the recognition of ethnic identities and the acquisition of upper identities take place at the same. On the other hand, for globalists, ethnic identity is something that should be celebrated, at least ideologically, as opposed

to the monotony or unanimity they present. The upper identity that maintains the BLM movement has been globalists. As a decisive reason for this is that the BLM movement is associated with police violence. It is no coincidence that after the BLM protests, the police forces were defunded in multicultural cities (McEvoy, 2020). The mentioned cities are largely governed by democrat politicians. Meanwhile pro-police demonstrations are held in cities with a high concentration of republican voters. For globalists, state and state bodies present established stereotyped oppression and closeness.

According to typical motivation of globalists, the emergence of forgotten ethnic identities means the disappearance of established national identities. However, the general trend is in favor of the new patriots as mentioned earlier. The contrary to previous globalization predictions, the international system is moving towards a point where national identities are reinforced.

Another issue related to ethnic identity are xenophobic and racist attacks during COVID-19 pandemic. In epitome, it is highly accepted that the attacks have been carried out by new patriots. The rhetoric of new patriotic politicians, such as Donald Trump's statements on Chinese virus, posts of new patriotic social media influencers and racist headlines made by new patriotic traditional media may have triggered this inference. As examined in previous chapters, in a system where identity is highly influential, it is highly expected to evaluate at viruses from the perspective of identity. On the other hand, the regulative ability of the identity affects not only new patriots, but also globalists. However, new patriots prone to discriminatory approaches against a Chinese origin virus. For a new patriot, the damaged caused by the Chinese products to their economy is similar to the damage caused by a Chinese origin virus. Both are products that harm national economy and disrupt the homeland socially and politically. Meanwhile, globalists welcome the COVID-19 with a more metropolitan understanding. They have an understanding that the virus is a coincidental threat that independent from national identities. Therefore, from a globalist perspective, all ethnic groups have to work effectively in combating the virus, and minority groups that suffer more should be taken into account. In other words, the struggle has to be done globally, not nationally. Globalists reacts according to their upper

identity. However, there is also an ethnic group that globalists are uneasy: Caucasians (Whites). In this context, the concept of white privilege has come to the fore during COVID-19. The white privilege manifests itself throughout the pandemic, as evidenced by previously mentioned studies, the COVID-19 affects minority groups further. In the simplest terms, white privilege is an idea that whites have benefits over the rest of society. Without a doubt, belief in white privilege becomes one of the most important elements of globalist identity. Accordingly, white privilege has been frequently voiced through the BLM movement, even well-known figures, such as Emma Watson, admitted their white privilege (Sullivan, 2019, p. 1; Aouragh, 2019, p. 4-5). In fact, denial of white privilege has been perceived as a contradiction for a significant number of globalists

The main problem that comes to mind is existence of white privilege. While examining the different impact of COVID-19 on different ethnic groups, social and economic inequalities were mentioned. However, it would be assertive to say that all whites have concrete and obvious privileges. Although being white, there are many people who are in poverty, cannot access health and education services and are politically unrepresented. Accordingly, Sullivan also argues that white privilege is more of a social class privilege (Sullivan, 2019, p. 9). In other words, the middle and upper classes are more exclusionary to non-white groups than lower-class whites. Furthermore, not only skin color or race, but also gender is prominent. In other words, the main privileged group is white men. As it is understood, white privilege is more than material values. It is rather a case of class consciousness and culture where many factors assemble. Nonetheless, albeit it is not the only factor, ethnic identity is still a decisive factor and determinant for white privilege.

On behalf of globalists, white privilege is an emphasis throughout COVID-19 that highlights the ethnic identity (Wurth, 2020). The ethnic identities are similarly imperative to globalists and new patriots. In other words, ethnic identity is at the center of the COVID-19 controversies, from whatever angle they approach. Moreover, the vandalism incidents in high-class white neighborhoods during the BLM protests may also

be linked to the concept of social class. Indeed, the social class and ethnic identity is highly intertwined in terms of white privilege.

Another identity that constitutes new patriotism and globalism is generation. The generation z has become an important actor for globalism and new patriotism. Generation z revealed established fault lines among globalists and new patriots. The vehicles through which younger generations may convey their complaints are more in number than the older generations. They also have mass vehicles which they can perceive on-board problems at earlier ages. After all, the older generations were questioning the existence of climate change. On the other hand, generation z has experienced climate change directly and it is well-informed about the repeated mistakes of older generations. They do not want to repeat the mistakes of older generations on issues such as LGBTQ+ rights and minority rights as well. It is also true that they acquire a more metropolitan identity. As mentioned earlier, therefore, generation z are substantially globalist.

The priorities of baby boomers are quite different. They primarily want the current political and economic status quo to be maintained. They tend to sustain economic growth without caring about environmental problems. Nonetheless, they tend to have more conspiratorial and protectionist thinking as a habit of Cold War and war against terrorism. Therefore, older generations evaluated COVID-19 by means of a skeptical perspective with economic concerns. In summary, baby boomers have a more new patriotic identity. A similar assumption may be made for other generations.

