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## The Rotten Carrot: US-Turkish Bargaining Failure over Iraq in 2003 and the Pitfalls of Social Embeddedness

Marina E. Henke

### ABSTRACT

Side-payments are commonly used in international relations to alter the foreign policies of states. Despite their frequent usage, however, our understanding is very limited as to why certain side-payment negotiations succeed, while others fail. This article tries to remedy this shortcoming. It argues that social embeddedness between actors involved in the negotiations has a major bearing on bargaining outcomes. Under ideal circumstances, social relationships can be used to reduce information asymmetries and increase trust. But in the presence of fractured social networks, social ties can foster information bias and distrust, ultimately increasing the likelihood of bargaining failure. The US-Turkish bargaining failure over the Iraq intervention in 2003 is used to illustrate and test this theory.

They called it the “deal of the decade:”<sup>1</sup> the largest side-payment package the United States had ever offered to a third party in multilateral coalition negotiations.<sup>2</sup> Discussions had dragged on for over six months and involved the entire senior leadership of the George W. Bush administration, including the president himself. In the end, the US offer for Turkish cooperation on the 2003 Iraq invasion included the following elements: Turkey’s choice of either a US\$4 billion cash grant or a US\$34 billion loan at a 50% below the market interest rate;<sup>3</sup> US\$2 billion in military aid; US\$250 million in upgrades to Turkish military bases; the American purchase of US\$750 million worth of Turkish products for use by US forces participating in the intervention; US\$1 billion worth of oil provided to Turkey from its allies in the region; a lifting of US quotas on Turkish textiles; the inclusion of Turkish gold and other valuable gems in the US Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), and the possible opening of “qualified

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<sup>1</sup>Philip Robins, “Confusion at Home, Confusion Abroad: Turkey between Copenhagen and Iraq,” *International Affairs* 79, no. 3 (May 2003): 564.

<sup>2</sup>Yaşar Yakış, interview by Marina E. Henke, Ankara, 25 June 2014.

<sup>3</sup>The loan would have to be repaid over 15 years with no instalments due for the first 4 years. It came at an interest rate of 6.25%. At the time, Turkey was paying an interest rate of 10.5% on regular markets. US\$8.5 billion of the US\$34 billion would be available short term.

industrial zones” inside Turkey, from which exports to the United States would be duty-free.<sup>4</sup>

Yet despite its impressive proportions, the deal fell through. On March 1, 2003, the Turkish Grand National Assembly rejected the motion, which would have allowed Turkey to reap the promised benefits in exchange for permitting the United States to use Turkish military installations and consenting to the transit of approximately sixty thousand US troops across Turkish territory on their way to Iraq.<sup>5</sup> As a consequence, US military officials were forced to change their Iraq intervention plans. Most importantly, the US Fourth Infantry Division, which had been designated to enter northern Iraq across the Turkish border, had to be rerouted through Kuwait.

President George W. Bush and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld both claim that the delayed deployment of these forces was partially responsible for the unraveling of Iraq in the aftermath of the US intervention. Bush blames the looting of Baghdad on their absence,<sup>6</sup> while Rumsfeld notes in his memoirs: “Because the 4th Infantry Division had been denied access to Iraq’s north through Turkey, most of the Sunni territory was not covered by U.S. troops in the early days of the war.... This meant that cities like Fallujah, Tikrit, and Ramadi never experienced major battles with U.S. troops and became safe havens for insurgents.”<sup>7</sup> Moreover, Turkey’s March 1 decision undoubtedly had a substantive impact on US-Turkish relations. The Pentagon, in particular, is said to have been extremely frustrated. Hitherto Ankara’s most ardent advocate in Washington, it now felt that its war plans had been sabotaged by Turkey’s behavior.<sup>8</sup>

The Turkish incident represents an intriguing example of the intricacies of side-payment negotiations—their powerful potential to secure agreement by offsetting the distributional patterns of international cooperation efforts, as well as the costly consequences of negotiation failure. The reasons for the Turkish refusal to cooperate with the United States on Iraq are still poorly understood. Most scholarly literature addressing this topic speaks of an involuntary defection.<sup>9</sup> The March 1 vote was extremely close; the final tally of the vote read 264 in favor and 250 against, with 19 abstentions. A vote of 267 in favor would have been required for the motion to pass. Consequently, many scholars suggest

<sup>4</sup>Deniz Bolukbasi, *1 Mart Vakası Irak Tezkeresi Ve Sonrası* [The March 1 Incident: The Iraq Motion and Thereafter] (Istanbul: Dogan Kitap, 2008), 68–74.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 47.

<sup>6</sup>George W. Bush, *Decision Points* (New York: Broadway Books, 2011), 258.

<sup>7</sup>Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir* (London: Penguin, 2011), 520.

<sup>8</sup>Bill Park, “Strategic Location, Political Dislocation: Turkey, the United States, and Northern Iraq,” *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 7, no. 2 (June 2003): 11–23. In the US government, the “Turkey file” thus moved from the Pentagon to the State Department, and the Turkish military that had benefitted from US military support for decades lost an important ally—a development that some analysts suggest precipitated the political decline of the Turkish military.

<sup>9</sup>For examples, see Arzu Kibris, “Uncertainty and Ratification Failure,” *Public Choice* 150, no. 3 (March 2012): 440; Baris Kesgin and Juliet Kaarbo, “When and How Parliaments Influence Foreign Policy: The Case of Turkey’s Iraq Decision,” *International Studies Perspectives* 11, no. 1 (February 2010): 30.

that Turkish officials had slightly miscalculated parliamentary opposition to the proposal.

This article puts forward a different explanation, based on extensive field research in Turkey and the United States, including interviews with political and military officials directly involved in the negotiations<sup>10</sup> and examination of Turkish press articles, books, and private papers from some of the negotiators involved. My detailed analysis of the US-Turkish negotiation process indicates that on several occasions, mistakes were made that follow a systematic pattern. US and Turkish negotiators were entrapped in fractured social networks, leading to information asymmetries, misplaced trust among the negotiating parties, and, ultimately, bargaining failure.

This article will describe these processes in great detail, but its ambitions are larger than that. The empirical details of the Turkish case reveal new aspects of the micro-foundations of side-payment bargaining. Side-payments occupy a central position in contemporary diplomacy.<sup>11</sup> They are ubiquitous when it comes to enticing countries to join US-led multilateral military coalitions<sup>12</sup> and are critical determinants of successful negotiations on arms control,<sup>13</sup> economic sanctions,<sup>14</sup> human rights,<sup>15</sup> conflict resolution,<sup>16</sup> international trade,<sup>17</sup> environmental agreements,<sup>18</sup> and other issues. But while many scholars and practitioners of international relations recognize their crucial importance, there is almost no theoretical research that systematically examines the micro-processes that underpin them. Most academic research on side-payments is either conceptual in nature<sup>19</sup> or

<sup>10</sup>Given the delicate information exchanged and the difficult political situation in Turkey, many of these interviews were conducted "on background": my interview partners granted me permission to use the information but asked to not be identified by name in the article.

<sup>11</sup>James K. Sebenius, "Negotiation Arithmetic: Adding and Subtracting Issues and Parties," *International Organization* 37, no. 2 (March 1983): 281–316.

<sup>12</sup>Marina E. Henke, "The Politics of Diplomacy: How the United States Builds Multilateral Military Coalitions," *International Studies Quarterly* (July 2017) doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqx017>.

<sup>13</sup>Thomas Bernauer and Dieter Ruloff, *The Politics of Positive Incentives in Arms Control* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999); Etel Solingen, *Sanctions, Statecraft, and Nuclear Proliferation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>14</sup>Lisa L. Martin, *Coercive Cooperation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

<sup>15</sup>Judith Kelley, "Who Keeps International Commitments and Why? The International Criminal Court and Bilateral Non-surrender Agreements," *American Political Science Review* 101, no. 03 (July 2007): 573–89.

<sup>16</sup>T. Clifton Morgan, "Issue Linkages in International Crisis Bargaining," *American Journal of Political Science* 34, no. 2 (May, 1990): 311–33; Branislav Gosovic and John Gerard Ruggie, "On the Creation of a New International Economic Order: Issue Linkage and the Seventh Special Session of the UN General Assembly," *International Organization* 30, no. 2 (April 1976): 309–45.

<sup>17</sup>Christina L. Davis, "International Institutions and Issue Linkage: Building Support for Agricultural Trade Liberalization," *American Political Science Review* 98, no. 1 (February 2004): 153–69; Christina L. Davis, "Linkage Diplomacy: Economic and Security Bargaining in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1902–23," *International Security* 33, no. 3 (January: 2009): 143–79; Bernard M. Hoekman, "Determining the Need for Issue Linkages in Multilateral Trade Negotiations," *International Organization* 43, no. 4 (October 1989): 693–714.

<sup>18</sup>See for example, Hubert Zimmermann, "Realist Power Europe? The EU in the Negotiations About China's and Russia's WTO Accession," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 45, no. 4 (October 2007): 813–32; Andrew R. Miller and Nives Dolšak, "Issue Linkages in International Environmental Policy: The International Whaling Commission and Japanese Development Aid," *Global Environmental Politics* 7, no. 1 (February 2007): 69–96.

<sup>19</sup>See for example, Robert D. Tollison and Thomas D. Willett, "An Economic Theory of Mutually Advantageous Issue Linkages in International Negotiations," *International Organization* 33, no. 4 (October 1979): 425–49; Susanne Lohmann, "Linkage Politics," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 1 (February 1997): 38–67.

examines the macro-effects.<sup>20</sup> Currently, we know very little about who is actually involved in the bargaining process, how side-payment negotiations unfold in practice, and, most importantly, why some elaborate side-payment negotiations unexpectedly fail. Using the Turkish case study, this article attempts to fill this void. Because it is based on only one case, the study should be seen as exploratory and hypothesis-generating rather than hypothesis-testing. Nevertheless, the Turkish case can serve as a first attempt at building a theory that can explain what factors influence the initiation, course, and outcome of side-payment bargains. If we are to understand this powerful policy tool, these micro-processes need to be properly examined.

The key theoretical finding of this article is that social ties between the actors involved in side-payment negotiations have a major bearing on bargaining outcomes. Whether the participants in the negotiations have previously interacted privately or professionally can significantly affect bargaining results. Under ideal circumstances, pre-established social relationships facilitate the negotiation process, providing information on bargaining preferences and trust—two variables often said to determine a favorable bargaining outcome.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, fractured social networks can inhibit bargaining success. Under these circumstances, social relationships can lead to the spread of biased or even erroneous information and misplaced trust, thus ultimately increasing the likelihood of bargaining failure. The ties that bind can therefore become the ties that blind.

