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Dueling Personalities and Leadership Styles: Gül, Erdoğan, and the Parliament in Turkey's Policymaking during the 2003 Iraq War[1]

Abstract: Recent research in International Relations pays more attention to the role of individuals in world politics. The subfield of Foreign Policy Analysis, in contrast, has a long-standing record in advancing its explanation of individuals in foreign policy. Specifically, at-a-distance approaches to studying individuals have grown noticeably. New theoretical connections (for example, to role theory), an expansion of its subjects and linguistic capabilities beyond English promise a growing literature in years to come. To continue to exploit the exploratory promise and illustrate these approaches' ability to account for individuals' impact on decision-making, this paper investigates Turkish foreign policymaking into the 2003 Iraq War under the leadership of two prime ministers. It utilizes Leadership Trait Analysis to profile Gül and Erdoğan, reports from multiple elite interviews, and connects the two leaders' profiles with associated behavioral expectations in their engagement with the parliament. Based on its findings in leaders' profiles and case study discussion, the paper argues an individual focused analysis offers much insight to understanding foreign policymaking processes and outcomes.

Keywords: leadership style, foreign/security policy, parliaments, Turkey, Iraq War

A proliferation of individual-level analyses in the broader international relations (IR) literature (among others, Yarhi-Milo, 2014; 2018; Horowitz, Stam, and Ellis, 2015) and specifically in foreign policy analysis (among others, Post, 2003; Schafer and Crichlow, 2010; Schafer and Walker, 2006; 2021) has made

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clear that 'leaders matter'. While the former line of work arguably is a reckoning of IR's long-due recognition of the role of individuals, the latter is a continuation of decades-long scholarship often dated back to Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin (1962). The evolution of at-a-distance approaches to political personality (see, Post, 2003) from this lineage took a major turn with automation of its analyses -specifically the operational code and leadership trait analyses (Hermann, 1999; Walker, Schafer, and Young, 1998). This research grew significantly in its geographic span as well: scholars profiled leaders from many non-English speaking countries (Dyson and Raleigh, 2014; He and Feng, 2013; Malici, 2008; Malici and Buckner, 2008; Kesgin, 2013; 2019; 2020a; 2020b; Özdamar and Canbolat, 2018). Presently, the addition of new languages in automated content analysis (Brummer et al., 2020; Canbolat, 2021; Rabini et al., 2020) promises new advancements in leadership studies and foreign policy analysis. Arguably not receiving as much attention, there has also been work that offers new paths and connections with other topics of inquiry. Brummer (2016) relates public policy with leadership studies. Recently, Wehner and Thies (2021) explore how role theory and leadership research can benefit from a cross-conversation (see also Cuhadar et al., 2017a; Kesgin and Wehner, 2022). In short, there is a lively field of scholarship with many questions to pursue in understanding leaders in foreign policymaking.

Taking a leadership approach, this paper revisits Turkey's decision-making during the months leading into the 2003 Iraq War. The Turkish case offers a very interesting opportunity to explore the impact of personality and leadership style, where in a span of three-weeks the government-controlled parliament voted for two contrasting decisions about Turkey's involvement in the war. First, the parliament did not pass the March 1st motion, which would have allowed the American (and allied) troops to station in Turkey as well as made Turkey an active combatant on the ground. Then, on March 20th, the very same parliament approved a motion to let the United States (US) use the Turkish airspace. One of the key differences between the votes was a change in the prime minister's office: Abdullah Gül stepped down, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan became the new prime minister. Some argued that the Turkish parliament assumed an elevated role in foreign policymaking, against a conventional understanding of legislatures and foreign policy in parliamentary systems (Kesgin and Kaarbo, 2010; Taydaş and Özdamar, 2013). While these works hinted at the potentially significant leadership factor, a systematic and comparative account of Gül's and Erdoğan's leadership styles is absent.

Employing leadership trait analysis (Hermann, 2003), this paper compares Gül's and Erdoğan's dealing with the Iraq crisis as prime ministers. The discussion proceeds as follows: first, the paper reviews research in leaders and foreign policy decision-making. Specifically, it builds upon Kaarbo's (2018) arguments about how prime ministers' leadership styles and the role of parliaments shape

security policy.[2] A detailed case study of Turkish decision-making under Gül's and Erdoğan's premiership – with support from elite interviews – illustrates that their different leadership styles impacted the decisionmaking processes and the outcomes of the parliamentary votes concerning Turkey's participation in the Iraq War.

Studying leaders in foreign policymaking[3]

Long occupied with systemic factors, recent IR scholarship shows an increased interest in individuals (e.g. Yarhi-Milo, 2014; 2018; Horowitz, Stam, and Ellis, 2015). Notwithstanding IR's general lack of interest in (if not, its dismissal of) the individual level, a line of work in the Foreign Policy Analysis tradition that build upon Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin (1962) has continuously expanded from the 1970s (among others, George, 1969; Janis, 1972) into the present. Most notably, the adaptation of personality psychology to political decision-making (Hermann, 1976) introduced novel approaches to systematically study the role of the individuals in IR and specifically in foreign policy decision-making. At--a-distance studies of political leaders' personalities developed in this context and out of a necessity, as those who hold the highest public offices are often not available to be interviewed by researchers or participate in personality assessment tests like other individuals (see, Post, 2003; and, for an overview, Winter, 2003). However, researchers can deduce elites' personality characteristics from their speech acts, that is their public speeches and/or other spontaneous utterances (see, Schafer, 2000). Accordingly, the key assumption for at-a-distance approaches is that the frequency of leaders' use of certain words in their discourse indicates the very salience of the content to them (Hermann, 2003, p. 186).