The generation z's approach to ethnic identity also matches the globalist perspective. In this respect, the issue of white privilege is largely a concept that is highlighted by generation z. It is also seen that an unconditional generation z support exists especially against the BLM-like movements. Again, they display a much more flexible attitude towards the migration, which may be regarded as an ethnic issue. In the historic Brexit referendum, it was seen that Millennials voted to stay in the union (Jackson-Preece & Dunin-Wasowicz, 2017, p. 2). On the other hand, generation z has also a similar perspective about gender identity with globalists. The issue of male supremacy

is also an issue that the generation z gives importance to. They also have quite fundamental beliefs about LGBTQ+ rights. They have a gender identification beyond two genders. Accordingly, the concept of Preferred Gender Pronoun (PGP) is also a concept that generation z has adopted greatly. The PGP briefly refers to the right to be called with the pronoun of one's choice. For example, non-binary individuals demand to be called ze/zir or they/them (Bradley et al., 2019, p. 43). Although PGP leads to grammatical confusion and communication problems in English speaking societies, it is accepted by the generation z decisively and severe institutions have already applied PGP. In summary, the group that generation z perceives as the source of problems is white-straight-male-baby boomers. Generation z contains many features of the globalist identity within itself. It has been a global voice of globalism, thanks to its unique ability to use the social media.

The impact of gender identity in forming the globalist upper identity has been already studied while examining other identity elements. If elaborated, traditional gender roles and traditional family institutions are more dominant phenomena among new patriots. The idea of family as the smallest unit in a healthy society continues among new patriots. As expected, for new patriots, the traditional parental roles (male-female) and patriarchal family practices have to be maintained and they are ready to struggle to sustain present gendered order (Friedland, 2001, p. 134). On the other hand, older generations do not have the sensitivities of the younger generations for gender equality, and their priorities are quite different, compared to other generations. Therefore, they tend to have a globalist identity.

As it is understood, different identity elements have been quite decisive for the formation of upper identities. An identity element, such as gender, which has very simple meaning in traditional terms, causes quite complex patterns of relations. Religion is important for the emergence of new patriotism as a contributor to ethnic and racial identity. On the other hand, social class gained novel meaning by coming together with other identity elements. It may be right that identity in general has become a quite complex issue. This section is aimed at making the identity more understandable and easy to examine. Affirmatively, it is well known that there are many identification varieties, in

other words, identity elements. This section examined the different identity elements and how they form two upper identities that are becoming increasingly apparent in the international system after the rising of populism and nationalism. In the next section, the effects of two different upper identities on behavioral patterns will be examined.

3.7. The Resistance to Masks: Behavior Patterns

The behavior change has been the concentration of discussions as an important indicator of increasing populism recently. In fact, behaviors, such as mask wearing, could not be associated with populism and nationalism and identity in general before. The basic health measures, as mask wearing and complying with quarantine, have been the resistance motives of some groups around the world. For these reasons, it would be useful to address the issue of behavior patterns.

The behavior patterns are principally the subject of behavioral science for a long while. Along with the concern of reducing the spread of COVID-19, changing the established behaviors has become a significant issue as well. Accordingly, studies arguing that identity and identity-related elements are decisive factors to achieve behavioral change. After COVID-19, certain behaviors are remembered. Some of the behavioral patterns that come to the fore have been hand washing, face-touching and personal isolation (Lunn et al., 2020, p. 1). Without behavioral changes, tackling the pandemic would be quite challenging.

The behavior change is quite challenging, the main troubling is perpetual constructed beliefs and established habits. It may be claimed that the cleaning habits, that are the subjects of discussion, are directly related to identity and identity-related elements. Besides, they are highly political (Smith, 2007). Accordingly, the understanding of personal hygiene practices in Japan and in the U.S. can be quite poles apart. The foundation of the racist and xenophobic comments which have been frequently observed in social media about COVID-19 also stemmed from the differences in cleaning habits. Although cultural differences in cleaning habits are obvious, there are some standards which are set by global health organizations. It has recently become a priority for national

governments to meet these standards, especially to prevent the spread of COVID-19. However, changing cleaning habits is more challenging than many other practices. Hence, education and other social communication methods may be ineffective for changing personal hygiene habits.

In the direction of effectively changing the hand washing habit, education and awareness initiatives were found to be insufficient in various studies. It is observed that the more effective factors are the regulations in physical and environmental aspects. It is also observed that it is effective to place alcohol-based hand sanitizers and similar cleaners with the signs for instructions at visible points (Lunn, et al., 2020, p. 2). There are similar circumstances for the habit of face-touching as well. Scholars have introduced the concept of “*behavior change wheel*” to alteration established habits which demand three elements: capability, opportunity and motivation. The behavior change wheel suggests that individuals should be psychologically ready for the change process. It also argues that external interventions are inadequate alone (Lunn, et al., 2020, p. 3). However, it suggests that the physical environment should be arranged accordingly for quicker results. It is observed that encouraging, motivating, striking education and apparent warnings contribute to the process as a social environment regulations.

The issue of personal isolation may be examined as a precaution where group identity is in more foreground. The reason for this is that contrary to hand-washing habits and face-touching behavior, the negative effects of self-isolation are relatively visible, that is, it requires abnegation. For this reason, experts emphasize the phenomena that intersect with constructivism and identity, such as group identity and social norms (Lunn et al., 2020, p. 4). This intersection is quite striking.

