From Fall 2015 to Spring 2016, 15 PhD candidates defended their theses and received a PhD degree from our Faculty. In this issue of the FEAS E-Research Bulletin, we acknowledge these new PhDs and provide the abstracts of their doctoral theses along with the names of their advisors and co-advisors. The doctoral theses in full can be reached from the METU Library.

I kindly acknowledge the assistance of the Director of Graduate School of Social Sciences Prof. Dr. Tülin Gençöz, the associate dean of our faculty Prof. Dr. Meltem Dayıoğlu, and our assistant Utku Havuç in this issue’s publication. Our research bulletins are available three times a year. We hope that they help inform the faculty members of the research taking place at FEAS and thereby, foster cooperation and joint-work among faculty members.

Prof. Dr. Özlem Özdemir
FEAS Dean
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Abstract: International Relations is dominated by Western’s (Euro-American) enterprise on theories, methods, praxes and narratives. In order to have a more inclusive and truly globalized IR, it has to substantially acknowledge diversity of existence, stories, voices, realities, cosmologies, and locally produced knowledge systems particularly from non-Western or Global South societies. Calls for reexamination and rethinking of its traditions of thoughts so as to accommodate changes and new issues in the international system are highly needed. One of its explorations is the call for the possibility of doing an Islamic theorizing about IR. Four steps were provided. First is to set up the background for generally identifying relations among religion & IR, and of Islam & IR. Second is to analyze one of the unit of analyses of IR, i.e. the nation-state. Its elements and constitutional cases are explored and provided the counterpart understandings of Muslim governance. Third is a further discussion of the element on authority by selecting four distinct Muslim scholars and decipher their conceptions on ruling in Muslim thought. The last step is assessing a practical case of a contemporary Muslim society in congruence with the analyses of previous steps. It concluded that the prospects of doing Islamic theorizing about IR falls under the condition of ‘pre-theory’.
Abstract: This thesis engages in a political theoretical reading of constitution making and constitutional change processes in Turkey within the framework of Carl Schmitt’s and Jürgen Habermas’s theories. The first theoretical part of the thesis expounds on the theories of Schmitt and Habermas regarding the legitimacy of constitution making/reforming processes in relation to three subjects, namely the conceptualization of constituent power and its democratic potentials, the conceptualization of the act and text of constitution, and legitimacy of judicial review. The second part of the thesis elucidates changing conceptions of the constitution and constitutional legitimacy in Turkey from the perspective of the framers of constitutions since the early Republican period on the basis of the theoretical frameworks presented in the first part. In this respect, the constitutional debates on the formation of 1921, 1924, 1961 and 1982 constitutions, and 1923, 1937, 1971, 1995 and 2010 amendments in relevant Assemblies are examined in order to understand how the authors of the constitutions, particularly the members of the Constitutional Committees and generally the members of the parliaments, conceive the constitution, the practice of constitution making and constitutional change and how they justify their practice.
Abstract: This study analyzes Turkish state’s security discourses and practices vis-à-vis the Kurdish issue from the perspectives of traditional and critical (emancipatory) security studies. The analysis is undertaken in two periods: the past and the present. Accordingly, the thesis argues that, in the Kurdish issue, Turkish state’s discourses and practices in the past could best be understood by traditional understanding of security. This means that, in state security discourses and practices the state was constituted as the only referent object of security and in security politics the use of force was seen as the only provider of security. However, such a restricted approach was unable to bring about security for myriad of actors, including the state itself. In the present period, on the other hand, there are signs of ruptures from this traditional conception of security towards a more emancipatory approach in the Kurdish issue. As a result, security discourses and practices better addressed insecurities of various referents. This demonstrates the potential of emancipatory approach in bringing about security in the Kurdish issue and this thesis also analyzes the role of the non-state and external agents in the present context that could transform state discourses and practices in more emancipatory ways.
Abstract: Intergovernmental transfers, that are significant source of income for state and local governments, are needed to annihilate the fiscal imbalances. This dissertation aims to investigate the welfare effects of an intergovernmental transfer rules in fiscally decentralized economies. The particular linear redistribution rule used in this study takes into account two criteria: equity and efficiency. The model consists of citizens, symmetric local governments and a central government, which are in a strategic interaction. Our study is the first to include interactions between these agents under a redistribution rule. So, this study focuses on Markov-perfect Nash equilibrium of this economy by a continuum of households and governments that act sequentially. There exist public good spillovers across regions and tax competition between local governments through mobile capital. Welfare is compared among no-rule case and full-rule (equity and efficiency) case and also among no-equity case and no-efficiency case. The results indicate that the welfare in full rule case is always higher than the one in no rule case. Furthermore, for high levels of capital mobility, no efficiency case has higher welfare level than no equity case. This implies that in case of high mobility government should give more weight to equity case.
Author: Eminel, Emine

