

ABSTRACT

The puzzle in the Turkish Foreign Policy decision-making process: Beyond the nexus of continuities and changes

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This dissertation analyses the puzzle over the nexus of *continuity* and *change* in the Turkish foreign policy decision-making process. It aims to demonstrate that in Turkey's case what seems to best explain the changing patterns in the country's foreign orientations are the so-called *adjustment* changes in its foreign policy outlook. This study seeks to address two interrelated research questions. The first research question is highly related to the complexity behind the nexus of consistency and inconsistency and to what extent changes in the country's foreign policy direction are *radical* or a product of *adjustment changes*. The second research question is related to how an interplay of interrelated variables can provide an insightful explanation regarding Turkey's convergences and divergences with states in high and low political salience issues. This study uses two decision models, the prominent 'Two-Level Games' introduced by Putnam, and a more recent model, the very well-known Poliheuristic theory introduced by Mintz, to demonstrate how the interplay of the individual, domestic and international component acts as a vehicle in Turkey's foreign policy decisions. To address that question, this study applies the core premises of the above-mentioned models to three Turkish foreign policy decisions – Operation Peace Spring, S-400 deal, and the TurkStream Agreement whose analysis will delineate how the leader's cognitive traits, the interference of the domestic constituents and the international developments are the determinant components of Turkey's foreign policy decisions. This study suggests that a fusion of these three components provides a more holistic overview when analysing what triggers the *adjustment changes* in Turkey's foreign outlook.

Keywords: Turkish foreign policy decision-making process, 'Two-Level-Games', Poliheuristic theory, adjustment changes, AKP, OPS, S-400 deal, Turkstream agreement