Indeed, construction of group awareness has been a difficult task for authorities during COVID-19 pandemic. It is quite challenging to construct group awareness especially in today’s international system where many different ethnic communities, age groups and even genders have become more visible as different identifications. Besides, there are new definitions of identity, which is known as democrats/liberals and

republicans, Brexiters and Remainers. In previous sections, all new identity definitions were categorized as new patriotic and globalist. Identity is particularly regulatory on new patriotism and globalism. New patriotism and globalism have emerged as upper-identities. The responses to COVID-19 and the functionality of the authorities' policies have been also determined according to mentioned upper-identities. Accordingly, increasing populism and nationalism have caused different reactions against pandemic, making it hard to create group awareness and changes in behavioral patterns. Therefore, the most demanding challenge in the fight against COVID-19 has been to produce a group identity due to social polarization, the excess of identity-based thinking.

Behavioral scientists have conducted studies trying to solve the problems caused by populism and nationalism, by creating a group identity and promoting group behavior in the wake of COVID-19. In a study conducted in this direction, findings indicated the importance of giving the messages of “*protects each other*”, “*stand together*” and “*this is who we are*”. Since the self-isolation requires personal sacrifice, group identity has become vital. Hence, it was stated that messages embracing different ethnic groups, religious beliefs and genders should be considered. Besides, the constructive behaviors and the former success of the society should be reminded (Bonell et al., 2020, p. 1-2). In other words, rhetoric that gives morale and courage to society is important.

Behavioral scientists focus on the concept of identity because it is beneficial in combating COVID-19. However, evaluating the concept of identity mostly on the basis of ethnic background, gender and religious beliefs may be misleading. The social perception of COVID-19 has been determined substantially by the upper identities which are far beyond the classical definitions of ethnic, gender or religious identities. The same may be applied for COVID-19, just as the anti-vaccine movement has an effect beyond classical definitions of identities. Individuals determine their positions in accordance with their upper identities against hand washing, face touching, mask wearing and especially personal isolation. The upper identities have nothing to do with partisanship. The partisanship must often be considered as a manifestation of upper identities. It may be

misleading to reduce the issue to partisanship during the pandemic. It should be said that the anti-mask protests which are reported in the U.S. are actions beyond partisanship.

There have been severe incidents showing COVID-19 has become a matter of identity. As the most notable, President Donald Trump claimed that the pandemic was a “*hoax*” while the COVID-19 was in an emerging phase. Fox News’ presenter Sean Hannity, known for conservative rhetoric, also said the COVID-19 was a “*fraud*”. Moreover, it was also said by the conservative press that the liberals exaggerated the COVID-19 to reduce credibility of the President. In addition, the last eight governors that imposed curfew were republican across the U.S. Republican politicians tends to evaluate COVID-19 from an economic and political cost, rather than human losses (Rothgerber et al., 2020, p. 4). It may be said that this tendency ignores pandemic-induced negative spill-overs.

Identity, largely defined by populism and nationalism, is highly influential in how news or social media posts are perceived and how the media frames the issues, so how the external world is perceived. In other words, it is also referred to motivated reasoning. Motivated reasoning basically claims that individuals make decisions in accordance with the ideas that approve their own wishes and desires instead of logical and rational reasons. Accordingly, cultural cognition theory claims that individuals accept the interpretations of experts who are closer to their world views. As can be seen from the examples given before, public responses to the COVID-19 in the U.S. took place in accordance with the recommendations of motivational reasoning and cultural cognition theory. Society mostly assessed the pandemic with ideological lenses, shaped by their identities (Rothgerber et al., 2020, p. 5). In this context, people are highly prejudiced by rising populism and nationalism.

The relationship of conservatives and liberals with the media is also quite different. The mentioned difference is defined as a hostile media effect. Accordingly, studies have been carried out to show that liberals perceive COVID-19 as a major threat, trust the news more and adhere to pandemic preventive measures (Rothgerber et al., 2020,

p. 7-8). It may be said that ideology overrides absolute knowledge and affects behaviors deeply (Rothgerber et al., 2020, p. 15). Another argument argues that republicans do not perceive pandemics as a threat because they live in areas with low populations and expose less information, besides, they have low level education. However, a study showed that these factors are not as effective as factors such as identity and ideology (Rothgerber et al., 2020, p. 22-23). Undoubtedly, Identity and ideology have been important factors in evaluating the world.

Another discussion is whether self-interest promoting messages or pro-social messages are more effective for behavior change. According to realism, human nature is selfish. Especially in times of crisis, individuals are expected to pursue their own interests and act hostile towards others. During the pandemic, the importance of producing messages that appeal to the human nature has emerged. The fundamental philosophical debate on human nature has come to the fore again due to increasing rate of selfish actions, such as the looting events and racist incidents. In this direction, it is controversial what kind of messages would work and let behavioral changes.

In a study, it was concluded that prosocial framing is more effective than self-interested framing when using one frame at a time. Besides, it was also concluded that using both prosocial and self-interested framing is no more effective than using only prosocial framing. In other words, it was concluded that people are moral actors, they do not want to look selfish and they are open to receive instructions accordingly (Jordan et al., 2020, p. 16-17). As a result, the conclusion may also be evaluated form the framework of the logic of appropriateness which was mentioned in previous chapters. The self-interest and the principle of survival are associated with rationalistic logic. Pandemics are serious global crises, the level of threat that is perceived by individuals is actually high. Besides, they affect individuals and their immediate surroundings directly. They require social cooperation, compared to other crises for such reasons. Individuals can empathize without difficulty during the pandemics for the reason that they require professional and moral support from others. As a result, individuals may be more pro-social, at least within their own community, that is, with others who suit their own identification framework.