Title: The Analysis of The Political Context of The Cyprus Hydrocarbons Debate in Relation to Cyprus Problem

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Oktay Fırat Tanrısever
Department: International Relations
Date: January 2016

Abstract: The discovery of new energy sources around Cyprus has created an interest in questioning the role of these resources; whether they will promote peace or exacerbate the existing tensions in the region. On that axis where energy and politics intersect, the Cyprus problem now holds a significant energy dimension which deserves to be explored carefully. With this understanding, this thesis is exploring Cyprus hydrocarbons issue by looking at energy related developments and related parties policies towards eastern Mediterranean on energy issues and the ways in which these policies are related to the Cyprus problem. The aim is to understand what the recent hydrocarbon related developments tell us about the geopolitics of energy in eastern Mediterranean and the dynamics of the Cyprus problem within that new geopolitical reality. This thesis maintains the significance of examining the contexts in which hydrocarbons debate emerge in Cyprus. It eventually argues that viewing the link between the Cyprus problem and the Cyprus hydrocarbons issue requires looking at sovereignty and territoriality dimensions of the conflict in Cyprus. The positions of Turkey, the RoC and TRNC, and the international community towards the oil and gas efforts around Cyprus reveal the predominance of these concepts in shaping the course of the energy developments in the region. In terms of whether the findings will exacerbate the existing conflict in Cyprus or will create the grounds for cooperation; this thesis noticed that analysed arguments and positions on Cyprus hydrocarbons debate almost completely overlap with related actors’ existing conflictual positions.
Author: Günay, Mehmet Zeki

Title: Russia’s Policy on Secessionism in The United Nations Security Council

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Oktay Fırat Tanrısever
Department: International Relations
Date: June 2016

Abstract: This dissertation examines Russia’s policy on secessionism in Kosovo (Serbia), Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Georgia), and Crimea (Ukraine) in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). It aims to compare and contrast Russia’s stance on these different cases of secessionism that have been brought to the agenda of the UNSC. Contrary to the views of some experts who claim that Russia’s references to issues concerning identity and international law during the debates on secessionism in the UNSC reflect Russia’s commitment to the principles of international law and its support to the selected identities, this dissertation argues that Russia’s positions on identity issues and international law are driven mainly by its pragmatic concerns in order to enhance its regional power and influence. This argument is supported by Russia’s inconsistencies in its approach to international law and identity matters. To this end, firstly, the literature on international relations of ethnic conflicts and secessionism, and theories of International Relations is discussed. Secondly, the dissertation examines the evolution of secessionism in Kosovo, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and Crimea. Thirdly, it analyzes post-Soviet Russia’s foreign and domestic policy on Kosovo, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Crimea. Later, it discusses Russia’s responses and policy choices concerning each case in the UNSC. The dissertation aims to identify the underlying determinants of Russia’s ‘varying’ responses to secessionism. Studying Russia’s position on secessionism in the UN in the post-Cold War era is significant not only for understanding ‘Russia in the UN’ but also Russia’s broader foreign policy choices.
Author: Konuralp, Emrah

Title: Transformation of Secularism in Turkey: Debating Post-Secularism under the AKP Rule

