

THE ROLE OF IDEAS IN COALITION FOREIGN POLICYMAKING: TURKEY AS AN EXAMPLE, 1991-2002

BY BINNUR OZKECECI-TANER

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the role of *institutionalized political ideas* on foreign policy choices by comparing twelve cases under four different coalition governments. The theoretical framework advanced in this project calls for three interrelated steps to be taken in examining the relationship between political ideas and foreign policy: 1) a clear conceptualization of political ideas, 2) a careful analysis of the institutionalization of these ideas, and 3) a methodological exploration of the *discord* among political actors that represent them. The framework proposes that “coalition governments” present a potential venue for analyzing and operationalizing how the ‘battles of ideas’ at the decision-making level affect foreign policy. The dissertation finds that *institutionalized political ideas* are highly influential in shaping foreign policy choices in coalition government settings when several conditions are met. These conditions are categorized in three subheadings: 1) reasons to enter into coalition governments, 2) nature of coalition governments, and 3) characteristics of parties. The findings of this dissertation contribute to the following literatures: 1) general IR literature on the role of ideas by a) specifying some of the *necessary* conditions for ideational influence on state action and b) providing a partial answer to how Constructivism can generate actor-specific theories; 2) general Foreign Policy Analysis literature by a) using the ‘operational code’ construct in specifying and examining how political groups such as parties with different ‘operational codes’ engage in policymaking and b) proposing ways to enhance the predictive power of ‘decision-units’ model, especially with regard to ‘coalition of autonomous actors’; and 3) general comparative politics literature by a) filling an important gap in the coalition politics literature by focusing on *policymaking* and b) offering new ways to measure *policy distance* among coalition partners. The dissertation also contributes to general literature on Turkish politics by entering theory and coalition policymaking in Turkish Foreign Policy, arguing that Turkish political parties, in fact, are important actors in foreign policymaking and examining some of the previously unexamined Turkish foreign policy decisions.