

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHESS: ERDOĞAN AND THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS
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TOWARDS A JEWISH-PALESTINIAN SETTLEMENT

Abstract: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the current President of Turkey, is a controversial figure within political spheres. His domestic and foreign policies are driven by inherent biases and religious motivators, resulting in a democratic government that rules with religious undertones. This study provides historical context of the development of Turkey as a nation formed in Islamic tradition and rise to a democratic power. Straddling Europe, Asia and the Middle East, the nation's geographical challenges are discussed. This study leverages certain psychological theories such as the rational actor, power motivation and social identity theories to explain Erdoğan's actions, particularly political policies, specifically in regard to the Syrian refugee crisis since the inception of the Syrian civil war in 2011. Issues arising from these policies are identified using these theories as lenses. Impacts of these findings, evaluated through application of the psychological drivers, provide a better understanding of the leader and his political motivations and actions. Through an exploratory research framework, a review and analysis of prior policies, interviews and speeches was performed to gain an understanding of the leader's innate and inherent desire to protect his Muslim ideological bases, while understanding inherent and basic needs that may drive a rational actor to establish policy and how unidentified or other political factors may be at play.

Discussion and Presentation: It is proposed for this conference, this author shall present a review of the study undertaken of the leader of Turkey including his background and heritage and the influence and effects upon Turkish policy. This presentation provides an overview of exploratory research conducted on Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's decision making actions in relation to the European Union and the Syrian Refugee Crisis. The central focus of the study will be the

policies established by the President, and the results upon the refugees, the citizens of Turkey and resulting foreign relations. The presentation will conclude with insights pertaining to the psychological drivers of the leader and provide a path forward for future foreign policy recommendations based upon this exploratory research.