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ayşe Ayata

Department: Political Science and Public Administration

Date: July 2016

Abstract: Post-secularism literature has been developed to respond the need for resolving problem of pluralism in the Western societies by putting emphasis on inviting the religious to the public sphere. The main goal of this research is to transpose this literature to the analysis of Turkish experience which is an officially secular and predominantly Muslim context. Turkey under the rule of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) can be considered as an example of post-secularism. The AKP is seen as an evolution of political Islamist National Outlook movement which antagonised secularisation in Turkey. Dissimilarly, the AKP did not challenge the secular credential of the Republic of Turkey directly and acted in between secularism and Islam. This ‘in-between-ness’ can be seen as a reflection of post-secularism. Nonetheless, the main thesis in this research is: Turkey under the AKP-rule cannot be considered as post-secular and this is assessed along with the following criteria of conditions for post-secularism in Turkey: (1) consolidated democracy; (2) deeply established secularism as a political principle; (3) the objective guarantees on the freedom of religion and conscience; (4) management of problem of pluralism; and (5) analysis of the AKP in relation to post-Islamism.
Abstract: This dissertation analyses the relationship between populism and democracy in Turkey from the perspective of Laclau’s theory on populism, focusing on the Democrat Party and the Justice and Development Party as illustrative cases. As the framework that Laclau developed to the end of studying the phenomenon of populism takes discourse analysis as its methodology, this dissertation addresses the discourse of democracy adopted by the Democrat Party and the Justice and Development Party. The cases of these two political parties fits Laclau’s theoretical framework perfectly, which provides us with the opportunity to reach key findings on the relationship between populism and democracy in Turkey. Populism is believed to contribute to the further development of democracy at times, and is deemed to be a pathological constituent of democratic systems at others. This dissertation demonstrates that the cases of the Democrat Party and the Justice and Development Party give revealing clues regarding the nature of the relationship between populism and democracy as experienced in Turkey. In this context, while carrying out a discussion on this relationship, this dissertation analyzes the circumstances in which populism contributed to and those in which it impaired democracy in Turkey.
Author: Stelmakh, Anastasiya

Title: Energy Politics of Ukraine: Domestic and International Dimensions

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Oktay Firat Tanrısever
Department: International Relations
Date: May 2016

Abstract: This PhD thesis aims to analyze domestic and international dimensions of Ukraine’s energy politics. The thesis focuses both on the developments at domestic level as well as Ukraine’s energy cooperation with the European Union and the Russian Federation. The main research problem of this dissertation is to determine the causal links between domestic and international factors as well as their impacts on the energy politics of on energy politics of Ukraine under Putnam’s two-level game approach. The thesis also aims to clarify the role of the oligarchic groups, who represent Russian interests in Ukraine. This thesis comprises seven main chapters. After the introduction, the second chapter develops the theoretical framework of the thesis by discussing the explanatory powers of IR theories and Putnam’s two-level analytical approach. The third chapter focuses on the dynamics of Ukraine’s energy policy during the period between 1991-2010. The fourth and fifth chapter discusses energy policy under the presidencies of Viktor Yushchenko and Viktor Yanukovych. The sixth chapter analyses the shift in energy politics after Euro-Maidan events. The seventh chapter presents comparative analysis the Ukrainian case with the Belarusian one. The concluding chapter discusses the main findings of this thesis.
Abstract: This dissertation argues that non-state actors were more apparent, and relatedly, more capable of controlling and transforming the international relations in the pre-modern period than they are in the modern. The role of non-state actors is dramatically limited in the modern international society because of the nation-state, the most centralized and penetrating polity that humankind have ever established. The organizing principles of the pre-modern international relations were more suitable for non-state action. World society conceptualization of the English School is adopted in order to develop this argument. As the existing accounts of the world society concept particularly concentrate on the possible effects of the values having the potential to be shared globally in the modern international society, they simply neglect interest-seeking and pre-modern forms of non-state action. For this reason, this dissertation makes a distinction between the value-based (ideational) and interest-seeking (functional) world society elements and analyzes their impact on the international system/society with respect to their aims. According to this distinction, functional world society elements only aim to control a specific sphere of international relations, while the ideational world society elements seek to reshape the core foundational principles of the international system/society. In order to support its main argument, the dissertation analyzes four distinct cases, namely the Roman Catholic Church, Amnesty International, the Hanseatic League, and International Chamber of Commerce, and compares them with each other. Main findings of the study show that the non-state dimension of international relations prevails against the state dimension in the pre-modern international relations.
Abstract: The aim of the study is to propose an empirical model of the international cost of equity by investigating and analyzing the long-run relation between disaggregated country risk ratings and country stock market index returns for a large panel of countries. The study tests the hypothesis that, given the available theoretical and empirical evidence, country risk ratings and country stock market index returns should move together in the long-run and there should be a long-run equilibrium between them; thus country risk ratings, with their forward-looking nature about the political, macroeconomic and financial fundamentals of a large number of countries, may behave as long-run state variables for stock returns to the extent they are undiversifiable internationally. The results of the analysis provide evidence in favor of the argument that disaggregated country risk ratings, in particular the political and economic risk ratings, are related to stock market returns in the long-run. Using this relation, an empirical model of the international cost of equity is proposed. The model takes country risk ratings as inputs and finds the international cost of equity for a specific country of known risk ratings.
Author: Ünal, Derviş Fikret