One of the most well-established approaches to profiling political leaders at-a-distance is Margaret Hermann's leadership trait analysis (LTA). Hermann's LTA integrates her decades of research on the role of personality characteristics in foreign policy (Hermann, 1976; 1980; 1999; 2003). In LTA, personality is conceptualized as a combination of seven traits: belief in ability to control events, conceptual complexity, need for power, distrust of others, in-group bias, self-confidence, and task orientation. Table 1 summarizes each trait with a brief description. Each trait score ranges from 0 to 1. A leader's trait score is considered high or low in comparison to a reference (also called norming or comparison) group's average and standard deviation.

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[2]   Given the nature of the case (i.e., the Iraq War), foreign policy and security policy are used interchangeably here.

[3]   This section partially borrows from Kesgin (2020b).

Table 1. Personality characteristics in leadership trait analysis

Trait	Description
Belief in Ability to Control Events	perception of own degree of control over political world
Conceptual Complexity	ability to distinguish complexities of political life
Distrust of Others	suspicions, skepticism, worry of others than own group
In-group Bias	belief that own group constitutes the center of political world
Need for Power	interest in developing, preserving, or reinstituting own power
Self-Confidence	notion of self-importance, and of his/her capacity to take on the political environment
Task Focus	concentration on problem solving vs. building relationships

Source: Cuhadar et al. (2017a); originally adapted from Hermann (2003).

Table 2. LTA trait combinations

Composite Characteristic	Types	Component Traits
Responsiveness to Constraints	Challenger/Respecter	Belief in Ability to Control Events + Need for Power
Openness to Information	Closed/Open	Complexity + Self-Confidence
Leadership Style	Active Independent, Collegial, Evangelical, Directive, Expansionist, Incremental, Influential, Opportunistic	Responsiveness to Constraints + Openness to Information + Task Motivation

Source: Cuhadar et al. (2017a); originally adapted from Hermann (2003).

The LTA framework also connects the seven traits to profile leaders in their (a) responsiveness to constraints, (b) motivation towards the world, and (c) openness to information. As Kesgin (2020b) summarized: for instance, constraint challenging leaders have a high belief in their ability to control events and a high need for power. In contrast, constraints respecting leaders are low in need for power and/or do not believe they can control events. Then, distrust

of others and in-group bias together suggest leaders' motivations towards the world. Lastly, conceptual complexity and self-confidence together indicate leaders' openness to information. While leaders with high scores on both traits, and leaders with high complexity and low self-confidence are open to information, those with low scores on both traits or with high self-confidence and low complexity are closed to information. These trait combinations, according to the LTA, culminate into a leadership style. Table 2 succinctly presents these combinations and names the leadership styles in the LTA approach.

Others have applied and expanded Hermann's LTA in various ways since its inception, and most notably since the automation of its coding. Dyson's (2006; 2008; 2009) research on British and American elites very clearly displayed the impact individuals had on policymaking. Kille and Scully (2003) used the LTA to profile the United Nations' secretaries-general and illustrated its effectiveness in explaining how personality traits and leadership style are relevant to understanding leadership in intergovernmental organizations. Cuhadar et al. (2017a) took on the question of trait stability when the same individuals hold different bureaucratic roles. Most importantly, the addition of new languages to automated content analysis of LTA now presents another potential growth area for this approach. Rabini et al. (2020) successfully illustrate this development in their coding with German documents. The Brummer et al. (2020) forum include the authors' reports about experimenting with automated coding (of LTA and operational code) in multiple other languages (specifically, Arabic, German, Persian, Spanish, and Turkish).

In addition to such important work, the applications of LTA also developed important theoretical advances to connect LTA specifically, and personality approaches in general, with other topics of inquiry. For example, Brummer's (2016) "fiasco prime ministers" presents an excellent argument to connect personality traits and leadership traits with policy failures. Van Esch and Swinkels' (2015) research took LTA into economic policy (also see, Dyson, 2018). Recently, Kesgin and Wehner (2022) advanced a new lens to understanding the leadership of rising powers using the LTA framework and role theory together in their analyses of India's three most recent prime ministers (also, see, Wehner and Thies, 2021). In another recent manuscript, Kesgin (2020a) theoretically connects LTA and personality approaches with conflict studies literature to investigate leaders' perceptions as hawks and doves.

This paper's inquiry is inspired by one recent such work: Kaarbo (2018) offered a framework to understanding leaders' personality characteristics and prime ministers' orientations towards parliament's influence in security policymaking. Kaarbo develops propositions about leaders' traits with respect to their willingness to accept parliamentary involvement and their involvement in managing that process. Accordingly, she expects that leaders with high conceptual complexity would be open to parliamentary involvement in security

policymaking, would actively engage in managing the parliamentary process and would be effective in doing so. Leaders high in need for power would actively and effectively manage parliamentary involvement, but would not be open to its involvement. Leaders with high self-confidence would be active but not effective in managing the parliament's involvement, to which they are not open to attribute a role to begin with. In addition to the general assumption that 'leaders matter', this paper specifically pursues Kaarbo's framework as to how leaders' traits steer the legislature's role in foreign and security policymaking processes.

All in all, Hermann's LTA, a well-established at-a-distance approach to understanding leadership style, serves very well for the purposes of this paper's inquiry into Turkey's policymaking during the 2003 Iraq War. Given LTA's successful applications in many different political contexts and recent theoretical advances, this paper uses LTA considering Kaarbo's (2018) propositions and inquires whether leadership styles of the two Turkish leaders made difference in the executive-legislative relationship and in Turkey's policymaking at the time. In doing so, the paper seeks to deliver on Kaarbo's call for case studies based on her propositions.[4] After a description of the paper's research design and a short account of the context, the paper presents Gül's and Erdoğan's LTA profiles, corresponding to the timeframe under investigation here.[5] A detailed study of Turkish decisionmaking under both leaders based on their leadership traits and styles follows this.