The remainder of the article is structured as follows: the next section summarizes the existing literature on side-payment negotiations more generally and on the US-Turkish negotiations over Iraq in particular. It highlights the strength of the literature as well as its shortcomings and explains how the content of this study resolves some of the deficiencies of the current state of research. The second section introduces the theory this article advances, explaining how social embeddedness can be used as a tool in side-payment negotiations and how it affects outcomes in positive as well as negative ways. The third section dives into the case study of US-Turkish bargaining failure over Iraq. Using original evidence, it traces the various stages of the US-Turkish negotiations and provides empirical proof

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<sup>20</sup>For example, several large-N analyses have tried to determine whether side-payments indeed increase the overall probability of states reaching an international agreement: see David B. Carter and Randall W. Stone, "Democracy and Multilateralism: The Case of Vote Buying in the UN General Assembly," *International Organization* 69, no. 1 (January 2015): 1–33; Paul Poast, "Does Issue Linkage Work? Evidence from European Alliance Negotiations, 1860 to 1945," *International Organization* 66, no. 2 (April 2012): 277–310; Heather Elko McKibben, *State Strategies in International Bargaining: Play by the Rules or Change Them?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). Studies informed by game theory have also attempted to model whether and how side-payments can affect domestic approval of international treaties: see Helen V. Milner, *Interests, Institutions, and Information: Domestic Politics and International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Frederick W. Mayer, "Managing Domestic Differences in International Negotiations: The Strategic Use of Internal Side-Payments," *International Organization* 46, no. 4 (October 1992): 793–818.

<sup>21</sup>Mara Olekalns and Philip L. Smith, "Mutually Dependent: Power, Trust, Affect and the Use of Deception in Negotiation," *Journal of Business Ethics* 85, no. 3 (March 2009): 347–65; Dean G. Pruitt and Steven A. Lewis, "Development of Integrative Solutions in Bilateral Negotiation," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 31, no. 4 (April 1975): 621–33.

that social ties between US and Turkish negotiators negatively affected the outcome. The final section highlights the theoretical and policy implications of this work and draws conclusions for the global practice of side-payment negotiations and multilateral military coalition-building.

### What Do We Know about Side-Payment Negotiations?

Side-payments are typically defined as “compensatory exchanges between functionally unrelated issues aimed at facilitating agreement between two negotiating parties.”<sup>22</sup> These exchanges can entail either direct monetary compensation or indirect compensation in the form of material concessions on other issues. The latter form of side-payment is often referred to as issue-linkage. Side-payments are widely considered valuable instruments that can help states secure international agreements. They are theorized to enable states to offset the distributional patterns of international cooperation.<sup>23</sup> As a result, the probability of concluding a cooperative agreement increases. Many case studies and several large-N analyses have confirmed these findings.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, side-payments have been shown to enhance the credibility of agreements.<sup>25</sup> If two sides encounter an enforcement problem (for example, one state believes a negotiating partner will renege on the agreement), adding a second issue to the treaty can incentivize all parties to commit to and enforce the final deal.<sup>26</sup>

Despite these apparent advantages, many scholars have also highlighted the challenges of side-payment bargains. Some point to the steep transaction costs that arise when side-payments are used as policy tools.<sup>27</sup> In particular, negotiating partners face the constant risk of being cheated during the bargaining process, as each one has an inherent incentive to misrepresent its bottom line in order to gain leverage, while during the enforcement phase, recipients of side-payments might act opportunistically and defect from the agreement. As a result, Daniel W. Drezner concludes that “only under very special circumstances will states opt for the carrot as their preferred policy option.”<sup>28</sup> These special circumstances are those that improve the information flow between the negotiating parties, such as side-payments between liberal democracies or side-payments that are negotiated under the umbrella of an international regime.<sup>29</sup> But even if transaction costs can be

<sup>22</sup>H. Richard Friman, “Side-Payments Versus Security Cards: Domestic Bargaining Tactics in International Economic Negotiations,” *International Organization* 47, no. 03 (July 1993): 390.

<sup>23</sup>Sebenius, “Negotiation Arithmetic,” 298; Tollison and Willett, “Economic Theory,” 427; Randall E. Newnham, “More Flies with Honey: Positive Economic Linkage in German Ostpolitik from Bismarck to Kohl,” *International Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (March 2000):73–96.

<sup>24</sup>See for example Davis, “International Institutions”; Paul Poast, “Can Issue Linkage Improve Treaty Credibility? Buffer State Alliances as a “Hard Case,”” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57, no. 5 (September 2013): 739–64.

<sup>25</sup>Poast, “Does Issue Linkage Work?”

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, 743.

<sup>27</sup>Morgan, “Issue Linkages,” 320; Daniel W. Drezner, “The Trouble with Carrots: Transaction Costs, Conflict Expectations, and Economic Inducements,” *Security Studies* 9, no. 1–2 (1999): 188–218.

<sup>28</sup>Drezner, “Trouble with Carrots,” 190.

<sup>29</sup>Drezner, “Trouble with Carrots,” 194; Lisa L. Martin, “Heterogeneity, Linkage and Commons Problems,” *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6, no. 4 (October 1994): 473–93; Martin, *Coercive Cooperation*.

minimized, domestic opposition can constrain negotiators and trigger bargaining failure.<sup>30</sup> In other words, domestic actors (such as national parliaments) may refuse to ratify an agreement negotiated by the executive branch because they are unaware of—or disagree with—the side-payments contained in the package deal.<sup>31</sup>

The latter explanation is the one most often advanced to explain the US-Turkish bargaining failure over Iraq in 2003. Most scholars studying this topic suggest that the Turkish executive brought home a deal unacceptable to the majority of the Turkish Parliament.<sup>32</sup> The ongoing academic debate concerns why exactly such decisive parliamentary opposition emerged. A first group of scholars points to the influence of Turkish public opinion, which was largely opposed to the American war plans.<sup>33</sup> A second group highlights the peculiar ideology and composition of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP). Approximately 70 percent of AKP members were willing to cooperate with the United States if it benefited Turkish interests.<sup>34</sup> However, the remaining party members were guided by a profound distaste for the United States and US policies in the Middle East. It is this latter faction that scuttled the vote.<sup>35</sup>

A third set of scholars points to the lack of military support. At a Turkish National Security Council meeting a day prior to the parliamentary vote, the leadership of the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) did not publicly offer any recommendations to the Turkish government.<sup>36</sup> This was a novelty. On prior occasions of similar importance, the TAF had always voiced an opinion. As a result of this hesitancy, the parliament rejected the vote.<sup>37</sup>

Finally, a fourth group emphasizes the lack of political leadership that prevented not only the whipping of votes in the parliament, but also the support of the military.<sup>38</sup> These scholars argue that the month of March 2003 was of critical political importance to the leader of the AKP, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. He was scheduled to run in a by-election on March 9, 2003 in the Turkish

<sup>30</sup>See for example, Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (July 1988): 427–60; Tollison and Willett, "Economic Theory," 445; Frederick W. Mayer, "Managing Domestic Differences in International Negotiations: The Strategic Use of Internal Side-Payments," *International Organizations* 46 (1992): 804; Morgan, "Issue Linkages," 320.

<sup>31</sup>Keisuke Iida, "Involuntary Defection in Two-Level Games," *Public Choice* 89, no. 3 (December 1996): 283–303; Jongryn Mo, "Domestic Institutions and International Bargaining: The Role of Agent Veto in Two-Level Games," *American Political Science Review* 89, no. 4 (1995): 914–24; Milner, *Interests, Institutions, and Information: Domestic Politics and International Relations*, 84.

<sup>32</sup>Kıbrıs, "Uncertainty and Ratification Failure," 440; Kesgin and Kaarbo, "When and How," 30.

<sup>33</sup>Cameron S. Brown, "Turkey in the Gulf Wars of 1991 and 2003," *Turkish Studies* 8, no. 1 (February 2007): 102–103; Ramazan Gözen, "Causes and Consequences of Turkey's Out-of-War Position in the Iraq War of 2003," *Turkish Yearbook of International Relations* 36 (2005): 78; Soner Cagaptay, "Why Are the Turks Hesitating on Iraq?," *PolicyWatch* 704, (Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 27 January 2003); Kesgin and Kaarbo, "When and How," 26.

<sup>34</sup>Cagaptay, "Hesitating on Iraq."

<sup>35</sup>Zeynep Taydaş and Özgür Özdamar, "A Divided Government, an Ideological Parliament, and an Insecure Leader: Turkey's Indecision About Joining the Iraq War," *Social Science Quarterly* 94, no. 1 (February 2013): 9.

<sup>36</sup>Murat Yetkin, *Tezkere: Irak Krizinin Gerçek Oyküsü* [The Motion: The True Story of the Iraq Crisis] (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2004), 169; Taydaş and Özdamar, "Divided Government," 13.

<sup>37</sup>Taydaş and Özdamar, "Divided Government," 14.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, 14; Esra Cuhadar, Juliet Kaarbo, Baris Kesgin, and Binnur Ozkececi-Taner, "Examining Leaders' Orientations to Structural Constraints: Turkey's 1991 and 2003 Iraqi War Decisions," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 20, no.1 (January 2017).

town of Siirt, an electoral district very close to the Iraqi border, whose inhabitants viewed the prospect of war particularly negatively. Winning these elections was crucial for Erdoğan, since it would enable him to finally join the Turkish Parliament and (once approved by a vote of confidence by Parliament) replace Abdullah Gül as Turkish prime minister. Consequently, Erdoğan refrained from strongly lobbying in favor of the motion so as not to negatively affect his election prospects.<sup>39</sup>

### **What Are We Missing?**

Can these four explanations really account for US-Turkish bargaining failure over Iraq in its entirety? My answer to this question is clear: no. Indeed, any scholar arguing that the influence of Turkish public opinion, AKP ideology, or the lack of TAF support determined the outcome of the March 1 motion must address the fact that the Turkish Parliament voted overwhelmingly in favor of three other motions also involving cooperation with the United States on the Iraq invasion very shortly before and after the March 1 vote.

The first of these motions—granting the United States permission for site preparations and other upgrades to Turkish military installations in preparation of the invasion—was passed by Parliament on February 6 with a vote of 308 in favor and 193 against. The second motion, on March 20, granted the United States overflight rights and was passed with a vote of 332 in favor, 202 against, and one abstention. Finally, a third motion approving the deployment of as many as ten to twelve thousand Turkish troops to Iraq was passed on October 7,<sup>40</sup> with a vote of 358 in favor, 183 against, and two abstentions.

