
Tansu Çiller's Leadership Traits and Foreign Policy

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Abstract

In the post-Cold War era, from 1993 to 1996, Tansu Çiller led Turkey through volatile political and economic crises. Moreover, she had a strong interest in foreign affairs and her leadership attracted attention from abroad as she was a female prime minister of a predominantly Muslim nation. Much like the general lack of interest in psychological factors in Turkish foreign policy, there is little research on personality and its impact on Turkey's foreign affairs. In this paper, Çiller's leadership is systematically studied by utilising one of the most prominent methods of leadership assessment: leadership traits analysis. This paper first profiles Tansu Çiller as prime minister and then compares her to other Turkish leaders in the post-Cold War era. Its findings suggest that Çiller's high in-group bias and high distrust mark her leadership and foreign policy behaviour. The paper highlights the significance of personalities in foreign policy making and calls for systematic accounts of this effect on Turkey's foreign policy.

Key Words

Profiling political leaders, at-a-distance assessment, leadership traits analysis, Tansu Çiller, prime ministers and Turkish foreign policy.

Introduction

Henry Kissinger once said that “As a professor, I tended to think of history as run by impersonal forces. But when you see it in practice, you see the difference personalities make.”¹ Kissinger's argument is well reflected in the scholarly study of foreign policy; in this line of research, the individual constitutes the heart of international politics.² For those who follow in the tradition of Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin, political leaders' individual features influence state behaviour.³ As such, personality characteristics (such as beliefs, motives, decision-making style, and interpersonal style) affect personal orientation to behaviour, which in turn shapes one's general orientation to foreign affairs.⁴ In other words then, individuals- or groups of individuals- are the sources of all state actions.⁵

* Assistant Professor of Political Science, Susquehanna University, Pennsylvania, USA. The author wishes to thank two anonymous reviewers, Cengiz Erişen, as well as Christina Xydias and Jessica Epstein for their useful comments and feedback. This research was funded in part by the Joseph B. Harris Fellowship from the Department of Political Science at the University of Kansas.

The study of individuals in the field of foreign policy analysis has benefited from and is closely connected with literature and research in psychology.⁶ This line of inquiry, and particularly the study of the individual in world affairs, has significantly expanded since Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin. Nonetheless, existing studies of political leadership heavily focus on Western democracies and systematic studies of non-Western leaders are relatively scarce. Likewise, there are but a handful of assessments of the role leaders play in Turkish politics, and more specifically in the making of Turkish foreign policy. Leaders in every political system come to office with their unique approach to foreign (as well as domestic) policy; Turkish leaders are by no means exceptions. This paper looks at Turkey's Tansu Çiller for various reasons. First, it aims to contribute not only to the study of Turkish foreign policy by introducing a method for systematically profiling Turkish leaders but also to the broader field of political leadership and foreign policy analysis by expanding the application of existing methods. In addition, Çiller is the only woman to have led Turkey and also one of very few (along with Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto and Bangladesh's Khaleda Zia) to have led a predominantly Muslim country. Therefore, understanding Çiller's leadership is important.⁷

Most significantly, Çiller was the head of the Turkish government at

critical junctures of foreign policy issues. Indeed, Turkey's self-described "iron lady"⁸ led the country in the aftermath of the Cold War, at a time when it- much like other countries- was re-defining its role in a new world. As Grove recently argued, "[e]specially in a world of great uncertainty and ambiguity, as opposed to rigid Cold War environment, individual leaders make a difference."⁹ Çiller's term as prime minister coincided with this transition in the international system. Other foreign policy issues such as Turkey's bid for European Union membership and its relations with Greece also dominated Çiller's reign. How did Çiller's personality affect Turkey's foreign policy during her term in office as prime minister? Can we systematically assess Çiller's leadership traits with respect to foreign policy matters?

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This paper starts with the assumption that leaders matter in politics, and more specifically in foreign policy making. After a brief review of the relevant techniques for assessing political leadership, it highlights Turkish prime ministers' significance in the making of the country's foreign policy. Then, former Prime Minister Tansu Çiller is profiled and a discussion about how

her leadership characteristics influenced Turkish foreign policy follows. According to the findings here, compared to other Turkish prime ministers since the 1990s, Çiller lacked self-confidence, had a high distrust of others, and a high in-group bias. These traits, in turn, became evident in Çiller's rather radical proposals (for instance, at the height of tensions with Greece to send troops to a contested islet in the Mediterranean, or to bomb "likely" terrorist camps in Iran) to deal with various issues. The paper concludes with a call for more examination of how individual actors can influence political outcomes and the psychological factors in Turkey's foreign policy-making process.

At-A-Distance Assessment of Political Leaders

The study of political leaders requires unique methods since leaders are not available or willing to be interviewed for psychological analysis. However, one can infer leaders' personality traits or beliefs from their public speeches and/or other spontaneous utterances.¹⁰ "At-a-distance" techniques are especially designed to overcome this problem of access. These methods help profile political leaders based on their publicly available verbal records (speeches, interviews, letters, etc.). These methods require meticulously designed procedures of coding and operationalisation of selected

personality measures.¹¹ In essence, these techniques are adaptations of conventional psychological personality measurements.¹²

"At-a-distance" methods of political leadership assessment have been computerised since the introduction of ProfilerPlus, developed by Michael Young and his associates at Social Science Automation. Since its debut in 2001, this program has been widely used in the personality assessment of various political leaders. Programs such as ProfilerPlus are important not only for significantly reducing the time spent for analysis but also for developing systematic and objective results. Automated content analysis is also advantageous as it allows for a wealth of materials to be examined. Thanks to the Internet, more open source texts are accessible for such analyses. This is crucial in that it allows researchers to address a major gap in the literature: that despite calls for expanding the study of political leaders beyond Western countries, the bulk of the current literature remains rather focused on Western leaders.¹³ While there are many documents (interviews, speeches, etc.) available for studies of non-Western political leadership, this call has been only partially met.¹⁴