Identity is still more determinative due to the fact that the concept of prosocial does not mean being less discriminatory. Essentially, individuals socialize more with their own environment. The environment is also determined by identity. It has nothing to do with boundaries, it is more about the concepts of self and other.

3.8. Racism and Xenophobia during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The rising nationalism and populism as a divisive systemic factor has been discussed until now. In a nutshell, rising nationalism and populism regulates many elements of the system, including epidemics and pandemics, just as it regulates realpolitik issues. It may be said that the regulatory nature of rising populism and nationalism on epidemics and pandemics is an assertive hypothesis, however, there have been findings proving otherwise since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The same applies in previous epidemics and pandemics as well, SARS pandemic in particular. In general, identity-related phenomena, mainly orientalism, manifest themselves during the COVID-19 pandemic. They have been determinant on racism and xenophobia during the COVID-19 pandemic. After the global economic crisis in 2008, the wave of populism and nationalism established itself around the world. As expected, the COVID-19 pandemic has also been highly influenced by this trend. Accordingly, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been a wave of racist and xenophobic incidents which directly demonstrate rising populism and nationalism in the international system.

It is known that there is a direct relation between crisis, racism and xenophobia. Apart from pandemics, identity has an impact on global crises in general (Wimmer, 1997, p. 27). Indeed, deep orientalism emerges as a central determinant in global crisis. When individuals encounter a tragedy, they tend to question its origin. As the prominence of COVID-19 escalates, this natural behavior manifests itself even more. As a comparative example, it is known that individuals tend to evaluate terrorism through the identity window. The property of terrorism depends on the identity of victims and attackers. It may be claimed that the terrorism and identity is principally related. Although the statistical values are materialistic, such as the distribution of weapons, terrorist incidents gain assessment according to the individual's perception of them. The elements of the terrorist

attack, such as empathy for victims, hatred against aggressors, are all related to identity. In addition, the armed aggressor is considered a gunman or a terrorist according to geography/ identity of which he/she is a part (Corbin, 2017, p. 463-466). As it turns out, identity is already a central dynamic in catastrophes on critical issues. After COVID-19 pandemic, the identity-based, orientalist approaches resurged against Chinese and Asian communities. They are the results of a similar tendency.

Since the COVID-19 has been highlighted in the international media, the pandemic has been evaluated through the framework of identity. If compared to terrorism, it may be claimed that viruses are more direct and materialistic threats and they are permitted from ideas, beliefs and values. However, it turned out after COVID-19 pandemic, this is not the case. The global perception of the early pandemic in China and the global perception of its arrival in Italy have been clearly different from each other (Giuffrida & Willsher, 2020; Melandri, 2020; Hernandez, 2020). A similar analogy may be made for Iran as well as a country that is framed from a more political perspective (Fassihi & Kirkpatrick, 2020). Accordingly, COVID-19 is evaluated depending on the geography where it is spread. The identity factor has been observable both nationally and internationally. Donald Trump's Chinese virus emphasis has been most prominent on discourse basis discussions (Chiu, 2020). Moreover, the global wishes of goodwill swept social media when pandemic was in Italy. When the pandemic was in China, more racist social media posts were shared. Although the link between viruses and identity is thought to be weak, it is clear that the regulatory nature of identity is much more structured and institutional and it can even regulate pandemics.

First of all, the rising populism and nationalism manifested itself on the basis of accusations against China at high policy level and social media speculations at individual level. Although China's institutional capacity and past anti-epidemic experiences are quite well, China's ability to manage the COVID-19 has been highly controversial among Western global media (Li et al., 2008, p. 8-10; Green & Medeiros, 2020, p. 2). This misperception is a natural result of orientalist framing against China. Contrary to popular expectation, Western developed countries have put a poorer test against COVID-19

(Kavanagh & Singh, 2020, p. 1002-1003). Secondly, the claim of biological warfare manifested itself both in the academic studies, social media accounts and traditional media brands (Brewster, 2020). The main reason is the tendency of the West to evaluate China on the basis of threat, terror and chaos. In addition, quarantine images from China have been shared as an element of fear while China did not take exceptional measures compared to Western countries. The empty Wuhan streets, stampede at the hospitals and people fainting on the streets were served on the social media as distant but interesting images from another world (Qin, 2020; Victor, 2020; BBC, 2020a; The Guardian, 2020). As a remarkable incident, Chinese cuisine has also been brought up to controversies. While the SARS pandemic continued, Chinese cuisine used to set on the target board before. The similar attitude has been grasped in the Ebola epidemic in Africa as well (Phillip, 2014). As mentioned before, there is no direct evidence of the relation between the livestock market and epidemics for Ebola, SARS and COVID-19. Nevertheless, the food and cooking videos from Asian countries have been trending on social media for months during COVID-19 (Taylor, 2020). Many of these videos were framed by disgust.