Arguments have been advanced that these three motions were different in their scope from the March 1 vote. It has been claimed, for instance, that the February 6 vote did not have significant ramifications for Turkey, the March 20 vote did not commit Turkey to participate in the war, and the October 7 vote was meant to repair US-Turkish relations after the repercussions of the March 1 vote had sunk in.<sup>41</sup> All of these qualifications are, however, rhetorical. Each motion did commit Turkey to cooperate with the United States on Iraq in substantive ways. The fact that all of these motions passed rather illustrates a remarkable political and ideological flexibility among Turkish MPs regarding US-Turkish cooperation on Iraq<sup>42</sup>—a flexibility that requires an explanation.

<sup>39</sup>Brown, "Turkey in the Gulf Wars," 101; James E. Kapsis, "The Failure of US-Turkish Pre-Iraq War Negotiations: An Overconfident United States, Political Mismanagement, and a Conflicted Military," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 10, no. 3 (September 2006): 39–40.

<sup>40</sup>William M. Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774* (London: Routledge, 2013), 167.

<sup>41</sup>Kesgin and Kaarbo, "When and How."

<sup>42</sup>Kesgin and Kaarbo argue that the March 1 vote symbolized the rise of the Turkish Parliament as an independent actor in Turkish foreign policy. I disagree with this suggestion; when looking at all four motions regarding Iraq, there is no coherence among the votes. Turkish elites still seemed to be very much in charge of determining foreign policy. For a similar point of view, see Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari, *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000).

One possible reason for this suppleness in voting behavior is the enforcement of party discipline during the February 6, March 20, and October 7 votes and the lack thereof on March 1. Why did Prime Minister Gül and Party Leader Erdoğan enforce party cohesion on these three occasions but not on March 1? The conventional wisdom is that Erdoğan was worried about his impending by-election prospects in Siirt, but this explanation is not entirely convincing. There was nothing for Erdoğan to worry about; he was very sure of his upcoming electoral success, polling almost forty points ahead of the main opposition party, the Republican People's Party (CHP).<sup>43</sup> We therefore require an alternative account of the failure of the March 1 motion. One place to look is how the side-payment negotiation process unfolded. Who was involved in the negotiations and how were these actors socially connected? The section below engages these questions by developing a theory of social embeddedness as a bargaining tool.

### The Impact of Social Embeddedness as a Bargaining Tool

In a world of perfectly informed individuals, a bargain should always be possible.<sup>44</sup> Side-payment bargaining failure thus constitutes an intriguing theoretical puzzle. As mentioned earlier, the existing literature suggests that side-payment negotiations can fail if (1) transaction costs are too steep or (2) domestic opposition is too strong. This article proposes a new explanation: negotiations can fail because of structural holes in the social network that connects the bargaining actors.<sup>45</sup> Under these circumstances, social embeddedness can turn into a competency trap, because it filters and potentially biases information on the preferences bargaining actors hold with regard to the negotiation outcome as well as on these actors' trustworthiness and intentions.<sup>46</sup>

For the purpose of this article, I define social embeddedness as social ties that connect actors involved in side-payment negotiation processes. These ties are often the result of bilateral or multilateral institutions—relating to economic, security, cultural or other areas of cooperation—that link the governments composing the dyad.<sup>47</sup> These connections compel government officials to interact with their foreign counterparts as officials are required to talk, exchange letters or emails, and meet at summits or other types of gatherings. On occasions, these ties also arise

<sup>43</sup>"Anketten Erdoğan cikti" [Erdoğan wins, according to polls], *Yenisafak Gazetesi*, 8 March 2003, accessed 11 April 2017, [www.yenisafak.com/arsiv/2003/mart/08/p4.html](http://www.yenisafak.com/arsiv/2003/mart/08/p4.html). Erdoğan's wife also came from Siirt. The probability that he would lose the March 23 vote of confidence in the Turkish Parliament—necessary to appoint him prime minister—was also negligible. There was no opponent inside the AKP who could have challenged his position as party leader and thus prime minister of Turkey.

<sup>44</sup>Ariel Rubinstein, "Perfect Equilibrium in a Bargaining Model," *Econometrica: Journal of the Econometric Society* (January 1982): 97–109.

<sup>45</sup>See Ronald S. Burt, *Structural Holes: The Social Structure of Competition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Ronald S. Burt, *Brokerage and Closure: An Introduction to Social Capital* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>46</sup>The causal logic of this theory is similar to Drezner. In other words, it is a lack of information (and trust) that inhibits side-payment bargaining success. Nevertheless, the process I propose that leads to such informational asymmetries is different. Drezner focuses on macrostructures (such as democratic governments, international regimes) whereas I focus on the micro-dynamics, such as social networks.

<sup>47</sup>Ole Jacob Sending, Vincent Pouliot, and Iver B. Neumann, *Diplomacy and the Making of World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 223.

from activities unrelated to government institutions (such as business or private connections). Each one of these interactions results in social embeddedness.

Social embeddedness, in turn, leads to the flow of material and nonmaterial resources such as money, information, and advice among embedded actors.<sup>48</sup> Over time, these ties also carry memory, or as John F. Padgett and Walter W. Powell put it, “[social ties are] the congealed residues of history.”<sup>49</sup> Of course, not all social relationships have the same impact. Some trigger repeated and intense exchanges while others prompt only irregular or fleeting interactions, thus creating strong or weak social ties respectively. However, both types are able to affect social outcomes, as Mark S. Granovetter rightly observed in “The Strength of Weak Ties.”<sup>50</sup>

So what are the concrete effects of social embeddedness on side-payment negotiations? Social embeddedness creates constraints and opportunities both at the individual level (between two bargaining actors) and the aggregate level (the social network connecting all actors in a particular negotiation process).<sup>51</sup> At the individual level, social embeddedness allows negotiators to access private information on their reciprocal bargaining preferences and shapes how they assess one another’s credibility and trustworthiness.<sup>52</sup> At the aggregate level, social network structures determine who among a group of bargaining actors has the greatest access to material, informational, and ideational resources.<sup>53</sup>

Theorists distinguish two types of social networks. A decentralized and unfractured network is one in which all bargaining actors have roughly the same number of links and thus the same access to resources (see Figure 1).<sup>54</sup> By contrast, in a centralized and fractured network (see Figure 2), some individuals—for example those that have substantially more links than their colleagues—can access more resources and thus garner influence over others; those who lack connections tend to suffer in isolation.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, bargaining actors located at critical junctures that bridge disparate groups can function as so-called *brokers*, using their position to influence the resource flow.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>48</sup>Deborah Avant and Oliver Westerwinter, *The New Power Politics: Networks and Transnational Security Governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 6.

<sup>49</sup>John F. Padgett and Walter W. Powell, *The Emergence of Organizations and Markets* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 3.

<sup>50</sup>Mark S. Granovetter, “The Strength of Weak Ties,” *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 6 (May 1973): 1360–80.

<sup>51</sup>Cf. Emilie M. Hafner-Burton, Miles Kahler, and Alexander H. Montgomery, “Network Analysis for International Relations,” *International Organization* 63, no. 3 (Summer 2009): 561; Macdonald, *Networks of Domination: The Social Foundations of Peripheral Conquest in International Politics*, 48; Burt, *Brokerage and Closure*; Joel M. Podolny and James N. Baron, “Resources and Relationships: Social Networks and Mobility in the Workplace,” *American Sociological Review* (1997): 673–93.

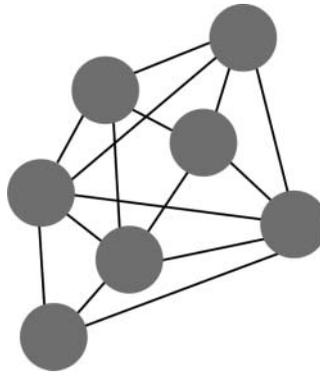
<sup>52</sup>Alexander Cooley and Daniel H. Nexon, “Interpersonal Networks and International Security: US-Georgia Relations During the Bush Administration,” in *The New Power Politics. Networks and Transnational Security Governance*, ed. Deborah Avant and Oliver Westerwinter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 74–102.

<sup>53</sup>Mustafa Emirbayer, “Manifesto for a Relational Sociology,” *American Journal of Sociology* 103, no. 2 (September 1997): 298–99; Mustafa Emirbayer and Jeff Goodwin, “Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency,” *American Journal of Sociology* 99, no. 6 (May 1994): 1414.

<sup>54</sup>Carter T. Butts, “Social Network Analysis: A Methodological Introduction,” *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 11, no. 1 (March 2008): 13–41.

<sup>55</sup>Linton C. Freeman, “Centrality in Social Networks Conceptual Clarification,” *Social Networks* 1, no. 3 (1978/79): 214–39; Phillip Bonacich, “Power and Centrality: A Family of Measures,” *American Journal of Sociology* 92, no. 5 (March 1987): 1170–82.

<sup>56</sup>Burt, *Structural Holes*, 38–44.



**Figure 1.** Decentralized and unfractured network.

The impact of social embeddedness works differently in these two ideal types of networks. In decentralized and unfractured networks, social embeddedness leads to cooperative and mutually beneficial effects by providing information and trust, whereas in centralized and fractured networks, social embeddedness can result in asymmetric and exploitative outcomes.<sup>57</sup>

### ***The Benefits of Social Embeddedness in Side-Payment Negotiations***

Social embeddedness opens information channels;<sup>58</sup> people who interact frequently learn about each other's personalities, policy preferences, cultural currencies, and working methods—information not readily available from public accounts.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, such data is often gleaned from one-on-one interactions, further increasing its reliability.<sup>60</sup> Frequent interactions also lead to trust, as negotiating parties have first-hand knowledge of each other's past behavior.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, viewed through a social-psychological lens, social embeddedness creates sympathy, affection, and reputational concerns.<sup>62</sup> Socially embedded actors can be

<sup>57</sup>Stacie E. Goddard, "Brokering Change: Networks and Entrepreneurs in International Politics," *International Theory* 1, no. 2 (July 2009): 250.

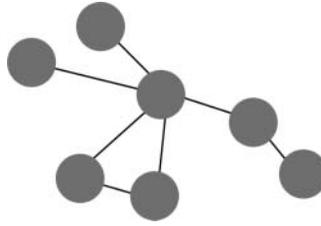
<sup>58</sup>Sending, Pouliot, and Neumann, *Diplomacy*, 223.