Design and the case studies

Gül's and Erdoğan's LTA profiles originate from the author's earlier collaborative research with Esra Cuhadar, Juliet Kaarbo, and Binnur Ozkececi-Taner (Cuhadar et al., 2017a; 2017b). Gül's profile covers his premiership (mid-November 2002 to mid-March 2003), and originally appeared in Cuhadar et al. (2017a). The Gül profile is based on his foreign policy relevants statements in 11 interviews. Erdoğan's profile corresponds to a timeframe that is informative for this analysis of his role in the Iraq War motions, as published earlier in Cuhadar et al. (2017b). The Erdoğan profile, accordingly, covers Erdogan's spontaneous foreign policy relevant statements from 28 August 2001 to 9 March 2003 in 33 documents (Cuhadar et al., 2017b). Both the Gül and Erdoğan profiles meet the LTA standards for constructing a reliable leadership profile.

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[4]   In her paper, Kaarbo mentions and briefly elaborates on the Gül and Erdoğan comparison as well.

[5]   This paper borrows (with the permission of the co-authors) its LTA data from Cuhadar et al. (2017a; 2017b) and some associated discussion from the same publications as well as Kesgin and Kaarbo (2010).

For its analyses of Gül's and Erdoğan's leadership at the time, the paper includes new primary sources from elite interviews conducted with the Turkish policymakers – many members of the JDP cabinets under Gül and Erdoğan – in Summer 2018. Gül's and Erdoğan's interactions with their own parliamentary party group members during this process and their leadership within the cabinet are the primary clues to their relationship with the parliament. Given the 'fusion of powers' between the executive and the legislative branches in parliamentary systems, these are presumably sufficient illustrations of how leaders' personality traits may condition parliaments' influence on foreign and security policymaking.

Leadership style in Turkey's Iraq War policymaking

The 2003 Iraq War was no surprise to the world after several months of debates: the US and its allies began the "Operation Iraqi Freedom" in the early morning hours of March 20th. A neighbor to Iraq and a member of the NATO, it was inevitable that Turkey would be involved in either the action or the planning – or both. The Turkish government was to decide on the nature of its involvement in Iraq amidst significant economic and security concerns given the 1991 Gulf War and its repercussions (see, Cuhadar et al., 2017b), domestic and international public opposition against a war (Barrett et al., 2012; Taydaş and Özdamar, 2013), and pressures from the United States (Bölükbaşı, 2008; Hale, 2007; Yetkin, 2004). The Turkish hesitation was only exacerbated by the insertion of an early parliamentary election in late 2002; the US administration had to wait for the outcome of the elections. With the failing health of the then-prime minister Ecevit and due to coalition politics within an otherwise stable cabinet, the Turkish electorate went to the polls, only to bring to power a new political party, the Justice and Development Party (JDP), the moderate offspring of the Islamist National Outlook movement.[6] To make matters even more complicated, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the charismatic leader of JDP, was banned from running for office.[7] When the JDP emerged as the electoral victor – enjoying a significant majority of the parliament thanks to an unusual vote distribution,[8] Erdoğan's placeholder

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[6]　Under Necmettin Erbakan's leadership, his ideology and a lineage of political parties (National Order and National Salvation parties in the 1970s and the 1980s, Welfare in the 1990s, Virtue and Felicity in the early 2000s into present day – as well as a recent New Welfare) have represented this political movement – *Milli Görüş* in Turkish.

[7]　Erdoğan did not run in the 2002 elections because he had been banned from running for or holding political office. He was imprisoned in 1998 for reciting a poem, which allegedly incited religious hatred (see, Çagaptay, 2017; Kesgin, 2020b).

[8]　Given the 10 percent national threshold in the Turkish parliamentary elections, only Erdogan's JDP, the Republican People's Party, and some independent MPs were elected to the parliament.

to formally represent the party in all governmental business was Abdullah Gül. While this was how many thought of Gül's leadership, Gül was the prime minister and responsible for the government's policies in that capacity.

The JDP cabinet was ready to prove -domestically and internationally – its disassociation from the Islamist parties. It was, however, also in some disarray given the duality of its leadership. Soon, it became evident that following a constitutional amendment to remove restrictions on Erdoğan, there would be a by-election in one province to secure Erdoğan a seat in the parliament. Arguably, this helped create an image of Gül as a caretaker prime minister. Nonetheless, by early November 2002, Erdoğan as the party chairperson and Gül as the prime minister were at the helm of the Turkish politics and foreign policy. Gül led the government into the March 1 vote in the parliament while Erdoğan remained as the chairperson; later, Erdoğan's cabinet brought up the March 20 motion to parliament (see, Kesgin and Kaarbo, 2010). The legislature failed the former and approved the latter. Did Gül's and Erdoğan's leadership styles matter for these outcomes?

Table 3. A timeline of Turkey's Iraq War policymaking

2002	
November, 3	Turkish elections
November, 18	Gül cabinet assumes office
2003	
January	Gül's Middle East peace initiative
January, 20	US Joint Chiefs of Staff in Ankara
January, 25	Powell meets with Gül
February, 6	Motion authorized: US inspect and upgrade in military bases
February, 8	Memorandum of understanding between US and Turkey
February, 25	Turkish government forwards motion to the parliament
March, 1	Motion (allowing US troops in Turkey) fails in the parliament
March, 9	Erdoğan elected to the parliament
March, 14	Erdoğan cabinet begins term
March, 20	"Operation Iraqi Freedom" starts
March, 20	Motion (overflight rights) approved by the parliament

Source: adapted from Kesgin and Kaarbo (2010).