A similar scenario occurred on the basis of intergovernmental relations. The diverse reactions had been made during the first stage of pandemic. Many countries decided to suspend their flights to China (Reuters, 2020a). Meanwhile, Serbia and Iran improve their relations with China (Lim, 2020; Albert, 2020). It may be said that the economic and political relations have tempered the orientalist approaches to some extent.

As it is known, threats and fear have been associated with nationalism, protectionism and hateful conduct in scientific studies as a general tendency. Indeed, epidemics and pandemics triggered massacres and exclusions in Europe before (Cohn, 2012, p. 13). Accordingly, during the COVID-19 pandemic, attacks on far eastern origin people have been seen all over the world. There have been attacks not only against Far Easterners but also different types of foreigners. As a thought-provoking instance, there have been attacks against the Ukrainian diaspora in Ukraine, who were brought to motherland mostly from China (Euronews, 2020). As another case, South Koreans in Israel were warned not to leave hotels by Israeli officials. However, the interesting thing

was that South Koreans were rejected by Israeli hotels and restaurants. In addition 200 South Koreans were forced by Israeli army to be held at the military airport (The Korea Times, 2020; Ahronheim, 2020; Middle East Eye, 2020; Israel Today, 2020). The xenophobia cases are also widely observed all over Africa. A mass attacked happened against a Far Eastern couple, also verbal and physical attacks occurred against Chinese construction workers in Kenya. Kenyan Politicians are included in the xenophobic campaigns (Solomon, 2020; BBC, 2020c). Japan had to issue travel alert in Europe after increasing attacks against Japanese abroad (Reuters, 2020b). Before Japan's France warning, Le Courrier Picard published a photograph of an Asian woman wearing a mask with "Yellow Alert" notice on its headline (BBC, 2020b). In addition to undesirable events, integrative steps have also taken. Severe countries provide anti-pandemic materials to each other and voluntary campaigns are organized for supporting foreigners against xenophobic attacks (Mahncke, 2020; UNESCO, 2020). These types of initiatives are important for building trust among communities.

There are two diverse possible explanations about the association between outbreaks and nationalism. The first explanation is that outbreaks are used as a justification for the already established racism, xenophobia and orientalism (Zhang & Xu, 2020, p. 212-220). This argument may be supported to a large extent, for the reason that not only in outbreaks, but also in other moments of fear and threat, such as economic crises, racism and xenophobia are brought forward to get away from fear. On the top of it, regardless of the crises, the rationale of racist rhetoric is similar. Accordingly, the arguments of the American patriots who want to protect their homeland from Chinese virus and Brexit supporters who seek independence from the European Union are quite similar. It is quite common to target foreigners, rather than the main source of the problem. Actually foreigners suffer from the problem as well. The second explanation claims that fear and threat lead to racism that is not already there. In other words, fear and threat produce discrimination out of nothing (Postelnicescu, 2016, p. 203-204). Moreover, it claims that the actions, not individuals, are racist, only temporary discriminative behaviors exist and they also continue during the threat and fear circumstances.

As a result, regardless of its source, it is obvious that during COVID-19 pandemic, racist and xenophobic incidents are experienced all around the world. The COVID-19 pandemic, the biggest crisis since WW2, has also been affected by increasing nationalism and populism. The established orientalist beliefs and values have a great influence in this case.

3.9. The Role of Social Media and Infodemics

The social media is the most easily observed environment for the rising populism and nationalism in the international system (Adriani, 2019, p. 2). The rapid spread of information and rapid globalization promote social media as a unique phenomenon where many radical ideologies and beliefs are deliberated. The issue of faster dissemination of information was welcomed with its positive aspects until recently in the Western world. Indeed, free diffusion of knowledge has given the West a great advantage since it has been the West that produced the high amount of knowledge and information until recently. The West has been able to use the free movement of information as an advantage in their struggle against the rest of the world. Therefore, the East met the destructiveness of Western origin information at an earlier age because it could not produce and control information until recently. However, balances changed as intellectual knowledge began to move to the East from the West. This situation has caused prejudice against social media that provides information bombardment in the Western world. Moreover, after the increasing nationalism and populism, social media emerged as the cause of the social problems.

The emergence of the concept of infodemic and the evaluation of social media from the national security framework have begun after Donald Trump's 2016 election campaign and alleged Russian intervention (Nance, 2016). The Facebook-Cambridge Analytica data scandal in 2018 brought the issue even further (Kaiser, 2019). These two events caused social media to be discussed at high policy level. However, social media has already proved its determination in severe political issues and mass popular movements, such as the Arab Spring and Orange Revolution protests before mentioned incidents. After the COVID-19 pandemic, novel dimensions of the infodemic became

more evident. When the COVID-19 pandemic first appeared as a destructive infectious disease, severe unfounded news and speculations spread in social media platforms, that is, both pandemic and infodemic are observed at the same time. In particular, identity demonstrates its regulatory ability as a systemic factor and social media stands out as a quite useful platform for the wave of populism and nationalism. The basis for the racist and xenophobic attacks against Asians and other foreigners have been also results of infodemic, populism and nationalism.