<sup>59</sup>Iver B. Neumann, *At Home with the Diplomats: Inside a European Foreign Ministry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 35; Andres Rozental and Alicia Buenrostro, "Bilateral Diplomacy," in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy*, ed. Andrew F. Cooper, Jorge Heine, and Ramesh Thakur (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 230–32; Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1977).

<sup>60</sup>Marcus Holmes, "The Force of Face-to-Face Diplomacy: Mirror Neurons and the Problem of Intentions," *International Organization* 67, no. 4 (October 2013): 829–61; Todd Hall and Keren Yarhi-Milo, "The Personal Touch: Leaders' Impressions, Costly Signaling, and Assessments of Sincerity in International Affairs," *International Studies Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (May 2012): 562.

<sup>61</sup>Brian C. Rathbun, *Trust in International Cooperation: International Security Institutions, Domestic Politics and American Multilateralism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Macdonald, *Networks of Domination*, 53.

<sup>62</sup>Macdonald, *Networks of Domination*, 54. Tarun K. Das and Bing-Sheng Teng, "Between Trust and Control: Developing Confidence in Partner Cooperation in Alliances," *Academy of Management Review* 23, no. 3 (July 1998): 494; William D. Leach and Paul A. Sabatier, "To Trust an Adversary: Integrating Rational and Psychological Models of Collaborative Policymaking," *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 4 (October 2005): 92.



**Figure 2.** Centralized and fractured network.

expected to behave in prescribed ways so as not to hurt their friend.<sup>63</sup> All these aspects condition the success of side-payment negotiations. Indeed, without access to private information—as Drezner rightly pointed out—side-payment negotiations are likely to fail even if they offer joint gains, because both parties have an interest in dissimulating their true red lines in an attempt to get a better deal.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, since side-payment bargains are often (quasi) secret agreements lacking the underpinnings of legal contracts,<sup>65</sup> existing trust among the negotiation partners can be indispensable to make them possible.<sup>66</sup>

### ***The Pitfalls of Social Embeddedness in Side-payment Negotiations***

Structural hole theory proposes an alternative view of the relationship between social embeddedness and the likelihood of side-payment negotiation success.<sup>67</sup> Rather than stressing the informational and social-psychological advantages of social embeddedness, it claims that fractured social networks can inhibit bargaining success. Indeed, in networks dominated by one highly central node, the informational advantages of social embeddedness are likely to disappear. As information is filtered through the central node, its breadth and quality decreases—especially if the hub holds biased predispositions of certain people or policy actions that taint the information flow.<sup>68</sup>

Fractured networks can also lead to misplaced trust in centrally located actors and mistrust toward those at opposite ends of the network. As a result, there can be a tendency to uncritically accept the central actor's analysis and framing of actions and events, even if the actual evidence points in a different direction. Simi-

<sup>63</sup>Mark S. Granovetter, "Problems of Explanation in Economic Sociology," in *Networks and Organization*, ed. Nitin Nohria and Robert G Eccles (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1992), 44.

<sup>64</sup>Drezner, "Trouble with Carrots." See also, Carsten K.W. De Dreu, Sander L. Koole, and Wolfgang Steinel, "Unfixing the Fixed Pie: A Motivated Information-Processing Approach to Integrative Negotiation," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 79, no. 6 (December 2000): 975–87; Olekalns and Smith, "Mutually Dependent," 347–48; Brian C. Rathbun, *Diplomacy's Value: Creating Security in 1920s Europe and the Contemporary Middle East* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014).

<sup>65</sup>Thurner and Linhart, "Political Multilevel Negotiations."

<sup>66</sup>Rathbun, *Diplomacy's Value*, 28; Kenneth A. Schultz, "The Politics of Risking Peace: Do Hawks or Doves Deliver the Olive Branch?," *International Organization* 59, no. 1 (February 2005): 1–38; Deborah Welch Larson, *Anatomy of Mistrust: US-Soviet Relations During the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

<sup>67</sup>Burt, *Structural Holes*.

<sup>68</sup>Burt, *Brokerage and Closure*, 168.

larly, information provided by less centrally located actors may be more heavily scrutinized or even disbelieved. The causal mechanisms underlying these processes have again much to do with affective relations and, in particular, face-to-face interactions.<sup>69</sup> Deeper social embeddedness leads to more favorable attitudes toward the centrally located actor's goodwill and reliability and hurts the credibility of those less centrally located. Both of these dynamics—the misplacement of trust and the filtering of information—can lead to bargaining failure.

### ***Testable Hypotheses***

If my theory is correct, we should see the following features affecting US-Turkish bargaining over Iraq in 2003. First, social networks connecting US and Turkish negotiators are noticeably fractured. Second, these fractures influence access and quality of information available to the negotiators: the most central node in the network is able to control the information flow, and his or her biases toward specific people and policy options taint the information that circulates to the other actors. Third, varying levels of trust and sympathy permeate the US-Turkish social network: the most centrally located actor benefitting from the most (perhaps unreasonably so) trust while others are considered less reliable. Fourth, in private conversations among US and Turkish bargaining actors prior to the March 1, 2003 vote, these information and trust asymmetries should become apparent and thus negatively affect the outcome of the motion.

### ***Alternative Explanations***

If social embeddedness played no or a negligible role in the US-Turkish bargaining process over Iraq in 2003, I expect that other factors would better explain the bargaining failure witnessed. If Turkish public opinion influenced the March 1, 2003 vote, high-level AKP officials such as Erdogan and Gül would have discussed their fears with regard to public disapproval in private conversations prior to the vote. They might especially allude to the effect of such a vote on the AKP's public standing and prospects of re-election. Similarly, if the military's reluctance to support the March 1 motion was the decisive factor, AKP officials should have discussed this lack of support and its relationship to the political standing of the AKP party (including discussion of a potential military coup). Moreover, if party ideology affected the vote, the most conservative (and thus most anti-American) elements of the AKP should be found to have voted against the motion while more moderate forces should have voted in favor. High-level party officials, such as Erdogan and Gül, should have discussed their worries about such a party split along ideological lines and tried to prevent it. Finally, if the March 1 vote can best be explained by Erdogan's fear of upsetting AKP party

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<sup>69</sup>Hall and Yarhi-Milo, "Personal Touch."

officials, thus jeopardizing his prospect of winning the by-election in Siirt and subsequent election in the Turkish Parliament, Erdogan should play a decisive role in the lead-up to the March 1 motion, explicitly signaling to AKP deputies and officials that they can vote according to their conscience. He should also not be surprised or angered by a negative outcome.

### **Explaining US-Turkish Bargaining Failure over Iraq: When the Ties That Bind Become the Ties That Blind**

Negotiations over Turkish support for the Iraq intervention began in March 2002 when Vice President Dick Cheney traveled to Ankara.<sup>70</sup> He met with Mustafa Bülent Ecevit, then serving as Turkey's prime minister. At the time of the visit, Turkey's economy was in bad shape. A year earlier, in February 2001, the Turkish lira had crashed, losing 50 percent of its value in two months. Interest rates surged and the Turkish banking sector effectively collapsed.<sup>71</sup> Government debt rose to approximately 100 percent of GDP, and the country's economy shrunk by a record 9 percent. Overall, two million Turks lost their jobs. Germany and the United States had stepped in to provide emergency financial help, and an IMF/World Bank bail-out followed, amounting to US\$10 billion in additional credit.

Although Turkey had recovered to some degree by the time of Cheney's visit, the government deficit remained high. In particular, its debt service of US\$28 billion annually put a major burden on government activity.<sup>72</sup> The economic prognosis was that Turkey would remain dependent on international aid throughout 2003 and 2004.<sup>73</sup> Cheney thus proposed to Ecevit that the United States would help Turkey economically and financially in exchange for Turkish political and military support of the US-led Iraq intervention.<sup>74</sup> Ecevit reciprocated positively.<sup>75</sup> But these high-level US-Turkish negotiations occurred just as Ecevit's health was ailing. On July 16, 2002, Ecevit announced his resignation as prime minister and early elections were called for November 3, 2002.<sup>76</sup> These elections swept a new Turkish government into power. The Justice and Development Party (AKP) won two-thirds of the seats in Parliament, resulting in a single-party majority government

<sup>70</sup>Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 112; Bolukbasi, *1 Mart Vakasi*, 26.

<sup>71</sup>Robins, "Confusion," 549.

<sup>72</sup>Brown, "Turkey in the Gulf Wars," 108.

<sup>73</sup>Robins, "Confusion," 549.

<sup>74</sup>William Hale, *Turkey, the US and Iraq* (London: SOAS Press, 2007), 96.

<sup>75</sup>The concrete conditions for Turkish support put on the table by the Ecevit government were as follows: (1) the United States would write off US\$4 billion in Turkish debt and compensate Turkey for the future financial losses that would occur as a result of war; (2) the transfer of military technology from the United States to Turkey would increase; (3) the war would not result in an independent Kurdish state; and (4) the United States would provide continued support for Turkish accession to the European Union (EU), share post-war reconstruction contracts in Iraq, and establish a regular political coordination mechanism between the two governments. The US government's response to these demands was positive. Its only hesitation concerned the exact amount of financial aid Turkey would receive; see Brown, "Turkey in the Gulf Wars," 98.

<sup>76</sup>Sedat Ergin, "The Perfect Crisis Revisited," (private papers used for presentation at the Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, 26 June 2003).

for the first time since 1991.<sup>77</sup> Every other party previously represented in the Parliament was ejected from the chamber.

The AKP had been founded on August 14, 2001, roughly a year before the elections. Most of its membership came from the Welfare Party, which had been banned by the Turkish Constitutional Court in 1998 on the grounds that it advocated for Sharia law.<sup>78</sup> The leader of the AKP was Erdoğan. He was charismatic, driven, and ambitious. He had previously been mayor of Istanbul, and many pundits attributed the AKP victory to his successful leadership of the city. But at the time of the elections, Erdoğan himself was legally banned from standing for election to Parliament. In 1998, he had been convicted of “inciting religious hatred” by reading publicly a poem including the line “the mosques are our barracks, the domes our helmets, the minarets our bayonets and the faithful our soldiers.”<sup>79</sup> Erdoğan was forced to resign as mayor, sentenced to ten months in prison, and banned from electoral politics for life.<sup>80</sup> Given Erdoğan’s ban, Abdullah Gül (his deputy) was appointed prime minister. The plan was that once in power, Gül would lift Erdoğan’s ban. Erdoğan would then run for Parliament in a by-election and in due course take over the premiership.