This outcome brought about a two-thirds majority for the JDP while its vote share was just about one-third of the votes cast (see, Özel, 2003).

Due to a myriad of reasons, including the JDP's leadership dynamics, the Turkish government oscillated in its position on the impending Iraq War. In the meantime, the war delayed because the US and its allies (primarily, the United Kingdom) had to navigate major international opposition and sought a legitimation from the United Nations Security Council. The Gül government in due course was first preoccupied with Turkey's European Union candidacy-one of its major objectives. Past the European Union summit in December, the Iraq matter was the single most important item on the government's agenda. The Turkish government and its American counterparts negotiated war preparations and cooperation between the two parties, and Turkey's compensation (Bölükbaşı, 2008; Hale, 2007). As Kesgin and Kaarbo outline, the US first sought "a permit for site preparation and upgrades in Turkey. While the government accepted this request, the decision required parliamentary approval, since it involved US troops on Turkish soil" (Kesgin and Kaarbo, 2010, p. 29). The February 6 motion, often characterized as a non-committal, cooperative engagement with the US, received the parliament's approval (308 in favor, 193 against). Next came the infamous March 1 motion, where the government asked for the parliament's vote regarding its involvement in the Iraq War in coordination with the US – and, allowing the latter to station troops in Turkey.[9] To everybody's surprise in Turkey and around the world, the motion failed, albeit only on a technicality (264 in favor, 250 against, 19 abstentions).[10] As Table 3 summarizes this process, after the Siirt by-election gave Erdoğan a seat in the parliament and he became the prime minister, the March 20 motion then allowed the United States to use the Turkish airspace in its war operations (332 in favor, 202 against).[11]

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[9]   One of the many reasons for the anti-war position of the Turkish public was the stationing of foreign troops in the country. The Turks were simply "uncomfortable with the idea of allowing even allied troops on Turkish soil" (Çagaptay, 2003).

[10]   Against this reading of the process, Henke (2018) argues the outcome of the bargaining between Turkey and the United States was not "an involuntary defection" but one that was determined by "fractured social networks".

[11]   A fourth motion, on October 7th, authorized the government to send Turkish troops into Iraq (358 in favor, 183 against). Cuhadar et al. (2017b) expand their discussion into this fourth motion, yet also note that Erdoğan's traits do not change significantly. This paper does not study the months following the March 20th motion.

Table 4. LTA profiles of Gül and Erdoğan

Trait	Gül[a]	Erdoğan[b]	World Leaders[c] [n=284]	Middle Eastern Leaders[c] [n=46]	Turkish Leaders[d] [n=6]
Belief in Ability to Control Events	.338	.372	.35 (.05)	.33 (.06)	.344 (.034)
Conceptual Complexity	.540	.580	.59 (.06)	.56 (.08)	.593 (.041)
Distrust of Others	.168	.109	.13 (.06)	.16 (.07)	.127 (.011)
In-Group Bias	.118	.101	.15 (.05)	.15 (.06)	.124 (.019)
Need for Power	.276	.311	.26 (.05)	.27 (.06)	.253 (.022)
Self-Confidence	.446	.374	.36 (.10)	.31 (.13)	.420 (.074)
Task Focus	.796	.732	.63 (.07)	.58 (.06)	.632 (.054)

[a] Gül's averages originally appeared in Cuhadar et al. (2017a).

[b] Erdoğan's averages published earlier in Cuhadar et al. (2017b). The original profile appeared with two integers; the third integer is added here for comparative purposes. This table also corrects a typo in Erdoğan's self-confidence score printed as .36 in Cuhadar et al. (2017b).

[c] The world and Middle East means and standard deviations (in parentheses) obtained from Margaret Hermann (email communication).

[d] The Turkish leaders comparison group is from Cuhadar et al. (2021), which looks at multiple Turkish leaders. These scores are included for readers' comparison only.

Note: All LTA scores were calculated by the ProfilerPlus program (version 5.8.4; see, Levine and Young, 2014).

How leadership styles matter: Gül, Erdoğan, and the parliament at the helm of Turkey's Iraq policy

Based on their LTA profiles in Table 4 and in comparison to the 284 world-leaders reference group, Gül's and Erdoğan's leadership traits and styles are as follows. Gül's leadership traits indicate low belief in ability to control events, conceptual complexity, in-group bias, need for power, and high distrust of others, self-confidence, and task focus. These traits in combinations suggest a constraints respecter, insensitiveness to new information, and a problem orientation. Gül's lower in-group bias and high distrust mark that he would prudently prepare to contain an adversary's actions while still pursuing own interests, as well as seek

opportunities and build relationships while remaining vigilant. Altogether, this profile culminates in an incremental leadership style, which Hermann (2003) describes as one who would try to improve his state's position in the world while avoiding any obstacles. Erdoğan, on the other hand, has high belief in ability to control events, need for power, self-confidence, and task focus but low conceptual complexity, distrust of others, and in-group bias. These traits in combination suggest a constraints challenger, openness to new information, and a problem orientation. His low distrust and in-group bias imply Erdoğan would perceive conflicts in context and react on a case-by-case basis, and would focus on taking advantage of opportunities and relationships. Accordingly, Erdoğan's leadership style is actively independent; he focusses on maintaining his own maneuverability and independence in a world that is perceived to continually try to limit both.