Leadership Traits Analysis

According to Young and Schafer, Leadership Traits Analysis is one of the

most significant research programmes about leaders' cognition.¹⁵ As a method of political leadership assessment, Leadership Traits Analysis (LTA) has led to multiple, fruitful lines of research and has been applied to many leaders around the world.¹⁶ This technique claims that leaders' choices of certain words reflect their personalities. As the pioneer of this method Margaret Hermann explains, "[i]n effect, the trait analysis is quantitative in nature and employs frequency counts. At issue is what percentage of the time in responding to interviewers' questions when leaders could exhibit particular words and phrases are they, indeed, used."¹⁷ Each trait is calculated according to a coding scheme developed by Hermann, and the scores for each

range from zero to one. As such, LTA involves a careful content analysis of leaders' discourse and its quantification into seven traits. These are (1) the belief that one can influence or control what happens, (2) the need for power and influence, (3) conceptual complexity (the ability to differentiate things and people in one's environment), (4) self-confidence, (5) the tendency to focus on problem solving and accomplishing something versus maintenance of the group and dealing with others' ideas and sensitivities, (6) general distrust or suspiciousness of others, and (7) the intensity with which a person holds an in-group bias (see Table 1 for a summary).

Table 1: Leadership Traits Analysis: Trait Conceptualisation and Coding Scheme

Trait	Description	Coding
Belief in Ability to Control Events	Perception of the world as an environment leader can influence. Leader's own state is perceived as an influential actor in the international system.	Percentage of verbs used that reflect action or planning for action of the leader or relevant group.
Conceptual Complexity	Capability of discerning different dimensions of the environment when describing actors, places, ideas, and situations.	Percentage of words related to high complexity (i.e., "approximately," "possibility," "trend") vs. low complexity (i.e., "absolutely," "certainly," "irreversible").
Distrust of Others	Doubt about and wariness of others.	Percentage of nouns that indicate misgivings or suspicions that others intend harm toward speaker or speaker's group.
In-Group Bias	Perception of one's group as holding a central role, accompanied with strong feelings of national identity and honour.	Percentage of references to the group that are favourable (i.e., "successful," "prosperous," "great"), show strength (i.e., "powerful," "capable") or a need to maintain group identity (i.e., "decide our own policies," "defend our borders").
Need for Power	A concern with gaining, keeping and restoring power over others.	Percentage of verbs that reflect actions of attack, advise, influence the behaviour of others, concern with reputation.
Self-Confidence	Personal image of self-importance in terms of the ability to deal with the environment.	Percentage of personal pronouns used such as "my," "myself," "I," "me," and "mine," which show speaker perceives self as the instigator of an activity, an authority figure, or a recipient of a positive reward.
Task Focus	Relative focus on problem solving versus maintenance of relationship to others. Higher score indicates greater problem solving focus.	Percentage of words related to instrumental activities (i.e., "accomplishment," "plan," "proposal") versus concern for other's feelings and desires (i.e., "collaboration," "amnesty," "appreciation").

Source: Stephen Dyson, "Personality and Foreign Policy: Tony Blair's Iraq Decisions", *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (July 2006), p. 292.

A leader's profile is assessed via a comparison of his or her traits' scores to those of a meaningful group of other leaders- that is, the norming group. When a leader's scores are a standard deviation below the norming group's mean, then he or she profiles *low* in that trait. Accordingly, when a score is one standard deviation above the norming group's, then the leader has a *high* score for the trait in question. When a leader's score is close to the norming group's mean, the leader is *moderate* in that particular trait. A leader's ranking in comparison to this group (high or low) then suggests how he or she will react to constraints, are motivated towards the world, and their openness to information, etc. These, in turn, inform a leader's leadership style. For instance, leaders have different

styles of decision-making because they "relate to those around them- whether constituents, advisers, or other leaders- and how they structure interactions and the norms, rules, and principles they use to guide such interactions" in different manners.¹⁸ Table 2 illustrates an example: how a leader ranks according to his or her scores in Belief in Ability to Control Events and Need for Power help determine the leader's responsiveness to constraints. Openness to contextual information is determined according to a leader's Conceptual Complexity and Self-Confidence scores; In-Group Bias and Distrust of Others together indicate motivation toward world; and finally, the Task Focus trait signals a leader's motivation for seeking office.

Table 2: Leader's Reaction to Constraints

Need for power	Belief in One's Own Ability to Control Events	
	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>Low</i>	Respect constraints ; work within such parameters toward goals; compromise and consensus building important.	Challenge constraints but less successful in doing so because too direct and open in use of power; less able to read how to manipulate people and setting behind the scenes to have desired influence.
<i>High</i>	Challenge constraints but more comfortable doing so in an indirect fashion-behind the scenes; good at being "power behind the throne" where they can pull strings but are less accountable for result.	Challenge constraints ; are skilful in both direct and indirect influence; know what they want and take charge to see that it happens.

Source: Margaret G. Hermann, "Assessing Leadership Style: Trait Analysis", in Jerrold M. Post (ed.), *The Psychological Assessment of Political Leaders: With Profiles of Saddam Hussein and Bill Clinton*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2003, pp.188.