### **Fractured Social Networks**

Although close collaborators in the AKP, Gül and Erdoğan were quite distinct personalities. Their life trajectories differed significantly, as did their political and social networks in Turkey and abroad. Gül was the founder of the AKP and was considered the party’s chief strategist. He was born in 1950 in Kayseri, a city in Central Anatolia. He studied economics at universities in Istanbul, London, and Exeter (UK) and pursued an academic career until his appointment as economist at the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where he served from 1983–1991.<sup>81</sup>

While in Saudi Arabia, Gül met Yaşar Yakış. At the time of their meeting, Yakış was serving as Turkish ambassador to Saudi Arabia. The two men grew close, and when the AKP won the election in 2002, Gül asked Yakış to serve as the new Turkish foreign minister.<sup>82</sup> Both shared common convictions, especially with regard to Turkish foreign policy. They had spent little time in the United States, knew few Americans personally, and concurred that Turkey’s future lay in Europe and especially in the European Union (EU). As a result, Yakış’ first action as foreign minister was to arrange for visits in various European capitals to introduce the new prime minister and lobby for Turkish accession to the EU.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>77</sup>Cagaptay, “Turks Hesitating.”

<sup>78</sup>The European Court of Justice subsequently upheld the verdict, arguing that Sharia law did not comply with the freedoms granted by the *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*.

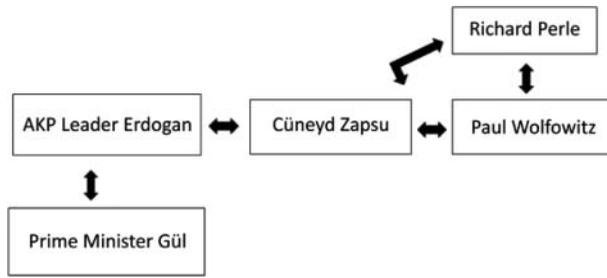
<sup>79</sup>“Turkey’s charismatic pro-Islamic leader,” *BBC News*, 4 November 2002, accessed 4 April 2017, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2270642.stm>.

<sup>80</sup>Hale, *Turkey*, 88.

<sup>81</sup>Michael Rubin, “Green Money, Islamist Politics in Turkey,” *Middle East Quarterly* 12, no.1 (Winter 2005): 13–23.

<sup>82</sup>Yakış, interview.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*



**Figure 3.** Social network structure among top-level US and Turkish officials.

Erdoğan, on the other hand, had good contacts in the United States. In early 2002, prior to the AKP's landslide election, Erdoğan had traveled to the United States to meet influential political players. Cüneyd Zapsu, one of Erdoğan's closest advisors, had prepared the ground for this visit. Zapsu had been a successful Turkish businessman before entering politics. He met Erdoğan when the latter was mayor of Istanbul, helped him gain legitimacy among the Turkish business elite,<sup>84</sup> and connected him with influential international players—connections that Erdoğan previously lacked due to his primarily domestic career trajectory.<sup>85</sup>

Zapsu was impressively well connected. He had served as the chairman of the International Nut and Dried Fruit Council (a world-wide business organization) and was a very active member of the World Economic Forum.<sup>86</sup> In the United States, Zapsu was on the board of directors of the American—Turkish Council (ATC), a powerful Washington institution bringing together key players involved in US-Turkish relations. He had also grown close to Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle<sup>87</sup>—two influential players in the George W. Bush administration and arguably two of the leading proponents of military action in Iraq.<sup>88</sup> Zapsu's relationship with Paul Wolfowitz was so close that he stayed at Wolfowitz's house when visiting Washington, DC.<sup>89</sup> As a result of these social ties, Zapsu was able to arrange for Erdoğan to visit Perle's home in the Washington, DC suburbs in 2002 to discuss with Wolfowitz, Perle, and others how Turkey under his leadership could become a role model for an Islamic democracy.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>84</sup>Can Dunder, "Zapsu, Erdogan ile Yasin El Kadi'yi Evinde Tanistirdi" [Zapsu Introduced Erdogan and Yasin El Kadi at His House], *Milliyet*, 17 July 2006; Goksel Bozkurt, "Cuneyd Zapsu: Gozonundeki Danisman" [Cüneyd Zapsu: An Advisor in the Spotlight], *Hurriyet Daily News*, 30 July 2006.

<sup>85</sup>Zapsu made sure, for instance, that in 2002 Erdoğan was invited to Davos, although Ecevit was still prime minister. See Dunder, "Zapsu."

<sup>86</sup>Bozkurt, "Cuneyd Zapsu."

<sup>87</sup>Yetkin, *Tezkere*.

<sup>88</sup>Wolfowitz and Perle had also been friends since their arrival in DC as students in 1969. They lived a stone's throw away from one another in Chevy Chase; see Jim Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 36.

<sup>89</sup>Dunder, "Zapsu."

<sup>90</sup>Perle had a special and long-standing interest in Turkey, having worked on US-Turkish relations for a long time. As assistant secretary of defense in 1987, he negotiated a deal that made Turkey the third largest recipient of US military aid after Egypt and Israel, and once leaving this office, he served as an important US-Turkish interlocutor via his own public relations firm, International Advisors, Inc.

In summary, when the AKP government was transitioning into power in late 2002, the social network of top-level US and Turkish government officials looked as depicted in [Figure 3](#). It was a fractured network. Zapsu held a bridge (or broker) position—connecting the US and Turkish sides—whereas Prime Minister Gül found himself in an isolated network position. Moreover, Gül’s relationship with Zapsu was much less intimate than Zapsu’s relationship with Erdogan. Zapsu, for instance, made no effort to introduce Gül to his American counterparts.

### ***US—Turkish Bargaining Over Iraq Resumes***

Once the new AKP government took power, the US government quickly tried to resume negotiations over Turkish support for the Iraq intervention. On the US side, the highest-level actors were Paul Wolfowitz in his capacity as deputy secretary of defense and Marc Grossman, who served as under secretary of state for political affairs, the State Department’s third highest ranking official. From a diplomatic viewpoint, the logical new counterpart on the Turkish side would have been Prime Minister Gül and his staff. Gül was the highest-ranking official in the new Turkish government, replacing Ecevit, with whom the United States had negotiated prior to the elections. However, the US government decided otherwise: instead of dealing with Gül, they focused on Erdoğan, despite the latter not officially being a member of the Turkish cabinet (because of his ban from politics) and thus not holding any constitutional powers. This strategic decision on how—and especially with whom—to conduct negotiations was inspired by Zapsu.<sup>91</sup>

### ***Cüneyd Zapsu Promotes Erdogan***

The AKP was a new party that had never before been in power. As a result, even US officials very familiar with Turkey had few (if any) contacts among AKP officials, which now populated the highest echelons of Turkish politics. The one exception was Zapsu. During late 2002 and early 2003, Zapsu consequently became the most centrally located actor in the social network connecting US and Turkish government elites. Zapsu used this position to provide information to the American side suggesting that Erdoğan was the true authority within the AKP; he was the only one able to discipline the party membership and thus capable of delivering Turkish support. Other Turkish actors—including Prime Minister Gül and other high-ranking members of the AKP, such as Speaker of the House Bülent Arınç and Deputy Prime Minister Abdullatif Şener—could *de facto* be ignored. Gül, in particular, was seen to have no opinion or influence of his own, but merely to be standing in for Erdoğan. He, Arınç and Şener were clear subordinates; only what Erdoğan had to say mattered.

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<sup>91</sup>Dundar, “Zapsu.” Brown (2007) suggests that US and Turkish leaders were influenced by US-Turkish negotiations over the Gulf War in 1990–1991. But this would suggest that both parties settle on the Turkish Prime Minister as chief negotiator, as had happened in 1990–91.

It is unclear whether Zapsu had a personal agenda when disseminating these views or if he was simply influenced by his own implicit biases. Did US government officials buy Zapsu's analyses? Yes, they did. Zapsu's standing in the US-Turkish social network was so central that few officials on the US side questioned his interpretation of the situation. His close relationship with Paul Wolfowitz especially led to US officials fully trusting his assessment. Information he provided was only minimally scrutinized; for the most part, it was accepted and uncritically passed along. Furthermore, because of the fractured network structure, US negotiators did not receive (as easily) any other type of high-level information.

### ***Erdoğan Makes Promises***

This US decision to focus on Erdoğan had immediate consequences. On his first visit to Ankara after the elections in early December, Paul Wolfowitz arranged for a dinner at the residence of US Ambassador to Turkey Robert Pearson to meet Erdoğan and three of his closest advisers (one of which was Zapsu) to discuss the Iraq intervention. Gül was not invited, nor were any other officials who actually held posts in the new Turkish cabinet. Neither the Foreign Ministry nor the General Staff of the Turkish Military ever received the official minutes of this meeting; whether or not Gül received the minutes is still unclear. Nevertheless, it appears that Wolfowitz left the dinner party with the understanding that the new Turkish government had approved a Northern Front via Turkey.<sup>92</sup>

To make the approval concrete, Wolfowitz invited Erdoğan to meet President Bush at the White House on December 10, 2002.<sup>93</sup> Extending such an invitation to Erdoğan rather than the actual sitting prime minister was again—in diplomatic terms—an astounding move, as it elevated the stature of the AKP chief above that of the Turkish prime minister. Some US diplomats voiced their opposition to the invitation. Pearson recalled in a personal interview, for instance, that “it was only normal that such [an] act would disgruntle Gül.”<sup>94</sup> Why it happened was again the result of Zapsu's central position in the fractured social network that connected the bargaining actors: Zapsu had arranged with his friend Perle to invite Erdoğan to the White House.<sup>95</sup> The American side took away from this meeting once more that Erdoğan would give his full political support to the US invasion.<sup>96</sup>

To settle on the precise technical details of the cooperation agreement, the two parties determined that day to initiate multi-track diplomacy—military to military negotiations regarding the force deployment and civilian negotiations on an adequate compensation package for Turkey. As a result, a larger number of

<sup>92</sup>Ergin, “Perfect Crisis Revisited.”

<sup>93</sup>Murat Yetkin, “Erdoğan'ın İkinci Abd Çıkarması” [Erdoğan's Second US Visit], *Radikal*, 25 January 2004.

<sup>94</sup>Robert Pearson, interviewed by Marina E. Henke via phone, September 2014. See also Ergin, “Pazarlık Başlıyor” [Negotiations Start], *Hürriyet*, 19 September 2003.