Because both Gül and Erdoğan had to work with the Turkish parliament on multiple occasions for decision (see, Cuhadar et al., 2017b), Kaarbo's (2018) propositions about leadership styles and parliamentary role in policymaking find a suitable testing ground in this episode and offer a foundational basis for this paper's inquiry. It is imperative to investigate this chapter in Turkish foreign policy with a leadership lens given that the JDP enjoyed a near two-thirds majority in the parliament at the time.[12] Gül's most salient traits at the time are a very high problem-oriented task focus and high self-confidence, along with high-leaning distrust and low-leaning conceptual complexity. To Kaarbo, these would show Gül's unwillingness to bring the parliament into policymaking. Gül's very high self-confidence correspond to active but ineffective management of the process; his high distrust and task focus suggest that Gül would not be active in managing the process at all. Kaarbo projects that this profile would rather "delegate the management of the decision-making process or avoid the process" (Kaarbo, 2018, p. 44). Erdoğan's most salient traits are low in-group bias, high need for power and task focus, and a high-leaning belief in ability to control events. According to Kaarbo's propositions, Erdoğan similarly would not seek the parliament's involvement in policymaking. Only his low-leaning in-group bias and (compared to Gül, higher) complexity would suggest otherwise. Erdoğan's higher belief in ability to control events and need for power (again, compared to Gül, his higher complexity) would suggest he would be more active in managing the process. Furthermore, Erdoğan's need for power and complexity also indicate he would be more effective in managing the process.

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[12]   There were 550 seats in the Turkish parliament at the time; the ruling party JDP had 363 and the main opposition Republican People's Party 178 seats. For the motions on the Iraq War to pass, the parliament's by-laws required a qualified majority of the voting members present in the chamber.

Prime Minister Gül and the March 1 Motion

The Gül government advanced an ambiguous and sometimes inconsistent policy.[13] Gül himself was reluctant about the Iraq War, and did not hide his hesitations from the public. In fact, Gül initiated a regional diplomacy offensive in January in pursuit of a peaceful solution to the approaching Iraq War[14] and, as late as February, was seeking to convince Saddam Hussein to cooperate. Meanwhile, Gül's government kept negotiating with the United States, allowed its NATO ally to inspect military bases in Turkey and began preparations (see, Altunisik, 2006). In the meantime, there was an open debate among some members of the cabinet. It was only by February that Gül finally stated that the Turkish government had ended its efforts for a diplomatic solution and instead joined the United States in a military action against Iraq (Brown, 2007, p. 99). The controversy continued, however, as the government's approach did not go beyond some weak commitments and occasional contradictory statements. Notwithstanding the government members' visible hesitation – if not outright opposition as in the case of Yalçınbayır – and disagreements within the cabinet, then the party leader Erdoğan said: "Our moral priority is peace, but our political priority is our dear Turkey" (Filkins, 2003).

All in all, there were clear signals of a lack of a consensus within the JDP's leadership cadres. Most importantly, the prime minister, Gül, did not display a resolute position on the Iraq War. Even as the negotiations between the United States and Turkey seemed to near a conclusion and developed into a memorandum of understanding, which provided the basis of the March 1 motion, with the excuse of a religious holiday – hence the parliament not working, and a National Security Council meeting at the end of the month, the Gül government delayed in sending the motion to the parliament. Facing some fierce opposition from or hesitation of some members of his cabinet, Gül sought the cabinet's support only to take the motion to the parliament. A member of the cabinet recalls Gül's words to his ministers in the meeting that sent the March 1 motion to the parliament: Gül said, "the authority belongs to the parliament. As members of the cabinet, you must send this motion to the parliament and not prevent its consideration of the matter. There, we cannot control how our friends will choose to vote" (Interviewee A). Yalçınbayır, a deputy prime minister then, openly shares the debates that took place in the cabinet. For instance, against the Finance Minister Unakıtan's clear warnings about budgetary implications of

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13   According to one interviewee, such ambivalence in the JDP government and the party was "less about the prime minister but instead about the lack of experience in government" (Interviewee B).

14   For Henke (2018, pp. 137–138), Gül's pursuit of a regional diplomacy was out of frustration with the United States for its rejection of more support on the Cyprus issue (which Gül was requesting in return for Turkey's support in the Iraq War, along with other bargaining matters).

not cooperating with the US, Yalçınbayır pressed Unakıtan and argued with him about the party's own platform (Author's interview, 2018). When another cabinet member intervened in their heated conversation, Yalçınbayır stated in the meeting that "it is easy to be for peace in normal times, now this [the Iraq War] is a test for all and requires us to be for human rights". In a rare illustration of Gül's attempt to influence the outcome, Gül requested from Yalçınbayır that he did not speak at the party group meeting because everyone knew of his opposition to the motion and his reasonings (Author's interview with Yalçınbayır, 2018).[15]

Gül and the party leaders also took advantage of the time gap in late-February (between the motion's delivery to the parliament and the February meeting of the MGK) to take a pulse of the JDP group in two-days long (February 25 and 26) meetings behind the closed doors.[16] In Robins' words, "[r]ather than responding boldly and with leadership to growing signs of dissatisfaction, the government resorted to further vacillation" (Robins, 2003, p. 563). To one of the members of the JDP, "it must be because [Erdoğan] did not feel comfortable about the vote that he sought to take a pulse at the party group" (Interviewee C). The party leaders surely expected some opposition to the motion but did not see any reason to impose party discipline. Furthermore, they wanted to portray an image of a genuinely deliberative body. The JDP chairperson Erdoğan stated that the party "would allow [its] group members to act in accordance with what their conscience tells them to do" (Brown, 2007, p. 101).[17] However, because the government did not show any resolve on the matter, the Turkish MPs voted on the March 1 motion given an openly divided and a visibly reluctant executive.