In addition to Hermann's research, recently Stephen Dyson has significantly contributed to leadership traits analysis. For instance, Dyson compared Tony Blair's traits scores (the prime minister of the UK from 1997–2007) with all the other British prime ministers since 1945. According to Dyson's analysis, Tony Blair has a high Belief in Ability to Control Events, a low Conceptual Complexity, and a high Need for Power compared to the other 12 British prime ministers in the post-1945 era.¹⁹ First, Blair's significantly higher Belief in Ability to Control Events score suggests that Blair strongly believes in his ability to control events in the political environment, and that he perceives Britain as an influential actor in world politics. Second, a low Conceptual Complexity score signals a worldview of binary categories such as good vs. evil and us vs. them. Blair's Conceptual Complexity score, which is one standard deviation below other British prime ministers, indicates that he would have a decisive decision-making style where other significant factors outside his black-and-white view are not evaluated properly or may go unnoticed. Lastly, Dyson shows that Blair is high in the Need for Power trait and hence would be actively involved in policy formulation and would work with small groups of hand-picked individuals. In addition, a combined high Belief in Ability to Control Events and high Need for Power score suggests that Blair

would likely challenge constraints in the international system. This leadership traits analysis of Blair shows how his preferences and behaviour dictated Britain's choice in Iraq. As the Iraq war unfolded, Blair "demonstrated a proactive policy orientation, internal locus of control in terms of shaping events, a binary information processing and framing style, and a preference to work through tightly held processes in policy making."²⁰ In his later work, Dyson explores the leadership in the United States administration- specifically, the leadership of the former Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld.²¹

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Further recent work in LTA has shed light on the decision-making during the Iraq war. For instance, Shannon and Keller show that, against some constructivist and realist propositions about how international norms were violated due to global social pressures or self-interest and the anarchic nature of world politics, leaders' beliefs and their decision-making styles have significant impacts on why and how leaders may defy international norms.²² Shannon

and Keller look at leadership traits of the members of the George W. Bush administration and their positions regarding the 2003 Iraq war.²³ Bringing insights from political leadership literature, Shannon and Keller's analysis shows that particular leadership traits (such as high Belief in Ability to Control Events, Need for Power, Distrust of Others, and In-Group Bias) can predict a leader's propensity to respect or challenge international norms. These studies illustrate the significance of LTA as a method to explain foreign policy behaviour and link this behaviour with the personalities of decision-makers.

LTA has been criticised for its inability to capture the leader's personality and for providing rather a snapshot at a certain moment.²⁴ Hermann, in response, makes it clear that personality can be contextually dependent and this can be determined by studying diverse material.²⁵ Notwithstanding such criticisms, it is widely accepted that many leader profiles that were assessed using the LTA technique have corresponded with the image of those leaders in the eyes of other leaders, advisers, and journalists.²⁶ These studies show that a leader's general profile can be assessed with a certain word count and a variety of issues covered from different times. Nonetheless, other studies, and particularly Mahdasian, also discuss how the LTA scores would become less stable when they are calculated over smaller

time frames or across different issues.²⁷ Finally, as mentioned earlier, a challenge still ahead of the LTA is to expand this method of analysis in profiling leaders in other countries and testing to what extent it is valid cross cultures as much of the published work in LTA remains within the Western context.²⁸

Turkey's Foreign Policy and Prime Ministers

Political leaders of Turkey have always controlled significant political power since Atatürk, the founder of modern day Turkey.²⁹ In fact, Turkish politics has always been "a stage for leader-based politics."³⁰ Specifically, prime ministers have been important actors in Turkish foreign policy making.³¹ For example, during his one-year in office then Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan attempted to put an interesting (and widely controversial) twist to Turkish foreign policy as he had explored new alternatives for Turkey in the Muslim world. Erbakan's foreign policy adventures very much reflected his view of the world and his personality.

Despite such examples as Erbakan, scholars of Turkish politics and foreign policy have rarely chosen to study leaders' personalities and trace their potential effects on foreign (as well as domestic) policy. Until recently, there were only two exceptions to this trend.

The first, published in 2002, is the Heper and Sayarı volume, a very informative collection of essays on Turkish leaders and their contributions (or lack thereof) to Turkey's democratisation.³² Although it has rather limited engagement with foreign policy issues, this book provides valuable information about leader personalities as each chapter has a section on their personalities. A second edited book, by Ali Faik Demir, focuses exclusively on foreign policy and leadership, and it is (most likely) the only such study in Turkish foreign policy literature.³³ However,

as of late 2011, there has been no research that has covered all the major political actors (e.g. prime ministers in the past two decades) in Turkey and assessed their personalities

in a systematic manner. Recently, there has been a new interest developed in leadership and Turkish foreign policy.³⁴ In addition, on a broader scale than a specific interest in personality, some research now looks at the role of psychological factors in Turkish foreign policy making.³⁵

In order to understand any prime minister's role in Turkish foreign policy making, it is necessary first to assess the bureaucratic organisation and cultural practices in which the prime

minister works. Historically speaking, Turkish foreign policy making has included other actors along with the prime minister: the civilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs bureaucracy, the Turkish military, the president, as well as the parliament.³⁶ Çiller's role in the foreign policy-making establishment as the chief executive was arguably constrained by these institutional and historical factors in Turkey.³⁷ For instance, Çiller was the head of a coalition cabinet and hence dealt with coalition-based decision-making processes.³⁸ In addition, one

would anticipate that Çiller was also limited by international constraints such as Turkey's dependence on the United States in economic and security matters as well. On the other hand, one would

expect Çiller to be actively involved in foreign policy matters given her personal background and also previous experience in government.

Tansu Çiller

Tansu Çiller, the daughter of a bureaucrat, was born and raised in Istanbul. Çiller studied at English-language schools from her early school years and after, earning a degree in economics from Robert College (present

day Bosphorus University). Çiller then completed her doctoral studies at the University of Connecticut in the United States where she and husband Özer Çiller lived for a number of years. The Çillers returned to Turkey in 1974 and Tansu Çiller taught at Bosphorus University's Department of Economics until she became actively involved in politics. Çiller was a technocrat and served as minister of state responsible for the economy from 1991 to 1993. Upon Demirel's election to the presidency, Çiller assumed the post of party chairperson in the True Path Party (centre-right) in June 1993. Shortly after, she became the prime minister when her own party and Social Democratic People's Party (centre-left) agreed to keep the coalition government in office.