<sup>95</sup>Yetkin, *Tezkere*; Nuriye Akman, “Röportaj Cüneyd Zapsu Kurt Ve Rumeli Kimliğimle Ovunuyorum” [Interview with Cüneyd Zapsu: I Am Proud of My Kurdish and Rumelian Identity], *Zaman*, 25 May 2004.

<sup>96</sup>Hale, *Turkey*, 103.

interlocutors would from now on be involved in the negotiations, among them on the Turkish side, Prime Minister Gül, Foreign Minister Yakaş, and representatives of the Turkish military. The Turkish negotiation team was headed by Ambassador Deniz Bölükbaşı, who would oversee the practical details of the negotiation. His US counterpart was Marisa Lino, who was assisted by a wide range of US officials hailing from the State Department, the Treasury Department, and all the branches of the US military. Nevertheless, high-level back-channel diplomacy with Erdoğan through Zapsu would also continue.<sup>97</sup> The US side expected to conclude the negotiations as rapidly as possible. They saw no serious obstacles to an agreement.<sup>98</sup>

### **Gül Complains**

Despite efforts to keep information flowing among all the new parties involved in the negotiations, discrepancies among these different channels soon emerged. Gül, in particular, quickly developed a severe distaste for the way the negotiations were proceeding. Not only had he not been invited to Washington, he now felt excluded from key aspects of the negotiations that were being handled by Erdoğan and Zapsu via back-channel diplomacy.<sup>99</sup> Gül informed his US interlocutors on at least one occasion that these back channels might mislead Washington.<sup>100</sup> But US negotiators ignored these early complaints, most likely because Zapsu maintained that Gül was not important to the success of the negotiations. It was Erdoğan who would and could deliver the agreement.

In mid-January, Gül's anger increased when he received a letter from President Bush stating that the Turkish government had three days to decide on its position on Iraq. Any failure to cooperate would have decisive and negative repercussions for the US-Turkish strategic partnership.<sup>101</sup> On January 16, Gül replied tepidly that the Turkish Parliament had the last word in any decision regarding a Northern Front, no matter what had been said in back-channel negotiations. Indeed, Article 92 of the Turkish Constitution required that "declaring war, sending forces abroad and receiving foreign forces on Turkish soil"—except when required by NATO commitments—had to be authorized by the Turkish legislative body.<sup>102</sup> Nevertheless, Gül also hinted in his response that he was willing to help pass a parliamentary motion if two conditions were met: (1) a UN resolution would be passed to authorize the invasion; and (2) the United States would put its diplomatic weight behind an easing of conditions on Turkey regarding the Cyprus resolution package that had been negotiated by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.<sup>103</sup> In other

<sup>97</sup>Ergin, "Perfect Crisis Revisited."

<sup>98</sup>Bolukbasi, *1 Mart Vakasi*, 34.

<sup>99</sup>Dundar, "Zapsu."

<sup>100</sup>Ergin, "Perfect Crisis Revisited."

<sup>101</sup>Sedat Ergin, "Size üç gün yoksa kötü olur" [You have 3 days or else], *Hürriyet*, 20 September 2003.

<sup>102</sup>Robins, "Confusion," 560.

<sup>103</sup>In 1999, UN Secretary-General Annan proposed a plan to reunite the two parts of Cyprus. The proposal suggested the establishment of a federation of the two states. The proposal asked for important concessions from Turkey.

words, Gül proposed an issue-linkage of his own: Turkish parliamentary support in exchange for leeway on the Cyprus issue.<sup>104</sup>

Bush's reply to the proposal disappointed Gül; Bush argued that the Northern Cyprus package was fully adequate and refused to address Gül's demands.<sup>105</sup> For Gül, that was the last straw. He was fed up with the US side. To signal his discontentment, he embarked on a tour of the Middle East to rally other countries to his cause<sup>106</sup> and invited the Iraqi vice president, Taha Yasin Ramazan, to Ankara for economic negotiations in early February 2003.<sup>107</sup> In Turkey, Gül arranged that a motion allowing the United States to modernize Turkish military bases and other infrastructure would be split from the actual parliamentary approval of US-Turkish cooperation on Iraq.<sup>108</sup>

Shortly after passage of the motion, Vice President Cheney called Gül, livid about the split of the two votes. He and the US negotiating team had still not realized how their focus on Erdoğan and Zapsu was producing counterproductive results.<sup>109</sup> Because of the fractured nature of the US-Turkish network, and especially Gül's isolated position in the network, earlier warnings by Gül were dismissed and courses of action—even those that produced undesired results such as Gül's tour of the Middle East—were not reexamined. The Americans still firmly believed Zapsu's account of how the negotiations would unfold. Because of his central position in the network, Zapsu was more easily trusted. All indications that disputed Zapsu's analysis were ignored.

As a result of this misplaced faith in Zapsu, Cheney kept pushing Gül to comply with US demands. He even imposed another ultimatum: the Turkish Parliament must decide whether US troops could transit Turkish territory on their way to Iraq by February 12 or the US would consider abandoning the Northern Front and all benefits promised to Turkey would disappear.<sup>110</sup> Deputy Secretary of State Elizabeth Jones added to this threat during her visit to Ankara in mid-February 2003 by suggesting to Gül that if Turkey denied its support, the United States would “ruin [Turkey's] economy.”<sup>111</sup>

<sup>104</sup>Yakış, interview. Solving the Cyprus issue had indeed been a key priority for Gül personally, because he considered the conflict a major obstacle for Turkey's entry into the European Union. By linking Cyprus to Iraq, he wanted the United States government to rein in the strong Cypriot lobby in the US Congress.

<sup>105</sup>Pearson, interview. It is likely that Bush's attitude toward Gül's demands was again influenced by Zapsu and, relatedly, Wolfowitz and Perle. All three of them maintained the position that Gül could be ignored.

<sup>106</sup>Ahmet Sever, *Abdullah Gul İle 12 Yil—Yasadım, Gordum, Yazdım* [12 Years with Abdullah Gül—What I Lived, Saw, Wrote] (Istanbul: Dogan Kitap, 2015), 38.

<sup>107</sup>*Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>108</sup>The modernization of infrastructure in Turkey deemed necessary for the US intervention required the arrival of American personnel, which in turn, under Turkish law, required approval by the Turkish Parliament. The landing of US combat forces *en route* to Iraq and the deployment of their support units in Turkey also required the approval of the Turkish Parliament. The US government wanted Turkey to merge these two issues and pass one motion granting broad permission for US-Turkish cooperation on the Iraq invasion from the Turkish legislative chamber, which would have cleared all the constitutional requirements for the Northern Front.

<sup>109</sup>Marc Grossman, interviewed by Marina Henke, Washington, DC, September 2014; Pearson, interview.

<sup>110</sup>Sedat Ergin, “Biz gemide askerler var sanyorduk, meğer yokmuş” [We thought there was infantry on the ships, but it turned out there wasn't], *Hurriyet*, 22 September 2003; Bolukbasi, *1 Mart Vakasi*, 30; Kapsis, “Failure,” 34–35.

<sup>111</sup>Sever, *Abdullah Gul İle 12 Yil*, 42.

Gül was not impressed. February 12 came and went, and he made no move to put forward a new motion authorizing transit of US troops through Turkish territory. By this time, approximately thirty ships transporting nearly seventy-two hundred vehicles (80 percent of the US Army's 4th Division's equipment) and nearly thirty-five thousand soldiers were idling off the Turkish coast waiting for permission to dock in Turkey, at a cost of US\$1.5 million per day.<sup>112</sup> Despite Gül's refusal to put forward the motion, the ships remained in place.<sup>113</sup> Did this mean that the United States not only wanted a Northern Front, but absolutely needed it? Was Turkey truly indispensable to US war plans? If so, Gül and his advisers realized, Turkey's bargaining power was almost infinite. Gül then determined that a special delegation led by his confidant Yakış would visit Washington for new talks with the US side on February 13–14, 2003. Gül's objective was to increase the size of the compensation package that US and Turkish officials were in the process of hammering out and get a stake in the negotiations that thus far had been dominated on the Turkish side by Erdoğan and Zapsu.

### ***Renegotiating the Details of the Side-Payments***

By February 2003, three US-Turkish working groups under the stewardship of Bölükbaşı and Lino were in the process of negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of over eighty pages. The working group on military issues focused primarily on the rules of engagement of US troops while on Turkish soil. The working group on political issues dealt with Turkish political demands, such as preserving the territorial integrity of Iraq in the aftermath of the intervention. The working group on economic issues dealt with compensation for Turkey. The package on the table included a US\$4 billion dollar grant to be passed by US Congress with National Security Priority status, which simplifies and accelerates congressional approval procedures. This grant could be transformed into a US\$34 billion loan, US\$8.5 billion of which would be available immediately. The loan would have to be repaid over fifteen years at an interest rate of 6.25 percent with no installments due for the first four years.<sup>114</sup> In addition, the United States would give Turkey US\$2 billion in military aid and spend US\$250 million on upgrades to Turkish military bases. The United States also offered Turkey a range of additional economic sweeteners: it would add specific Turkish products (such as gold and other valuable gems) into its Generalized System of Preferences (GSP); the White House would ask Congress with National Security Priority status to open qualified industrial zones inside Turkey that would be able to export to the United States without any limitations; and the United States would help Turkey obtain US\$1 billion dollar worth of oil from its oil-producing allies in the region.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>112</sup>Hale, *Turkey*, 108; Ergin, "Biz gemide askerler."

<sup>113</sup>Kapsis, "Failure," 34–35.

<sup>114</sup>At the time, Turkey was paying an interest rate of 10.5 percent on regular markets.

<sup>115</sup>Bolukbasi, *1 Mart Vakasi*, 69–73.