The recent studies of infodemic and COVID-19 pandemic have reached intriguing results. In two different studies, conducted with more than 1600 participants, it was revealed that the main factor for the sharing of unfounded news was that the users were unable to distinguish true and false news. In the first study, when the users were asked to share the news without asking for their reliability, it was seen that they tended to share the fabricated news. In the second study, when a reminder added along with the news, approximately two times less false news were shared. In addition, users with higher education turned out to be more reliable (Pennycook et al., 2020, p. 1). The importance of education for analytical thinking is quite evident.

The mentioned studies focus on the accuracy of the news, which is a controversial concept, and the perception capacity of the users, bypasses the issue of deliberate bias due to the partisanship and identity in general. The main motivation of individuals when sharing news on social media is not impartial journalism. As a natural result, it cannot be said that average social media users carry journalistic ethics. Therefore, the pre-acceptance that individuals pursue right and wrong while spreading any news may be misleading. While it is obvious that they have avoided low credibility news, they usually prioritize news that approves their own world view. In other words, the accuracy of news does not mean it is worth sharing but the suitability of the individuals' worldview is determinative. For instance, rather than a news that tomatoes are red, a news that the American tomatoes are redder is more suitable for the average American to share on their social media profiles. Whether the American tomato is really redder is not important to the average social media user of the U.S. Above and beyond, it is not important that news

sources are biased for the reason that average social media users do not carry scientific or journalistic ethics. As a matter of fact, they cannot be expected or asked to carry ethics. Indeed, this tendency of the average American social media user is a natural consequence of the rising populism and nationalism in the international system.

It is also worth noting that, contrary to popular belief, a high percentage of social media users do not have any long-term political agenda. They act with utilitarianism or hedonism, rather than a long-term plan and programs. Moreover, the desire to be approved and the feeling of belonging to a community also have a big impact (Ma et al., 2017, p. 796). In fact, this desire reflects the basic human psychology for populism. On the other hand, social media users also experience a customized user experience with the development of artificial intelligence (Dijck & Poell, 2013, p. 8). The media organs, influencers, politicians and even comedians they encounter on social media are determined by their own world views and preferences. The audience that every user addresses is also unique. Briefly, when a user shares a news, he/she decides as a result of a process that consists of many factors, and even the mass they address is determined largely by artificial intelligence. For this reason, most social media users are only exposed to posts that match their political orientations and world views.

Nevertheless, it should be prominent that social media is at the center of a propaganda war including states and various non-state actors. The state owned or state funded broadcasting organs, such as Sputnik of Russia, may be sources of misleading and unilateral news (Aro, 2016, p. 121-125). However, social media users are influenced by identity and tend to partisan preferences while sharing such news. As the mentioned research shows, although the reality check statement reduces the sharing of fake news, it must be said the reliability of news is related to how the user perceives it. American tomatoes may not be so red in the eyes of Iranian public opinion, compared to the American public opinion. The reality is constructed by how it is perceived by individuals.

It is also revealed in mentioned studies that people with higher education levels and scientific knowledge are more cautious while sharing news on social media. These

findings show that individuals with scientific ethics tend to share more reliable news. Nevertheless, it is worth remembering that well-educated individuals have high analytical thinking skills as well as they have ethical concerns. These assumptions are related to news that is obviously made up. As is often mentioned, it is challenging to categorize the news as accurate and fictitious. Education level is determinate for fake news that can be easily noticed.

Another finding in the study is that individuals from different political views have different behavioral patterns against COVID-19 related news. In the U.S public, it has been detected that republicans are not interested in COVID-19 headers and they have more credit for false news. It was also concluded that this differentiation was a result of emotional and conspiratorial thinking (Pennycook et al., 2020, p. 14). However, there is not a discussion about the source of emotional and conspiratorial thinking. The main reason for the intellectual difference between republicans and democrats is that the political views of individuals are regulated by identity. The issue cannot be explained by the claim that democrats are less affected by identity or that republicans think more through identity lenses. In other words, democrats are affected by the identity in the same degree as republicans. Their reactions to COVID-19 pandemic are at least as identity-based as republicans. The main reason why they consider about pandemic more may be explained by that they feel belonging to a global community which is the basic indicator of group behavior. On the contrary, republicans also behave against a foreign virus with group consciousness. In short, because of the fact that democrats are more metropolitan, they are more sensitive against global pandemics. On the other hand, republicans are more patriotic.

Contrary to previous pandemics, the U.S. Presidency also reacted with a group consciousness and with the identity lenses to the COVID-19 pandemic. In other words, he is influenced by populism and nationalism intensely that are driven via social media. The behavior of the President is interpreted as meeting the demand of the voters. It may also be supposed that the president only seeks to ensure future elections. Therefore, he remains under the influence of populism. Besides, Donald Trump's labelling COVID-19 as

Chinese virus, and his other parallel approaches, may be interpreted as an important indicator of systemic change towards a more identity dominant system. The evidences are unblemished that pandemics are highly affected by identity. Along with viruses, other materialist elements in the system are regulated by the identity as well. The change in reaction of the U.S.' public and the President of the U.S. may be associated with the systemic change.