One would expect Çiller to be actively involved in foreign policy matters given her personal background and also previous experience in government.

Çiller stayed in government with brief interruptions as other coalition cabinets alternated in power and served as deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs during the 1990s- more specifically, in the Erbakan government. Çiller's reputation gradually eroded due to various scandals and electoral defeats,

and she finally retired from politics after the November 2002 elections. Çiller's tenure in politics lasted a little longer than a decade; nevertheless, as Turkey's first female party chairperson and prime minister, Çiller made her mark on Turkey's political history and its foreign policy in the 1990s. Scholars of Turkey have yet to assess Tansu Çiller³⁹ despite her importance in Turkey's recent political history.

Data and Method

This paper takes public domain texts as its data: as such, transcripts of *all* interviews with Çiller and *any* other spontaneous statements Çiller made are included in the analysis that follows. Only the words directly spoken by the leader, Tansu Çiller, are analysed here; that is, no comments paraphrased by others are included. Furthermore, only the content relevant to foreign policy issues is selected. Çiller's words are drawn from LexisNexis Academic, Factiva, and the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), and the Internet when transcripts were readily available on the Internet. The data include translations (from Turkish utterances into English) as well as Çiller's own words originally uttered in English. From July 1993 to February 1996, the analysis here uses 27,402 words of Tansu Çiller, pertaining only to foreign policy.⁴⁰ The data span the entire period Çiller was in office as

Turkey's prime minister. Hence, these interviews discuss various issues at various different times during her tenure in government and as such represent Çiller's general foreign policy approach.

ProfilPlus (Version 5.8.4, Social Science Automation) was used to analyse these texts, and to assess leadership traits scores for Çiller. Analysing text with this program guarantees uniformity in the treatment of text; the words are the data.⁴¹

Çiller's Leadership Traits and Foreign Policy

Cizre claims that Çiller's own description of her personality characteristics emphasised "such man-like attributes as courage, endurance, determination, and militarism."⁴² Arguably, with such an image, one can claim that Çiller did not greatly challenge customs in gender relations in Turkish society. On the contrary, as Cizre notes, Çiller never hesitated to use her gender to gain political advantage. For instance, Çiller's self-made titles were *Ana* (Mother) and *Bacı* (Sister), the most traditional images of woman in Turkey.⁴³ Çiller's "stylish Chanel suits" often were matched with a light veil she could wear when necessary in conservative settings.⁴⁴

Çiller's record in office suggests that she was "motivated for power, egoistical interests, aggression, clientalism, and

political intrigues."⁴⁵ In addition, Çiller developed a "reputation for being confrontational and difficult to work with."⁴⁶ For instance, Mehmet Dülger, then a prominent member of Çiller's True Path Party, told the *Chicago Tribune* that Çiller had always had a problem of selecting the right team and getting along with team members.⁴⁷ According to her former press secretary, Çiller "doesn't handle people very well. She is not friendly or open. It's the result of both inexperience and insensitivity."⁴⁸ Quoting Çiller's aides and colleagues, Cizre portrays Çiller as an authoritarian leader, who lacked self-confidence and was not a good team player.⁴⁹ While these are broad observations about Çiller's personality, here the analyses specifically focus on Prime Minister Çiller's leadership traits in foreign policy and their repercussions on Turkish foreign policy.

Along with Turkish prime ministers' average scores, Table 3 displays Çiller's scores in all seven LTA traits. According to these results, Çiller has a close to average score in her Belief to Control Events and does not differ much from the rest of Turkish prime ministers in the post-Cold war era. In terms of Conceptual Complexity, Çiller is lower than the average Turkish leader. This suggests that Çiller was more likely than other Turkish leaders to interpret objects, ideas, events, or things in simple dichotomous good-bad, black-white,

either-or terms. Accordingly, Çiller would have had “difficulty in perceiving ambiguity in the environment” and would have responded “rather inflexibly to stimuli.”⁵⁰ Çiller has an almost average Need for Power; Prime Minister Çiller did not have significantly more (or less) concern for establishing, maintaining, or restoring power, control or influence over other persons or groups. Likewise, Çiller does not deviate much from an average Turkish prime minister with respect to her motivations in seeking office; according to the leadership traits technique, she would be expected to have either a task (solving problems) or a relationship focus depending on the context. In these four traits, Çiller does not seem to differ from the norming group, that is Turkey’s prime ministers in the post-Cold war era. However, in three traits Çiller deviates significantly from the average scores of Turkish prime ministers. Now, the discussion shifts to

Çiller’s unique leadership style and its impacts on Turkey’s foreign policy under her authority.

To start with, Çiller has the lowest self-confidence score among all of Turkey’s prime ministers in the post-Cold War era. Despite some claims to the contrary,⁵¹ Cizre’s account of Çiller’s self-confidence is confirmed in Çiller’s leadership traits analysis. Arguably, in an example from domestic politics, her low self-confidence was the primary reason for Çiller’s giving in to the military during her tenure as prime minister. Prime Minister Çiller “lavishly praise[d]” the military and never challenged its role in politics; in fact, she was most comfortable delegating the PKK issue to the Turkish military.⁵² In foreign affairs, Çiller’s low self-confidence may have been overshadowed by her other traits, namely distrust of others and in-group bias where Çiller displays high scores.