The group Gül sent to Washington in mid-February was directed to up the ante. The new offer that the delegation put on the table amounted to US\$9 billion in aid instead of the negotiated US\$4 billion.<sup>116</sup> This new sum had been calculated as follows: during the Gulf War, which lasted two years, Turkey had suffered economic losses of US\$18 billion. As a result, Turkey wanted US\$9 billion to compensate for losses it expected to incur during the first year of the Iraq War.<sup>117</sup>

Headed by Yakış, the group was received at the White House by President Bush, National Security Adviser Rice, Vice President Cheney, and Secretary of State Powell. Yakış presented the new Turkish demands, but Bush refused to engage. He allegedly said in response to the new proposal: “I come from Texas and there are horse traders—they strip you down to the last shirt. The offer on the table is the last word.”<sup>118</sup> His consternation with the new Turkish offer resulted again in part from a distorted US interpretation of what was happening inside Turkey and Gül’s position in particular. Based on information provided predominately by Zapsu, Bush’s advisers did not believe it necessary to take Gül and his team seriously—his negotiation demands could be ignored. Consequently, in a deliberate attempt to delegitimize Gül’s proposal, US negotiators leaked details about it to the press. The US media picked up the sum of US\$92 billion as the new Turkish demand and started to depict Turkey as an outrageously greedy haggler.<sup>119</sup>

Sensing that the negotiations were about to fail, Powell invited Yakış’ team to his house in the DC suburbs on Sunday morning for a last-ditch effort to find a compromise; Grossman and Wolfowitz were also present.<sup>120</sup> But this effort was still unable to bridge the gap. The Turkish team was unwilling to budge, and the US team did not believe that Gül’s threat to walk away from the negotiations was real. Erdoğan and Zapsu continued to confirm via back channels their resolute support for the agreement. Because of their biases, US negotiators listened to Erdoğan and Zapsu and ignored Gül, who—in their eyes—was a less trustworthy negotiator. He was an isolated actor in the US-Turkish social network. As a result, US officials were unwilling to meet Gül’s demands, and the agreement remained largely as it had been negotiated by Bölükbaşı and his team.<sup>121</sup> The Yakış’ team was disillusioned not only by the failure of negotiations, but also by how their mission had been interpreted by the media. Yakış later mentioned in our interview

<sup>116</sup>Yakış, interview.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid.

<sup>118</sup>Ibid.

<sup>119</sup>The sum of US\$92 billion was the estimate of a Turkish taskforce created to forecast the effects of the war. The team thought of a scenario of five years and calculated the totality of costs including losses in trade, tourism, military spending, etc. The US\$92 billion was the collective sum of all these costs. See Yetkin, *Tezkere*. Wolford suggests that the negotiations failed because the United States was not willing to pay Turkey what it wanted. Wolford argues that US officials “were divided on the military necessity of a second front, especially as the Iraqi military had weakened significantly since the end of the last war.” See Scott Wolford, *The Politics of Military Coalitions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 90. I disagree with this analysis of events. The US side was being fed information by Zapsu that the new Turkish offer should not be taken seriously.

<sup>120</sup>Grossman, interview.

<sup>121</sup>Brown, “Turkey in the Gulf Wars,” 99.

that his visit to Washington, DC had been the decisive moment. His commitment to negotiating in DC had been real. “If the U.S. had been more forthcoming it would have changed things.”<sup>122</sup>

### **Final Countdown**

Shortly after the trip to Washington, on February 24, Prime Minister Gül called for a cabinet meeting to make a final decision as to whether Turkey should support the Iraq intervention. Because Erdoğan was not a member of the cabinet, he did not attend. According to various meeting participants, the atmosphere was tense; it was the first time that those in support of the intervention and those against it openly and directly clashed. Gül took the first step by stating: “I have been in communication with the [AKP] party and the mood there is troubled. Our friends there are troubled about the subject [of Iraq].”<sup>123</sup> Yakaş continued “More than half of the Cabinet members openly oppose the motion. Our job [to pass it] seems difficult.” Cemil Çiçek, the minister of justice, then replied: “It [indeed] seems so. Also the [prime minister] seems to want the motion to be denied.”<sup>124</sup> This latter statement was arguably the most truthful. Gül was indeed against the deal—nevertheless, he tried (to a certain degree) to hide his stern opposition behind the opposition of others. Once these statements were made, a heated debate erupted that lasted over six hours. In the end, the cabinet was incapable of reaching a conclusion and Gül decided to leave it up to Parliament to decide.<sup>125</sup>

Gül’s newly revealed determination to oppose the motion surprised and frightened many participants who were loyal to Erdoğan. They informed him, and he immediately called Gül, asking him to arrange another cabinet meeting at his residence that same night. The meeting started at 11:00 p.m. and continued until 3:00 a.m. All ministers were again present in addition to Zapsu, Ömer Çelik, Erdoğan’s chief political advisors, and Gül’s chief of staff, Ahmet Davutoğlu.<sup>126</sup> The meeting was again intense and conflictual. Çelik and Davutoğlu argued heatedly. Davutoğlu did not want the motion to pass and suggested that “democratic proceedings” would give Turkey an excuse to refuse the motion.<sup>127</sup> Çelik rebutted that this argument would not hold, as Turkey did not have as clear a “separation of powers” as the United States. If a Turkish government wanted to pass something, it could.<sup>128</sup> Zapsu tried very hard to convince Gül and his team to let the motion pass and was apparently in constant conversation with Wolfowitz via telephone.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>122</sup>Yakaş, interview.

<sup>123</sup>Ergin, “Tezkere,” *Hurriyet*, 22 September 2003, accessed 4 April 2017, [www.hurriyet.com.tr/tezkere-akpyi-catlatti-173002](http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/tezkere-akpyi-catlatti-173002).

<sup>124</sup>Sever, *Abdullah Gul Ile 12 Yil*, 45.

<sup>125</sup>Yakaş, interview.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid.

<sup>127</sup>Sever, *Abdullah Gul Ile 12 Yil*, 43.

<sup>128</sup>Ergin, “Tezkere.”

<sup>129</sup>Sever, *Abdullah Gul Ile 12 Yil*, 43.

The meeting came as a shock to Erdoğan, who had underestimated the disagreements inside the AKP government and especially between himself and Gül. He then embarked on a last-ditch lobbying campaign to gather the necessary votes in Parliament regardless of the position of Gül and the rest of the AKP leadership. Initially, Gül had scheduled the vote for Tuesday—the next day. But this did not give Erdoğan enough time for his lobbying efforts, so he pushed Gül for a delay. Gül agreed to delay the vote until Wednesday, but Erdoğan argued that the opinion of the National Security Council, which held its monthly meeting on Friday, had to be taken into account.<sup>130</sup> Finally, an agreement was reached that the vote would take place on Saturday.<sup>131</sup>

While Erdoğan lobbied in support of the Iraq motion, Gül did not remain idle. Three days before the vote, he instructed officials at the Turkish Foreign Office to prepare a comparative report of all political, economic, and military consequences for Turkey of both the motion's passage and failure. The report was then distributed to all AKP MPs, possibly in an attempt to convince them that a failed vote had fewer negative consequences than they might have anticipated.<sup>132</sup> In addition, Uğur Ziyal, under secretary for political affairs in the Foreign Ministry, was instructed to communicate once more to the US side that they should not place too much importance on information received from Zapsu and other informal sources. Rather, they should listen to what the government and the foreign minister were saying: "the motion might actually not pass."<sup>133</sup> Gül also held a meeting the night before the vote during which his chief of staff, Davutoğlu, tried to convince various ministers not to support the motion. "Brother, please insist on your views," he reportedly said, "let's not enter Iraq."<sup>134</sup> Whether Gül himself actively lobbied AKP deputies to reject the motion is unclear. His closest collaborators certainly did.

### Day of the Vote

On March 1, 2003—the day of the vote—Erdoğan asked for a party group meeting early in the morning. He had done all the lobbying he could; now it was decision

<sup>130</sup>Traditionally, Turkey's key national security decisions have been made by the country's National Security Council, which was long controlled by the Turkish General Staff. But due to recent political reforms, by March 2003 the army no longer held the majority of the council's seats.

<sup>131</sup>The military leadership was annoyed about being involved in Erdoğan's strategy for saving the vote. It had already issued its recommendation to the government at the end of January and perceived this as a maneuver by Erdoğan to put the political responsibility for the motion onto its shoulders. Erdoğan had asked for a public statement supporting the motion. The statement did not materialize. It is unclear whether the civilians or the military refused to issue the statement. Those who attended the meeting have hinted that the civilian leadership did not even propose that the military officials issue a statement (Deniz Bölükbaşı, interviewed by Marina E. Henke, Ankara, 23 June 2014; Yakış, interview). Furthermore, the chief of the Turkish military staff, Hilmi Özkök, confirmed in an email that he was indeed in favor of passage (Hilmi Özkök, email message to Marina E. Henke, 6 July 2014). See also Yetkin, *Tezkere*.

<sup>132</sup>Sever, *Abdullah Gul Ile 12 Yil*, 42.

<sup>133</sup>*Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>134</sup>"1 Mart tezkeresinde Davutoğlu elime sarılıp 'Abi ne olur Irak'a girmeyelim' dedi" [For the March 1 motion, Davutoğlu grabbed my hand and said 'Brother, please let's not enter Iraq], *T24 online newspaper*, citing Yalçınbayır's interview with *Ozgur Dusunce Newspaper*, accessed 4 April 2017, <http://t24.com.tr/haber/1-mart-tezkeresinde-davutoglu-elime-sarilip-abi-ne-olur-iraka-girmeyelim-dedi,327569>.

time. As a final test of the waters, Erdoğan called for a straw poll of all AKP deputies, distributing a piece of paper on which each AKP MP could indicate whether he or she would vote in favor of or against the motion.<sup>135</sup> The straw poll's results looked promising. Erdoğan's intense lobbying apparently showed the desired results. Only fifty deputies signaled that they would oppose the measure.<sup>136</sup>

So Erdoğan approved bringing the motion to the floor of the parliament. He needed 271 AKP votes to pass it. He did not enforce party discipline or call for an open vote,<sup>137</sup> either of which would have limited the number of defections. His reasons for not doing so are still unclear, but most likely he wanted to avoid a public display of a high-profile defection inside the AKP.<sup>138</sup> He knew that Gül would vote against the motion even if party discipline was invoked, which would send a signal to the Turkish public that he, the party leader, was weak and unable to enforce party cohesion.<sup>139</sup> The vote was preceded by a public debate in Parliament. Bölükbaşı and his deputy Ziyal, who had negotiated the MOU, had been invited specifically to brief the MPs on the US-Turkish agreement, including all the economic sweeteners that Turkey would receive in return for passing the motion.<sup>140</sup> Both ambassadors had prepared elaborate presentations. But Speaker of the Parliament Arınç, who was closer to Gül than to Erdoğan, refused to give them the floor. They were dumbfounded.<sup>141</sup> Debate was dominated by speakers opposing the motion. All those voicing support were cut short. It was an orchestrated show, a deliberate piece of theater. The final tally of the vote read 264 in favor and 250 against, with 19 abstentions. A vote of 267 in favor was required for passage. It came very close,<sup>142</sup> but the vote failed. Gül had won.