Title: Turkey’s Relations with Israel in the 2000s: A Constructivist Perspective

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Özlem Tür Küçükkaya
Department: International Relations
Date: June 2016

Abstract: The main aim of this dissertation is to understand Turkey’s relations with Israel in the 2000s from the perspective of Turkey’s state identity. The research question of this dissertation is whether or not the concept of “state identity” is relevant to the Turkish-Israeli relations, and if so, to what extent. This dissertation also studies if there is continuity or change in Turkey’s state identity in the 2000s. To that end, the dissertation compares and contrasts the situation before and after the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) term from a theoretical perspective in order to reach a final analysis. This dissertation assumes that the change in the Turkish-Israeli relations in the 2000s from the strategic relations to crises can be explained by the change in Turkey’s state identity from the pro-Western stance to the Middle Easternized Central Country / Heir of the Ottoman Empire stance.
Author: Yakut, Aykut Mert

Title: Internal Migration, Redistributive Policies and Income Distribution in Turkey: An Intertemporal CGE Analysis

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ebru Voyvoda - Prof. Dr. Erol Taymaz

Department: Economics

Date: September 2016

Abstract: This thesis focuses on the effects of the public policies on the size distribution of income in Turkey. To this end, an intertemporal computable general equilibrium model with heterogeneous agents in a small open economy framework is constructed. This study serves several extensions to the literature with its algebraic structure and calibration process in which various micro-level data sets have been utilized extensively. The results reveal that, in line with the previous findings of the literature, increasing budget allocations to unilateral social transfer programs has no significant effects on the size distribution of income and has adverse effects on the labor market decisions of relatively poor laborers. On the contrary, subsidizing the cost of labor has positive impacts on labor supplies and the size distribution of income improves in favor of relatively poor households.
Abstract: In the thesis, we present two different endogenous growth models for a middle income trap economy. In order to present two growth models, first we investigate the experiences of the middle income trap and nontrap countries. Our analysis shows importance of “human capital” and “structural change” rooted factors to overcome the middle income trap. Second, we analyze the relative importance of these factors by using the shift share analysis. Our findings demonstrate that average labor productivity growth rates differ significantly in the trap and nontrap economies and this difference mainly comes from the “within sector” productivity gains. Third, we present an endogenous growth model with quadratic technology function for a middle income trap economy (the first model). The quantitative assessment of the model for Turkey shows that increasing the years of schooling, educational quality, share of researchers in overall educated population, and the technology transfer may enable Turkey to escape the trap. Last, we present an endogenous growth model with human capital and biased technological changes for a middle income trap economy (the second model). The model implies that the most effective two ways to get a higher growth rate and hence to get satisfactory convergence experience are to have improvements in human capital quantity and quality. Both of the models in the thesis show the importance of a high quality education system with special emphasis on the science, technology, engineering and mathematics training to overcome the trap.
Author: Yükselen, Hasan

Title: Turkey’s Changing Discourses of Strategy: A Critical Realist Analysis

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Faruk Yalvaç
Department: International Relations
Date: July 2016

Abstract: This dissertation analyzes Turkey’s changing discourses of security strategy since the foundation of the Republic. The concept of strategy, which is classically analyzed through the level of analysis distinction, is handled through employing the ontological depth concept of critical realism. To reach an historical and sociological analysis, the concept of strategy, which is conceived as an agential attribute, is analyzed within the dynamic interaction of agent and structure. In this way, agential and ideational aspects of strategy, conceived as ends that was tended to be forgotten or neglected in favor of material aspects conceived as means, can be analyzed from a dialectical perspective. In other words, this dissertation incorporates the evolution of strategy within the dialectics of agent-structure in which agency intentionally strives to overcome the constraining effects of structure through emancipatory strategies. In Turkish Foreign Policy, agency showed no hesitancy to formulate strategies and represent them through discourses. However, what is spoken – discourses – about strategy could not always be realized in outcomes as what is actualized. This dissertation seeks an explanation to the source of incongruence between what is spoken and what is actualized. This dissertation contributes to the existing literature on critical realist analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy by incorporating the concept of strategy and strategic discourse within this framework.