Table 3: Çiller's LTA Profile*

	Çiller's average profile	Average profile of Turkey's prime ministers since 1991
Belief in Ability to Control Events	.348	Mean = .351 Low < .319 High > .383
Conceptual Complexity	.538	Mean = .564 Low < .527 High > .601
Distrust of Others	.143	Mean = .138 Low < .097 High > .179
In-Group Bias	.170	Mean = .142 Low < .114 High > .170
Need for Power	.278	Mean = .287 Low < .243 High > .331
Self-Confidence	.305	Mean = .400 Low < .320 High > .480
Task Focus	.610	Mean = .637 Low < .572 High > .702

Source: Barış Kesgin, *Political Leadership and Foreign Policy in Post-Cold War Israel and Turkey*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 2011.

*The average Turkish prime minister profile includes scores for Süleyman Demirel, Tansu Çiller, Mesut Yılmaz, Necmettin Erbakan, Bülent Ecevit, Abdullah Gül, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (in chronological order) from November 1991 to 31 December 2009.

According to the results shown in Table 3, Çiller has lower than average scores in all but Distrust of Others⁵³ and In-Group Bias traits. In the rankings of these both traits in the norming group, Tansu Çiller is second only to

Necmettin Erbakan. This is indeed very telling of Çiller's foreign policy. For Çiller, Turkey's location forced it to be prudent and cautious of others: "We of course, as a nation in this part of the world, are watching what the neighbours

are doing. We watched that in Iraq, we watched that in Europe, we watched that elsewhere and there is no reason why we should not be concerned as to what is happening on our borders and in our neighbourhood.”⁵⁴ Then, according to Çiller, Turkey was the central state in the world and its culture and status were of the utmost significance:

We are very proud of our democratic heritage. We have all the institutions of democracy, the parliament, the free press, all the other institutions. And we are proud of what we have set forth as an example for the other 52 Muslim countries, and it's a model, either the Iranian model or the Turkish model, we have two models now. Turkey is the only stable country in the Middle East which has access to 200 million Turkish-speaking people that have disintegrated from the former Soviet Union- the Azerbaijanis, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. We are the country, as you know, with the support of the United States administration who will be providing the energy needs of Europe via the pipeline, petroleum pipeline and natural gas pipeline of Azerbaijan, of Turkmenistan, of Kazakhstan, passing through Turkey to Jehan [*sic*] to the Mediterranean to Europe. It is not a country that can be neglected with the water reserves.⁵⁵

Çiller's discourse and policy preferences reflected her desire for a strong move- which was only reconciled with other participants' calm in the decision-making processes.

According to the Leadership Traits Analysis, it is predicted that leaders

with high scores in both Distrust of Others and In-group Bias will focus on eliminating potential threats and problems. These leaders perceive the world to be centred around adversaries, and they intend to spread their power. Moreover, such leaders are expected to take risks, because they think it is a moral imperative to challenge those adversaries. As her leadership traits profile suggests, Çiller's "militarism" may very well be an outcome of her high Distrust of Others and In-group Bias scores.⁵⁶ One can trace the impact of these two traits in the examples of Kardak crisis with Greece and Çiller's approach to the fight against the PKK.

First, during the Kardak crisis in late 1995, Çiller's discourse and policy preferences reflected her desire for a strong move- which was only reconciled with other participants' calm in the decision-making processes. In reaction to the news that there was a Greek flag on the Kardak islets and that Greek soldiers had "occupied" them, Çiller quickly declared that "that flag will come down, those soldiers will go back to Greece." This reflected Çiller's discourse as observed by others: "[Çiller] liked pounding her hand on the table when talking. She used a language of force: *we act; we break; we demolish.*"⁵⁷ During the Kardak crisis Çiller said "This is our legacy: We do not give away territory. We do not concede even an inch of territory or a pebble. We can sacrifice lives, but not pebbles..."⁵⁸ In

fact, as Turkish policymakers formulated their response to these events, Çiller is said to have suggested even tougher policies than those of the Turkish military. Had Turkey preferred the military action as proposed by Çiller, it was quite likely that Greece and Turkey would have been at war. Two weeks after the Mediterranean calmed down, Çiller signalled that Turkey's response would be firm should Greece retaliate again and that the Turkish position was simply indisputable:

If they bring soldiers to Kardak and hoist a flag once again, the same thing will happen. We are saying: *Do not create a de facto situation by opening up the place for settlement. We will not allow this. We would regard this as a genuine provocation and a cause for war. [...]* In our view, all these issues are very clear. If we are being told: There are things that you are not aware of and this is why we claim that we have rights, then they should come and show us the relevant documents. [...] *We are aware of what was given to Greece through agreements. There is no question about those areas*⁵⁹ [emphasis added].

Likewise, another issue where one can observe Çiller's hawkish policies was the fight against the PKK during her tenure as prime minister. Responding to questions about a Turkish cross-border operation against the PKK in northern Iraq, Çiller said that "the terrorists have settled down there and to attack back to my country to kill the innocent people. So we had to do something about it to stop it. We will withdraw in the shortest possible time, and we are- we have

already started doing that. But I have to specify that if that kind of thing happens again, we will have to do the same thing again."⁶⁰ Similar to the Kardak example, it is reported that Çiller once proposed to attack possible PKK targets in Iran. This was, however, overruled by then President Demirel.⁶¹ Such examples are abound: earlier in her tenure, reacting to the tension in the Caucasus Çiller did not hesitate to declare, "If one inch of Nakhichevan soil is touched and there is any attempt to change its status then I will call on parliament to authorize war and to send in troops. We are currently reviewing all the possibilities. The Turkish army is drawing up preliminary plans for every scenario, and it is waiting the government's decision."⁶²

In essence, Çiller was responsive to and attentive of the international constraints Turkey faced at the time and could not risk Turkey's relations with the United States.