### Case Study Assessment

There is no doubt that US-Turkish social networks during the negotiations over Iraq were fractured. Erdoğan's adviser Zapsu was the most centrally located actor and served as a network broker. He was deeply socially embedded with key negotiators on the US side and thus considered a trustworthy and friendly operator. Once the AKP party swept into power, he played a central role in transmitting information between the two sides. But his own biases quickly tainted the information flow, notably with regard to the role Gül would play in the bargaining process. Zapsu's interpretation of who held power in Turkey (Erdoğan, not Gül) and the US side's complete and uncritical acceptance of this interpretation led to

<sup>135</sup>Yakış, interview.

<sup>136</sup>Kapsis, "Failure," 39.

<sup>137</sup>Brown, "Turkey in the Gulf Wars," 101; Kapsis, "Failure," 39.

<sup>138</sup>Yakış, interview.

<sup>139</sup>Kapsis, "Failure," 40. The transcript of the vote is still classified, despite a motion put forward in Parliament in 2013 asking for public release. People speculate that Gül still does not want to admit that he voted against the motion.

<sup>140</sup>The content of the MOU had been kept secret, and many of the MPs did not know anything about it.

<sup>141</sup>Bölükbaşı, interview.

<sup>142</sup>Initially, the MPs thought the motion had indeed passed, given that a majority of the votes had been cast in favor of it. Speaker Arınç then, however, announced that according to the rules of the parliament, a qualified majority had not been reached.

Erdogan's— and not Gül's— invitation to the White House in December 2002. Furthermore, the United States did not adjust its bargaining strategy, despite Gül's direct appeals and actions in January and February 2003, but continued to trust Zapsu, who kept confirming that Gül could be ignored. Gül's isolated network position provides a credible explanation for such behavior. US negotiators trusted Zapsu, with whom they were intimately familiar, and distrusted Gül, whom they barely knew. In the end, Gül's dissatisfaction with the deal led to his refusal to support the motion in the Turkish Parliament, which contributed to its failure.

The accumulated evidence also suggests that alternative explanations, while not invalid, cannot explain US-Turkish bargaining failure to the same degree. Public opinion concerns were hardly discussed among high-level AKP officials in the run up to the vote. Nevertheless, it is likely that Gül and his collaborators felt comforted by the fact that public opinion supported their stance on Iraq. Moreover, the military vote was used by Erdogan to extend the time he had to lobby AKP officials to support the motion, but it was never perceived by the AKP leadership as a decisive act influencing the vote. Also, while conservative AKP officials did oppose the March 1 motion in larger numbers than their moderate counterparts, ideology alone is insufficient to explain the parliamentary split in its entirety.<sup>143</sup> Instead, much of the disunion transcended from the split between Gül and Erdoğan. Erdoğan intensively lobbied in favor of the motion while Gül made his dissatisfaction with the deal known among AKP officials and—at a minimum—his collaborators discouraged other AKP officials from consenting to it. This latter fact also contradicts accounts that suggest that Erdogan did not pressure AKP deputies to vote in favor of the motion because he was anxious to win the Siirte by-elections and the subsequent AKP parliamentary vote to confirm him as prime minister. To the contrary: Erdogan desperately wanted this deal to pass, and he was privately furious when the motion failed.<sup>144</sup>

## Implications

The failure of US-Turkish side-payment bargaining over Iraq was costly—some scholars even call it devastating.<sup>145</sup> While its impact on the looting of Baghdad and the emergence of a Sunni insurgency in cities like Fallujah, Tikrit, and Ramadi is hard to determine, one outcome is certain: the bargaining failure dramatically changed the US-Turkish relationship with results that are still present

<sup>143</sup>These conservative MPs did, however, strongly support Gül. It is because of them that Bölükbaşı and his deputy Ziyal were not allowed to brief the MPs on the content of the compensation package.

<sup>144</sup>Media reports have also mentioned that Massoud Barzani, the president of the Kurdish regional government, influenced Kurdish members of the AKP to vote against the motion. But during my field research, I did not come across any evidence that this influence was decisive. If the AKP leadership had stood united behind the March 1 motion, it is unlikely that Kurdish AKP MPs would have voted against it, despite Barzani's lobbying attempts. Many Kurdish AKP MPs had received generous help from the AKP leadership during the election campaign, and consequently their loyalties were often with the AKP rather than Barzani.

<sup>145</sup>Robert J. Dillard, "When Aid Fails: The Unsuccessful US Attempt to Coerce Turkey Through Aid Prior to the 2003 Invasion of Iraq," *Alternatives: Turkish Journal Of International Relations* 12, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 43.

today. Thus, the failure of US-Turkish negotiations over Iraq warrants detailed academic attention in an attempt to understand what mistakes were made and whether these mistakes follow a systematic pattern. This article took on this challenge. Using original testimonies of key US and Turkish negotiators, it traced in detail how the negotiation process unfolded. The analysis revealed that social embeddedness had a major bearing on the outcome. The level of social embeddedness of the individuals involved in the negotiation process varied greatly. Erdoğan's advisor Zapsu was closely connected with the US side while Gül held an isolated network position. These fractures in the US-Turkish network had an impact: instead of dealing with Gül as the point person of the negotiation effort after the AKP election victory in November 2002, the US team turned to Erdoğan. Influenced by Zapsu's interpretation of who possessed power in the new AKP government, a consensus emerged among US officials that Erdoğan was the one to deliver what they wanted. This consensus, however, was misguided, the result of flawed information and misplaced trust. It led the US side to ignore Gül. Only recently, in hindsight, have some US officials come to this realization. Ambassador Grossman, for example, concluded in our interview: "It was a big mistake to have accepted Zapsu as the primary interlocutor. It was a mistake from the Turkish side as well as the US side. In the end, Zapsu was not able to move the Turkish bureaucracy."<sup>146</sup>

The US-Turkish case of side-payment bargaining failure thus serves as a first step in building theory on the micro-foundations of side-payment negotiations— theory that explains how these types of negotiations unfold and what factors influence bargain success or failure. Currently, we know very little about these processes. This case teaches us about the impact of social embeddedness on side-payment negotiation outcomes.

Social relationships arguably influence any type of international negotiation,<sup>147</sup> but their impact might be more powerful on side-payment negotiations, which differ from more conventional international bargaining in several ways. First, on most occasions side-payments are negotiated in secret, because states try to avoid the impression that "they have paid a ransom or accepted a bribe" in exchange for a certain policy decision.<sup>148</sup> Second, side-payment negotiations usually involve only a very small number of actors out of fear that information might be leaked. Third, many side-payment agreements remain informal or even implicit, lacking the underpinning of legal contracts.<sup>149</sup> These three distinct features make the usage

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<sup>146</sup>Grossman, interview.

<sup>147</sup>See Heidi Hardt, *Time to React: The Efficiency of International Organizations in Crisis Response* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Paul K. Macdonald, *Networks of Domination: The Social Foundations of Peripheral Conquest in International Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Stacie E. Goddard, "Brokering Peace: Networks, Legitimacy, and the Northern Ireland Peace Process," *International Studies Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (June 2012): 501–515.

<sup>148</sup>Morgan, "Issue Linkages," 329.

<sup>149</sup>Paul W. Thurner and Eric Linhart, "Political Multilevel Negotiations and Issue Linkage During an EU Intergovernmental Conference: An Empirical Application," *Computational & Mathematical Organization Theory* 10, no. 3 (November 2004): 243–66.

of social embeddedness as a bargaining tool more likely given their undeniable advantages, including improved access to private information and trust, which leads to more credible commitments. As this article has shown, however, an uncritical reliance on social ties can also create dilemmas, especially when the social networks that englobe the bargaining actors are fractured. Social embeddedness can then become a competency trap.<sup>150</sup> Actors involved in the negotiation process become overly reliant on the information gathered through their personal connections, leading to informational asymmetries, misplaced trust, and thus potentially to bargaining failure.

In addition to highlighting the micro-processes of side-payment negotiations, the findings of this article also add to the academic literature on multilateral military coalition-building. Most existing research on this topic has pointed to state preferences and systemic factors (such as hierarchy) to explain why states join US-led coalitions.<sup>151</sup> This article, however, suggests that how the coalition-building process unfolds (such as which actors lead the negotiations and how the negotiations are structured) can also have a critical impact on whether states decide to follow a US lead. Moreover, we learn about the potential pitfalls of social networks. The focus of most of the existing IR scholarship on social networks has thus far been on the largely positive effects of social network connections.<sup>152</sup> Very little research exists on the circumstances under which social relationships can turn into competency traps affecting international outcomes.<sup>153</sup> Finally, from an empirical point of view, the findings of this article contain important policy recommendations. US diplomats conduct side-payment negotiations on a regular basis. This article suggests that they need to be fully aware of the social network structures in which they are embedded—both to reap the benefits these social structures can provide and to avoid potential dangers—notably the distortion of information flows and the misplacement of trust.

<sup>150</sup>Bruce G. Carruthers and Sarah L. Babb, *Economy/Society: Markets, Meanings, and Social Structure* (Newbury Park, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2000), 52.

<sup>151</sup>On state preferences, see works such as Patricia A. Weitsman, *Waging War: Alliances, Coalitions, and Institutions of Interstate Violence* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014); Jason W. Davidson, *America's Allies and War: Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Andrew Bennett, Joseph Leggold, and Danny Unger, *Friends in Need: Burden Sharing in the Persian Gulf War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Daniel F. Baltrusaitis, *Coalition Politics and the Iraq War* (Boulder: First Forum Press, 2009); Atsushi Tago, "Why Do States Join US-Led Military Coalitions?: The Compulsion of the Coalition's Missions and Legitimacy," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 7, no. 2 (May 2007): 179–202. On hierarchy, see David A. Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

<sup>152</sup>For an overview of social network theory, see Hafner-Burton, Kahler, and Montgomery, "Network Analysis for International Relations," 559–92. Examples of positive network effects are Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (October 1998): 887–917; Goddard, "Brokering Peace," 501–515; and Han Dorussen and Hugh Ward, "Intergovernmental Organizations and the Kantian Peace: A Network Perspective," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52, no. 2 (April 2008): 189–212. An example of research that highlights the negative effects of social networks is Emilie M. Hafner-Burton and Alexander H. Montgomery, "War, Trade, and Distrust: Why Trade Agreements Don't Always Keep the Peace," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 29, no. 3 (July 2012): 257–78.

<sup>153</sup>A notable exception is Cooley and Nexon, "Interpersonal Networks."

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