Before the government's motion was voted in the chamber, the JDP party group met for yet another time on the morning of March 1st. Most notably, according to one JDP MP, "When Gül walked to the podium at the party group, he looked like he was devastated" (Interviewee C). Similarly, another interviewee

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[15] In contrast, many interviewees claimed that Erdoğan – notwithstanding his constraints for not being in the government and not being an MP – did as much as he could to influence the vote for the March 1 motion (Interviewee C; Author's interview with Arınç; Author's interview with Yalçınbayır). In one instance to illustrate Erdoğan's interventions at the time, one member of the cabinet recalled Erdoğan telling him: "Don't do this [vote against the motion]" (Interviewee A). When it mattered most, at the party group meetings, Erdoğan told the MPs that he "would not give his blessings to those MPs who did not support the motion" (Author's interview with Yalçınbayır).

[16] While the government had sent the motion to the parliament, in coordination with the speaker's office it also chose to wait for the February National Security Council meeting with hopes of a public support for its decision.

[17] Nonetheless, Erdoğan did not choose (or was not in a position) to impose any restrictions on the JDP MPs. While Erdoğan's preference was known, he was new to parliamentary politics and not a member of the cabinet. Despite his significant influence as the party leader – and, multiple attempts to shape the vote, as told by the interviewees, he could not be very assertive in the weeks leading to the March 1 vote.

who was a member of the cabinet then recalls that "Gül's and Gönül's [Minister of Defense] speeches at the party group did not indicate an unambiguous take on the motion. They only outlined the implications of a 'Yes' or 'No' vote, and left the choice to MPs who were not as informed about the subject matter" (Interviewee D).[18] In the words of a well-respected figure in the JDP, the March 1 motion did not have the strong backing of the cabinet itself and lacked the genuine support of its ministers (Interviewee C). This MP noted that "members of the cabinet did not express a solid support of the motion when they defended it in front of the party group, which in turn influenced the MPs". In short, Gül and his cabinet members were not convincing in the party group meeting hours before the parliament's vote.

A prominent member of the cabinet recalled conservative journalist Abdurrahman Dilipak greeting every JDP member on their way to the party group meeting immediately before the March 1st vote[19]: "Dilipak shook hands with all MPs and was saying 'Don't put blood on your hands'. […] This has an impact on one; it is not easy [hearing these words]. Well, the feeling of wrongdoing has an impact. It is not something to judge" (Interviewee E). Several interviewees shared the result of the party group's secret voting on the motion immediately before the vote in the parliament's floor. All highlighted that the lower number of votes against the motion in the party group[20] did not exactly transpire in the general assembly. Some attributed the difference between the vote in the party group and the general assembly to a false sense of security that the group vote generated. As one interviewee put it, "Due to the vote count in the party group, [Erdoğan] thought the motion was ready for the chamber" (Interviewee C). To Arınç's reading, however, the March 1 motion lacking the military's and the president's backing – and, with clear hesitations of the cabinet members – was only bound to fail (Author's interview). Furthermore, Arınç's observation is that Gül – and the cabinet – appeared to think "it is fine if the motion does not pass".

A JDP member of the parliament at the time, and a prominent politician, acknowledged that "some members of the parliament – and, those of Kurdish descent in particular – were under significant pressure from the public while he did not receive direct communication from his constituency" (Interviewee C). This interviewee also highlighted that "the perception that Americans would not retreat once they arrived East and Southeastern Anatolia influenced the Kurdish politicians". According to this prominent JDP member, while the MPs from the Eastern and Southeastern provinces voted against the motion, MPs with

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18 Henke's account also similarly reports that before the vote Gül had asked for "a comparative report of all political, economic, and military consequences for Turkey of both the motion's passage and failure" (2018, p. 142).

19 Also reported in Özdamar and Taydaş (2012, p. 214).

20 Yetkin (2004, p. 174) reported "about 30" JDP members signaled a "no" vote in the party group vote. An interviewee told the author a more precise number: 54 (Interviewee C).

a National Outlook (see footnote 6) heritage abstained. According to another member of the cabinet, those who supported the motion 'were anxious about Mr. Bulent Arınç's position, and his chairing of the session' (Author's interview). Interviewees also highlighted an impassionate speech by the opposition leader, veteran politician, Deniz Baykal: whereas the records of the meeting remain confidential and the interviewees were careful in not sharing further details, they argued that Baykal's speech on floor likely made an impact on the outcome. They also noted that Arınç's management of the meeting was important, where he ran a meeting with own prerogative to hear from Baykal and others. The speaker, Arınç, presiding over the closed session himself, recalls that "Baykal's and Önder Sav's (another opposition MP) speeches on the floor were most influential on March 1", and "at the parliament's chamber, the JDP was behind 2-0" (Author's interview).[21] To illustrate the JDP's disarray, Arınç observed that against the influential speeches by the opposition, the JDP spokesperson on that day only gave a 10-minute presentation – despite having the same time allocated.