Çiller, according to her LTA profile, respects constraints and is not likely to challenge them. Then, Çiller is open to contextual information, since her Conceptual Complexity score is higher than her Self-Confidence score. When compared to the average score of a Turkish prime minister, Çiller's low

Conceptual Complexity was evident in her electoral speeches: occasionally Çiller said that “we [True Path Party] either win or win.”⁶³ Finally, Çiller’s Task Focus score is below the mean but is higher than the low mark. Overall, Çiller has a collegial leadership style. According to Hermann, collegial leaders “focus their attention on reconciling differences and building consensus and on gaining prestige thorough empowering others and sharing accountability.”⁶⁴ This, however, does not fit well with Çiller’s image as has been accounted so far. The LTA can offer an explanation: the interpretation of Çiller’s Task Focus score would make a difference. Compared to the world leader average score, all Turkish prime ministers have a rather higher score in Task Focus.⁶⁵ If Çiller too were considered to have a higher score relative to an average world leader, then she would be problem focused rather than relationship focused. Given this LTA assessment, Çiller would be expected to have an opportunistic leadership style. This in fact appears to explain Çiller’s leadership: opportunistic leaders “focus on assessing what is possible in light of one’s goals and considering what important constituencies will allow.” In essence, Çiller was responsive to and attentive of the international constraints Turkey faced at the time and could not risk Turkey’s relations with the United States.

Conclusion

“Who leads matters.”⁶⁶ In addition to domestic and international constraints, decision-making processes are bound by leaders’ constraints. Psychological approaches to international relations offer scholars the tools to delineate the individual (as well as group) level limitations on decision-making. Building on current research in political leadership studies, this study shows that at-a-distance assessments of political leaders provide the means to conduct research on world leaders in a systematic manner. Furthermore, their conclusions go well beyond subjective appraisals of political leaders.

Since this area of research is a relatively young scholarly vocation and remains heavily oriented towards Western leaders, there are plenty of opportunities in exploring non-Western leaders. The study of Turkish leaders and of its foreign policy with an emphasis on leadership can benefit from and contribute to this literature. The leadership traits profile of Tansu Çiller here illustrates the utility of a systematic assessment of personality in understanding Turkish foreign policy.

The arguments put forward in this paper and its findings advance our understanding of Turkish foreign policy. First, this paper shows that personality-oriented studies can significantly contribute to the study of Turkish

foreign policy. Çiller as Turkey's prime minister shaped its foreign policy in tumultuous times, and her personality clearly emerged throughout her tenure—for instance, as discussed here, during the Kardak crisis. Çiller's reactions and policy at the time can be interpreted through her leadership traits and style. Compared to all the prime ministers of Turkey since 1991, Çiller exhibited three distinct traits as a leader: low self-confidence, high distrust of others, and high in-group bias. This paper has argued that Çiller's low self-confidence (the lowest self-confidence among all of Turkey's prime ministers in the post-Cold War era) might have had its roots in the domestic political environment (the influence of the military and the economic and political instability of the 1990s). In foreign affairs, more specifically, Çiller's high distrust of other and high in-group bias (both the second highest among the Turkish leadership) significantly impacted her choices and actions. As it was discussed with multiple other examples along with the cases of the fight against PKK and the Kardak crisis, these traits primarily led Çiller to take an approach that focused on eliminating potential threats and problems. Inarguably, there is much to explore

in Çiller's tenure as prime minister; this study is an initial attempt. Çiller's management of Turkey's relations with the European Union (more specifically, the decision-making processes that led to the signing of the Customs Union agreement) would be the best case study to look further into Çiller's leadership and decision-making.⁶⁷

Second, this paper contributes to the study of Turkish foreign policy by introducing a well-established method of assessing political leadership. Using such methods (operational code analysis, image theory, etc.), scholars of Turkish foreign affairs as well as policymakers can reach methodologically sound and theoretically informed understanding of factors influential to Turkey's foreign policy. Moreover, this paper contributes to the broader literature on the methodology that it employs: Çiller's leadership traits correspond well with her foreign policy preferences and behaviour. As such, in addition to some extant literature, this paper illustrates that the Leadership Traits Analysis as a method is applicable to non-Western leadership. In this study, this literature expands to a new territory in Turkey.

Endnotes

- 1 Cited in Daniel Byman and Kenneth M. Pollack, “Let Us Now Praise Great Men: Bringing the Statesman Back In”, *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Spring 2001), pp. 107-146.
- 2 Richard C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck and Burton Sapin, *Foreign Policy Decision Making*, New York, Free Press, 1962; Valerie M. Hudson, “Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations”, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (March 2005), pp. 1-30. In stark contrast, the assumptions of classical and structural realism run counter to this claim; see, for instance, Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, McGraw-Hill, 1979. A particular brand of realism, neo-classical, engages with the individual level more so than its classical and structural variants; there is a great opportunity for interaction between neo-classical realism and political leadership studies. However, presently, this remains quite limited. For some short discussion, see, Wesley Renfro, *Presidential Decision-making and the Use of Force*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Connecticut, 2009, pp. 11-17.
- 3 Richard C. Snyder, H.W. Bruck and Burton Sapin published their *Foreign Policy Decision-Making* originally in 1962; an earlier, 1954 version was also printed as “Foreign Policy Analysis Project Series No. 3” at Princeton University. Unless otherwise noted, any citations here refer to an updated edition published in 2002 (*Foreign Policy Decision-Making, revisited*) with additional chapters by Valerie M. Hudson, Derek H. Chollet and James M. Goldgeier.
- 4 Margaret G. Hermann, “Explaining Foreign Policy Behavior Using the Personal Characteristics of Political Leaders”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (March 1980), p. 12.
- 5 Hudson, “Foreign Policy Analysis”.
- 6 Here, “Foreign Policy Analysis” refers to the academic study of foreign policy as a subfield of International Relations. For a review, see Jack S. Levy, “Political Psychology and Foreign Policy”, in David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy and Robert Jervis (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 253-284.
- 7 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000*, Portland, Oregon, Frank Cass Publishers, 2002, p. 197.
- 8 According to a profile of Çiller in *Maclean’s* magazine (“The other new woman PM”, 12 July 1993), Çiller frequently mentioned Margaret Thatcher as a political model.
- 9 Andrea K. Grove, *Political Leadership in Foreign Policy: Manipulating Support across Borders*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 1.
- 10 Margaret G. Hermann, “When Leader Personality Will Affect Foreign Policy: Some Propositions”, in James N. Rosenau (ed.), *In Search of Global Patterns*, 1976, pp. 326-333; Mark Schafer, “Issues in Assessing Psychological Characteristics at a Distance: An Introduction to the Symposium”, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (September 2000), pp. 511-527; David G. Winter, Margaret G. Hermann, Walter Weintraub, and Stephen G. Walker, “The Personalities of Bush and Gorbachev Measured at a Distance: Procedures, Portraits, and Policy”, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (June 1991), pp. 215-245.
- 11 David G. Winter, “Personality and Political Behavior”, in Sears, Huddy and Jervis (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, pp. 110-145.