Identity, populism and social media are also quite determining factors in the case of partisanship. Political polarization, as a vital result of populism, manifests itself all around the world with the help of social media. Essentially, political polarization and populism are the concepts that the world experienced from time to time before the 2008 Global Economic Crisis. Accordingly, political polarization was also dominant during the Cold War. The struggle between communism and capitalism has caused cruel coups, revelations and severe political and social crises in many countries. As well, Western countries, democratic half of the world, had to implement illiberal practices due to unpreventable political polarization and so-called danger of communism, just like the so-called danger of Islamism today. A similar political polarization tendency is observed nowadays all around the world. However, there are differences between the Cold-War and the current political polarization. In short, while the Cold-War polarization was based on economic factors (means of production), today's polarization is based on identity and identity-related elements. Specifically, while there was a polarization over materialistic elements, idealistic elements are more dominant today. The social media also stands out as a decisive factor that did not exist during the Cold-War.

There have been several attempts to explain current political polarization. One of them suggests that education level is decisive for emerging of political views. However, it would not be correct to say that there is a causal relationship between education and political views. Accordingly, in American public, it has been revealed that the impact of education level on concerns about climate change is less observable on republicans than democrats (Holm et al., 2020, p. 4-5). As it is known that individual responses to COVID-19 are similar to climate change. Individuals who are not sensitive to global warming are

more skeptical against COVID-19. The same may be applied for reactions from the political elite all over the world as well. A similar correlation may be established regarding anti-vaccination and COVID-19. The claim that skeptical tendencies against COVID-19 are related to low education level may be disproved by the skepticism of well-educated American political elites. Whether education is deceived or not, as can be seen, the political views, as an element of identity, is a regulator in many imperative phenomena. Therefore, populism and nationalism determine even the most natural reactions of individuals. It may be also said that social media emerges as a new educational institution because it provides up-to-date information faster than any schools in the world.

Partisanship may be considered as a micro norm which is regulated by identity. Social, political and economic responses to the COVID-19 pandemic are largely regulated by partisanship. Partisanship may be considered as social identity and even personality type. It causes different behavioral patterns to epidemics and pandemics. For example, under Obama's Presidency, republicans were more concerned about Ebola than democrats (Gadarian et al., 2020, p. 2). On the contrary, as understood in the previous survey, democrats seem more concerned about the COVID-19 pandemic. It seems that individuals respond appropriately to the political identity they belong to. Partisanship affects not only basic political preferences, but also health behaviors, social distance practices and hand washing habits (Gadarian et al., 2020, p. 1). It is thought-provoking that political identities are evident even in unrelated issues, as health.

The rational attitude which is expected from individuals in case of a major risk for health is to rely on healthcare professionals more. However, it is witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic that the public does not prefer to trust healthcare professionals. Actually, they take into account the recommendations of healthcare professionals who fit their own political identity. Furthermore, for many people, the suggestions of the politicians from the same political understanding come to the fore, even though they have no adequate knowledge of the subject (Gadarian et al., 2020, p. 3). Moreover, political activists/ influencers in social media emerged as a highly trusted sources of information. It is also observed that President Trump refers to political activist/ influencers, rather than

so-called corrupt mainstream media outlets on his own twitter account. It can also be said that media are also divided within itself and readers categorize the media as reliable and unreliable in accordance with their political stance. This trend takes place not only in American society but also in other societies.

Studies have shown that political beliefs and identity are also effective in obeying vital practices, such as social distancing. In a study that was conducted by Painter and Qiu, by examining location information of the smart phones and credit card expenditures, they determined that the republican countries complied with the social distancing less than democrat countries. In addition, they concluded that democrats prefer online shopping in accordance with pandemic precautions. In other words, democrats tend to change their behaviors. Finally, it has been revealed that both democrats and republicans have fulfilled COVID-19 precautions of governmental institutions in compliance with political stance of the governor (Painter & Qiu, 2020, p. 3-4). In this context, decisiveness of political figures has also come to the fore.

It has been revealed that the American public is politically polarized. It was alleged that the parsing rhetoric of the political elite in the U.S. has been highly determinative for this situation. Comparative studies have been conducted on Canada and the U.S. to bring scientific clarity for the issue. A study found that politicians in Canada use a relatively more unifying language during COVID-19 pandemic. In other words, the fight against COVID-19 is not affected by political stances at the elite level in Canada (Merkley et al., 2020, p. 6). It also revealed that Canadian society's perception about social distance and COVID-19 risk is not related to political views (Merkley et al., 2020, p. 5). However, there is no study presenting correlation between political polarization and Canada's success against COVID-19. The lower COVID-19 mortality rates in Canada may be a result of Canadian experience from the SARS epidemic a short time since. The high standards of health services may also be effective.

In fact, pandemics are global emergencies in which societies have to develop the same behavioral patterns, perceive the threat at the same level, and take into account

directions of the authority and experts cautiously. Otherwise, fighting pandemics basically becomes unmanageable. Despite this basic logic, due to rising populism and nationalism, individuals react in the opposite way than expected. Decision makers need to relate the issue of identity and offer alternative solutions to political polarization. In this context, it is important to develop alternative approaches to achieve behavioral change.

3.10. Summary

In this chapter, the impact of increasing populism and nationalism on the COVID-19 pandemic was debated as a case study. In doing so, identity elements, race, ethnicity, religion, generation, gender and social class were studied under separate headings.