The March 1 motion failed on a technicality: three votes short of an absolute majority in the chamber, the abstentions and the MPs not voting made a difference. The result surprised the government and the opposition alike; the media outlets first announced the bill passed and even the speaker took a break to ascertain the outcome. Yet, the parliamentary procedures were clear; the government – despite its comfortable majority in the parliament – was not able to gain the legislature's approval. Whereas Gül succeeded in passing the February 6 motion, he and the party leadership failed to deliver when it mattered most. Gül considered resigning, but then was convinced to wait until Erdoğan became prime minister. The JDP defections on the vote for March 1 motion exceeded everyone's calculations (Yetkin, 2004). The leader of an opposition party argued that there was a serious split between the JDP MPs and the party's leadership cadres (Radikal, 2003). Notwithstanding, Gül later told MacLean that "he was not surprised by the vote" because "[JDP] delegates were representing the people and what they [the people] wanted was clear" (MacLean, 2014, p. 235). After the vote, the JDP's Mehmet Dulger, the chairman of the parliament's Foreign Affairs Commission, said a "new motion… should be presented in a different manner to Parliament and *a strong-looking government with a stronger voice is also needed*" (Balci, 2003; italics added for emphasis).

Existing analyses of the March 1 vote, Gül's LTA profile, and interviewees' records correspond with each other well. Gül's personality traits and leadership style were evident in his management of the decisionmaking process as the

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prime minister. Gül as a politician "respected constraints and used his skills and status to persuade rather than to force others to follow his ideas or policy choices", as Cuhadar et al. (2021) observed.[22] Gül's choice to let the parliament freely (without party discipline)[23] decide on the matter showed his preference to work towards his goals within the parameters of the Turkish constitution, which designated the parliament as the ultimate decision-unit for such occasions. As Cuhadar et al. (2017b) argued, Gül tried to spread responsibility for the Iraq War decision and was most importantly reluctant to take responsibility himself. He called on the JDP MPs to vote on their conscience, which allowed them to separate their decision calculus away from the government's late and visibly hesitant preference for cooperating with the United States and taking part in the war. Whereas Gül's profile finds a very high task focus – indicating his problem-orientation, Gül's actions then rather show his unease with a mere problem solution focus. Gül's initiative reaching out to the regional leaders suggest that he may have had a relationship focus during this episode as well.[24] Gül's hesitancy into February was even more striking given the Turkish military's private (but not public) support for working with the Americans.[25]

According to Kaarbo's propositions, Gül would be unwilling to bring the parliament into the policymaking process, be active but ineffective in managing the parliament's engagement, and would "delegate or avoid". These broadly correspond to Gül's actions at the time – if his willingness about the parliament's role is a bit contradictory to Kaarbo's predictions. Indeed, it is clear from the interviews that Gül clearly perceived the parliament as the final authority (as dictated in the constitution). Reluctant as he may be, Gül eventually did want Turkey and the US cooperate, however, he also did not want to dictate to the party's MPs their choices – arguably, Gül's was at an impasse.[26] Some members of the cabinet remarked in their interviews that Gül "should have not left the vote to

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[22]   It is also important to highlight that Gül's personality traits were relatively stable across his political career (Cuhadar et al., 2017a).

[23]   Formally, there could be no party discipline on votes of this nature. However, the JDP indeed simply ran a very liberal internal debate during the March 1 vote.

[24]   Cuhadar et al. (2021, p. 17) argued Gül's "focus on relationship[s] was visible in the Iraq War decision".

[25]   Existing studies indicate that the Turkish military deferred to the political authority on the Iraq War (Yetkin, 2004; Bölükbaşı, 2008; Cuhadar et al., 2017b). In the meantime, as Cuhadar et al. (2017b) note Gül's expectation was that the military would share the burden if they had taken a public stance. Some argued that the military also wanted to push the new government into a major conundrum (Interviewee F; Interviewee B; Author's interview with Arınç).

[26]   Taydaş and Özdamar argued that "under pressure from Erdoğan, [Gül] worked for the motion to be approved" (Taydaş and Özdamar, 2013, p. 231). There is, however, no clear evidence offered to support this. A recent manuscript on this episode in Turkish foreign policy aptly marks that "Gül was politically and legally beholden to the public opinion. Therefore, he was more cautious and always responsive to other options" (Yilmaz, 2021, p. 10). Some interviewees similarly highlighted the contrast between Gül's formal role as the prime minister (and

each member's conscience" (Anonymous Interviewees). Others noted that when the party group met behind the closed doors, Gül's plea for their support did not sound genuine: "what came out of Gül's mouth did not match his facial expressions, body language" (Interviewee E). With such a mindset, ultimately Gül's last minute and unenthusiastic efforts to shape the outcome of the March 1 motion were fruitless.

Prime Minister Erdoğan and the March 20 Motion

With Erdoğan's election to the parliament, and the end of the caretaker government, there was a visible change in Turkish foreign policy: its leadership. The position of Erdoğan was relatively clear since the November 2002 election: Erdoğan was strongly in favor of taking a part in the Iraq War – if not in favor of the war itself. One can argue that his position was rather dictated by the circumstances; indeed, Erdoğan's speeches to the JDP group in the parliament on February 5, 26, and 27 suggest his reasoning. Accordingly, the assumption was that the United States had made its decision and Turkey was supposed to adjust and stay active to minimize its losses. With such motivation, Erdoğan took actions to ensure a different outcome for the next occasion for decision. Contrary to the context of the March 1 motion, when the March 20 motion arrived the Erdogan-led executive had a clear position. Moreover, as prime minister (and, the JDP chairperson) Erdoğan was able to exert his influence on the party group directly. One such signal came quickly when Erdoğan announced *his* cabinet before the March 20 motion vote, Erdoğan excluded Yalçınbayır (a deputy prime minister in Gül's cabinet), one of the most vocal critiques of the war, from any post in the cabinet as well as from parliamentary level appointments. Prime Minister Erdoğan dominated decisionmaking in this occasion for decision. In addition to Erdoğan, and possibly at his urging, the Turkish Joint Chief of Staff Hilmi Özkök declared publicly that the military supported the government's position (Yetkin, 2004, p. 186).[27]

According to a member of the cabinet, unlike Gül who is risk-averse and carefully weighs in all factors in his decisionmaking, Erdoğan makes a decision and then seeks to back up that decision – therefore, Erdoğan's decisionmaking is much faster (Interviewee B). Arguably, then, one may well assume that given Erdoğan's clear position on the Iraq matter, the path to the March 20th motion

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the associated political and legal responsibilities) and Erdoğan's as the party chairperson (devoid of any constitutional accountability as the government leader).