- 12 David G. Winter, "Personality and Foreign Policy: A Historical Overview of Research", in Eric Singer and Valerie M. Hudson (eds.), *Political Psychology and Foreign Policy*, Westview Press, 1992, pp. 79-101.
- 13 Mark Schafer and Stephen G. Walker, "Operational Code Analysis at a Distance: The Verbs in Context System of Content Analysis", in Mark Schafer and Stephen G. Walker (eds.), *Beliefs and Leadership in World Politics: Methods and Applications of Operational Code Analysis*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, pp. 25-51.
- 14 Ofer Feldman and Linda O. Valenty (eds.), *Profiling Political Leaders: Cross-Cultural Studies of Personality and Behavior*, Westport, CT, Praeger, 2001; Akan Malici and Allison L. Buckner, "Empathizing with Rogue Leaders: Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Bashar al-Asad", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 45, No. 6 (November 2008), pp. 783-800.
- 15 Michael D. Young and Mark Schafer, "Is There Method in Our Madness? Ways of Assessing Cognition in International Relations", *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (May 1998), pp. 63-96. Other techniques Young and Schafer identify are operational code analysis, image theory, and cognitive mapping. For recent reviews about leaders' cognition, see Thomas Preston, "Leadership and Foreign Policy Analysis", in Robert A. Denemark (ed.), *International Studies Encyclopedia Online*, Blackwell Publishing, 2010; Jerel A. Rosati and Colleen E. Miller, "Political Psychology, Cognition, and Foreign Policy Analysis", in Denemark (ed.), *International Studies Encyclopedia Online*.
- 16 Stephen B. Dyson, *The Blair Identity: Leadership and Foreign Policy*, Manchester, New York, Manchester University Press, 2009; Stephen B. Dyson, "'Stuff Happens': Donald Rumsfeld and the Iraq War", *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 5 No. 4 (October 2009), pp. 327-347; Stephen B. Dyson and L. Lorena Billordo, "Using Words as Data in the Study of the French Political Elite", *French Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (March 2004), pp. 111-123.
- 17 Margaret G. Hermann, "Assessing Leadership Style: Trait Analysis", in Jerrold M. Post (ed.), *The Psychological Assessment of Political Leaders: With Profiles of Saddam Hussein and Bill Clinton*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2003, pp. 178-212.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 181.
- 19 Stephen Dyson, "Personality and Foreign Policy: Tony Blair's Iraq Decisions", *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Volume 2, No. 3 (July 2006), pp. 289-306. Here Dyson reports scores for all the seven personality traits in the LTA, however in his discussion he focuses exclusively on these three traits.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 303.
- 21 Dyson, "Stuff Happens".
- 22 Vaughn P. Shannon and Jonathan W. Keller, "Leadership Style and International Norm Violation: The Case of the Iraq War", *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 3, No.1 (January 2007), pp. 79-104.
- 23 These individuals are: President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz.