It has been observable that increasing populism and nationalism brings various identity elements to the surface and adds new meanings to them. Race and ethnicity were the easiest identity types to observe this change. The most fundamental debate about race and ethnicity has been xenophobic and racist attacks against Asian communities during the pandemic. Moreover, orientalism also emerged as a decisive phenomenon. Another factor was related to different lethality rate among different ethnic groups. It was concluded that the pandemic does not affect races and ethnicities differently because of genetic factors, but social and economic factors. In other words, COVID-19 is not simply Chinese virus, but genetically every nation's virus.

In the following section, the thesis concluded that religion is a major factor for behavior change. The god given freedom and healing through worship became prominent concepts during the pandemic. Moreover, the suspicions against scientific thought in Christian theology has been one of the major sources of conspiratorial thinking around the world. On the other hand, social class has also become an important element which represents growing distrust between elites/rich and the public.

Another identity element that emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic was generation. The age was a naturally important issue at the beginning of the pandemic for

the reason that COVID-19 was more deadly for the elderly. However, generation z and its demands have also caused unprecedented discussions throughout the pandemic.

Finally, gender came to the fore by bringing the gender related debates to the COVID-19 pandemic. The most important of these were discussions about women's socio-economic conditions and new gender definitions.

As it is understood, each identity element offers quite useful data on its own. However, inferences from different identity elements led the study to conclude that two upper identities emerged as outputs of today's populism and nationalism. The fault lines within main identity definitions are related to the mentioned two upper identities: globalism and new patriotism. Accordingly, the tension between globalism and new patriotism was also examined in separate titles. In accordance with the argument of the thesis, globalism and new patriotism are synthesized with previously mentioned identity definitions and become new-type upper identities. Throughout COVID-19 pandemic, globalists became much more prone to behavior changes, understood the seriousness of the pandemic, and demanded stricter governmental measures. On the other hand, new-patriots resisted behavioral changes, did not believe in the pandemic, found the pandemic artificial and defended anti-vaccination by producing various conspiracy theories. Moreover, while the globalists react more within the framework of international solidarity, the new patriots have been more discriminatory. In this context, resistance to behavior change was discussed as an important indicator of populism and nationalism. Besides, it turned out to be a factor that determines the difference between two upper identities.

In the rest of the chapter, the details of racist and xenophobic incidents were debated as the effects of increasing populism and nationalism after examining the role of social media. As a result, the disruptive effect of populism and nationalism on the fight against COVID-19 was revealed by including the faster dissemination of information as a disturbing factor.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the thesis was to reach conclusions that would prove the impact of increasing populism and nationalism on COVID-19 pandemic with the help of social constructivism. Therefore, in the first chapter of the thesis, theoretical debates on social constructivism were carried out. As it turned out, social constructivism as an idealist theory offered worthwhile explanations against mainstream theories of international relations. Accordingly, social constructivism generated an idealist definition of identity by using ideas, beliefs and norms. These improvements were important for the reason that they enabled a better understanding of populism and nationalism. At this moment, the prominence of neo-realism was decisive. The neo-realism, as the leading theory of international relations, had a distinct position to better understanding of social constructivism and its offerings. Idealist theories address beliefs, ideas and norms and how identities and behaviors are shaped by them. Accordingly, the stress was made on how social constructivist contributions had altered the traditional concepts of international relations, such as, self-help, state and anarchy. Social constructivist phenomena, as identity and norm construction, delivered convenient explanations. The platonic philosophy and German idealism were also discussed in order to comprehend the orientalist thought that reemerged during the COVID-19 pandemic. German idealism also plays a vital role in the development of the idealist theory of social constructivism.

In the second chapter, the origins of increasing populism and nationalism were examined. It was concluded that today's populism and nationalism are quite different from their version in debut. Populism and conspiracy thinking are highly linked in this context. Meanwhile, for nationalism, the new patriotism emerged as a new world view. This new type of nationalism is more close to the patriotic ideology. It addresses a wider civilization understanding, contains religious components and objections to globalization. Besides, it turned out that the 2008 Global Economic Crisis is a major trigger for increased populism and nationalism.

In the final part of the thesis, the impact of increasing populism and nationalism on the COVID-19 pandemic was debated. In doing so, identity types were studied. It is

apparent that rising populism and nationalism brings various identity types to the fore and provides new-fangled gist to them. Moreover, the polarization between globalism and new patriotism was also examined. In accordance with the argument of the thesis, globalism and new patriotism are combined with previously mentioned identity elements and turned into new-type upper identities. It has been revealed that these new upper identities highly determine the behaviors and motivations of individuals. Accordingly, throughout COVID-19 pandemic, globalists have been much more liable to behavior changes, agreed with the seriousness of the pandemic, and required restrictive measures. In contrast, new-patriots resisted behavioral changes, did not have faith in the pandemic, found the pandemic false and advocated anti-vaccination by generating several conspiracy theories. Moreover, while the globalists respond more within the international solidarity, the new patriots have been more prejudiced.

As a result, it is assumed that the impact of populism and nationalism, which have increased since the 2008 Global Economic Crisis, are also seen on the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, increasing populism and nationalism are realized in a way that can be better explained by social constructivist concepts, such as identity and norm construction, which are based on ideas and beliefs. Accordingly, it may be valuable to consider such reflections of populism and nationalism in dealing with the pandemic. Moreover, the results of this thesis may be a worthwhile source for future studies on the epidemics and pandemics.

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