[27]   This probably was a major difference between the two motions. It is worthwhile to inquire how Erdoğan got the military on his side, had Özkök's public support -or, why and how the military chose to do so then (but not earlier).

was already set when he assumed the premiership. His fellow party MPs had no hesitation about where Erdoğan stood, and what he asked of them on March 20th.

Cuhadar et al. find that "The 2003 Iraq War case demonstrated that [Erdoğan] wanted to control the outcome by actually making his party to vote *en bloc* on the bill. Erdoğan periodically used direct threats that sometimes resulted in more commitment to a foreign policy issue" (Cuhadar et al., 2021, p. 17; italics in original). They also note "there were many instances that illustrated that [Erdoğan] saw the issues in black – and – white, without really showing any interest in looking into the gray areas. […] Erdoğan was very intent to justify why certain actions needed to be taken or some hard decisions had to be made… He showed commitment to his group and asked for complete loyalty in return" (Cuhadar et al., 2021, p. 17). Indeed, Erdoğan's profile, for his high belief in ability to control events and need for power, predict that he would be skillful in both direct and indirect influence in challenging constraints (Hermann, 2003). Furthermore, this profile suggest that Erdoğan would "know what [he] want[ed] and take charge to see it happens" (Hermann, 2003).[28] In their analyses of Erdoğan in the Iraq case, Cuhadar et al. (2017b) observe that "[Erdoğan] took charge of the process and acted more decisively and forcefully on the second occasion for decision [the March 20 motion], he still took into account advice given by other people in the policy-making circles" (Cuhadar et al., 2017b, p. 46). The authors also remind that Erdoğan's ascent to the prime minister's office occurs in an interesting moment: when his political bans were just lifted and he assumed power at the national level immediately after. Erdoğan's relative inexperience in the office and his learning to influence if not control his party group (in the context of a publicly declared aspiration for a democratic party administration) also cloud this moment to some extent.

Per Kaarbo's propositions, Erdoğan would not seek the parliament's involvement in the policymaking process but would be active and effective in managing the parliament's engagement. Erdoğan's actions as the prime minister fit very well with these expectations. Erdoğan took charge, and sought to achieve his goal (i.e. passing the motion). The same party group – hence, the parliament – approved the motion (albeit with lower stakes than the March 1 vote).

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[28]   Cuhadar et al. (2021) finds Erdoğan's profile in a longer timespan also a constraint challenger, but with a lower need for power.

Conclusion

With an established approach to studying political leaders at-a-distance, this paper presented evidence that Gül and Erdoğan differed between each other in their leadership traits and styles during Turkey's policymaking in the 2003 Iraq War. Turkey's choices then and specifically the March 1 motion had major repercussions for the war and Turkey's relations with the United States since then. It is imperative to understand this episode for its short- and long-term impacts, which can be illustrative for similar examples elsewhere. For one, Erdoğan's later association of the March 1 motion with the controversies about his government's desire to send Turkish troops to Syria shows the significance of this paper's discussion.

The cases of Gül's and Erdoğan's illustrate the importance of context-specific profiles, as their respective leadership traits and styles explain their policymaking during the 2003 Iraq War. Kaarbo's propositions are not "merely speculations" – as she wrote, but carefully derived from research in LTA (Kaarbo, 2018, p. 44). As she called for, "empirical investigation(s)" such as this paper's are essential to advance our understanding of leaders and their styles in foreign and security policymaking and most specifically the interaction between leaders and parliaments in policymaking. The Turkish case from its policymaking in the 2003 Iraq War offered a fitting 'laboratory' to answer Kaarbo's call. Two leaders and two different outcomes in a short timeframe presented an opportunity to investigate the relationship between leaders and parliaments in security policymaking.

As Henke put it, "[t]he reasons for the Turkish refusal to cooperate with the United States on Iraq are still poorly understood" (2018, p. 121). This paper's inquiry, accordingly, contributes to unpacking this important moment in Turkish foreign and security policy. There remains much unknown in the parliamentary debates, and will so until the closed sessions' records are made public. Similarly, despite some public or anonymous accounts of the cabinet ministers, the interactions between Gül and Erdoğan as "leaders in conflict" (Dyson, 2015) will likely remain undisclosed for a long time (if not forever).

Beyond Turkey, parliamentary involvement in similar contexts, such as regarding military deployments or declarations of war, are directly relevant to this paper's discussion. The British decision-making processes under Tony Blair and David Cameron respectively concerning the Iraq War and the Syrian war will allow for similar inquiries to expand applications of and further Kaarbo's propositions. Indeed, some existing research already explore associated debates (Kaarbo and Kenealy, 2016; Mello, 2017; Raunio and Wagner, 2017). In the meantime, the expanding literature on parliamentary war powers (Peters and Wagner, 2011; Ruys et al., 2019) also offers such connections in different contexts. A leadership centric analysis will be instrumental – as this paper illustrated – to understanding

the decision-making dynamics at the intersections of executive and legislative branches in foreign and security policymaking.

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