- 24 Karen A. Rasler, William R. Thompson, and Kathleen M. Chester, "Foreign Policy Makers, Personality Attributes, and Interviews: A Note on Reliability Problems", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (March 1980), pp. 47-66.
- 25 Margaret G. Hermann, "On 'Foreign Policy Makers, Personality Attributes, and Interviews: A Note on Reliability Problems'", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (March 1980), pp. 67-73.
- 26 Hermann, "Assessing Leadership Style", p. 211.
- 27 Sarkis A. Mahdasian, *State, Trait, or Design? A Critical Examination of Assumptions Underlying Remote Assessment*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Washington State University, 2002.
- 28 For instance, Dyson, "Personality and Foreign Policy"; Juliet Kaarbo and Margaret G. Hermann, "Leadership Styles of Prime Ministers: How Differences Affect the Foreign Policymaking Process", *Leadership Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (September 1998), p. 243; Mahdasian, *State, Trait, or Design?; Renfro, Presidential Decision-Making and the Use of Force*. One must highlight that this argument is solely based on published research utilizing this methodology.
- 29 Metin Heper and Sabri Sayarı (eds.), *Political Leaders and Democracy in Turkey*, Lanham, Maryland, Lexington Books, 2002.
- 30 M. Hakan Yavuz and Nihat Ali Özcan, "Crisis In Turkey: The Conflict of Political Languages", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Fall 2007), pp. 118-135.
- 31 Like elsewhere, not all Turkish leaders have had the same level of interest in foreign policy. Experience and interest/training in foreign policy were employed as measures in earlier political leadership studies but are not in current at-a-distance assessment of leadership, see Hermann, "Explaining Foreign Policy Behavior".
- 32 Heper and Sayarı, *Political Leaders and Democracy in Turkey*. In addition to Sayarı's introduction and Heper's concluding remarks, included in this book are chapters on Atatürk, İsmet İnönü, Celal Bayar, Adnan Menderes, Süleyman Demirel, Bülent Ecevit, Necmettin Erbakan, Alparslan Türkeş, Turgut Özal, Mesut Yılmaz, and Tansu Çiller.
- 33 Ali Faik Demir (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikasında Liderler: Süreklilik ve Değişim, Söylem ve Eylem*, Çağaloğlu, İstanbul, Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2007. This edited book contains studies of Adnan Menderes, Süleyman Demirel, Bülent Ecevit, Necmettin Erbakan, Alparslan Türkeş, and Turgut Özal.
- 34 Ömer Ak, "Liderlik Profili Analizi ve Dış Politika: Turgut Özal ve Recep Tayyip Erdoğan", in Ertan Efeğil and Rıdvan Kalaycı (eds.), *Dış Politika Teorileri Bağlamında Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, Ankara, Nobel Yayınevi, 2012; Esra Çuhadar- Gürkaynak, Binnur Özkeçeci- Taner, and Ömer Ak, "Interaction between Structure and Agency in Turkish Foreign Policy: Conflicting Roles, Clashing Ideas, and Competing Priorities", paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, 2010; Barış Kesgin, *Political Leadership and Foreign Policy in Post-Cold War Israel and Turkey*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 2011; Barış Kesgin, "How Do "Secular" and "Religious" Leaders Shape Foreign Policy Behavior Towards the United States?", paper presented at the Annual Convention of the International Studies Association-Midwest, 2009; Özgür Özdamar, "Dış Politika Karar Alımı Sürecinde

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- 35 See, Cengiz Erişen and Barış Kesgin, “Dış Politika ve Psikolojik Unsurlar: Türk-Yunan İlişkilerinin Analizi”, in Efeğil and Kalaycı (eds.), *Dış Politika Teorileri Bağlamında Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, Ankara, Nobel Yayınevi, 2012.
- 36 Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War*, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2003, pp. 52-92.
- 37 Here, primarily, the role of the military in making Turkey's foreign policy is implied.
- 38 Juliet Kaarbo, “Power and Influence in Foreign Policy Decision Making: The Role of Junior Coalition Partners in German and Israeli Foreign Policy”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (December 1996), pp. 501-530; Binnur Özkeçeci- Taner, *The Role of Ideas in Coalition Government Foreign Policymaking: The Case of Turkey between 1991 and 2002*, Republic of Letters Publishing, 2009.
- 39 The two exceptions are Yeşim Arat, “A Woman Prime Minister in Turkey: Did It Matter?”, *Women and Politics*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (1998); and Ümit Cizre, “Tansu Çiller: Lusting for Power and Undermining Democracy”, in Heper and Sayarı (eds.), *Political Leaders and Democracy in Turkey*, Lanham, Maryland, Lexington Books, 2002. Arat focuses on gender and politics; Cizre approaches to Çiller's leadership in general and given the theme of the Heper and Sayarı volume on leadership and democracy.
- 40 This is well beyond the 5,000 words suggested by Hermann for an accurate leadership traits profile of a leader.
- 41 Michael Laver, Kenneth Benoit, and John Garry, “Extracting Policy Positions from Political Texts Using Words as Data”, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 2 (May 2003), pp. 311-331; Dyson and Billordo, “Using Words as Data”.
- 42 Cizre, “Tansu Çiller”, p. 207.
- 43 One must note that these perceptions of women in leadership positions may very well reflect gender stereotyping; see, Arat, “A Woman Prime Minister in Turkey”.
- 44 *MacLean's*, “The Other New Woman PM”.
- 45 Cizre, “Tansu Çiller”, p. 207.
- 46 Current Biography Yearbook, “Tansu Çiller”, Vol. 55 (1994), pp. 104-108; Çiller's former colleagues at Bosphorus University mentioned her “uncompromising attitude”, see Molly McAnailly Burke, “Turkey's First Lady”, *Lear's*, Vol. 6 (October 1993), pp. 34-36.
- 47 Quoted in *MacLean's*, “The Other New Woman PM”.
- 48 Burke, “Turkey's First Lady”.
- 49 Cizre, “Tansu Çiller”, p. 206.
- 50 Hermann, “Assessing Leadership Style”, p. 196.
- 51 For instance, according to Çiller's profile published in *Maclean's*: “Çiller displays a self-confidence that some say borders arrogance: on the wall of her living room hangs a magazine

- cover portraying her in armor as a Turkish version of Joan of Arc”. Another account of Tansu Çiller published in *The New Republic* (7 July 1997) also illustrates this: Çiller “would not be averse to being called “Anatürk”.
- 52 Cizre, “Tansu Çiller”, p. 203. It is noteworthy that the military’s role in the 1990s also increased due to political and economic instability. This, however, does not take away from the fact that Çiller did not object to the military’s role in domestic (for instance, the PKK) or foreign (for example, relations with Israel) policy matters. Otherwise, this argument does not apply to Çiller’s later fight with the military during the Refah-Yol coalition. Then, Çiller was the deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs. The analysis here depends solely on Çiller the prime minister.
- 53 Çiller’s Distrust of Others score is not significantly higher than the average score; yet, if Erbakan (with a score more than two standard deviations higher than the mean) is an outlier in this trait, then Çiller’s distrust of others becomes more significant.
- 54 Tansu Çiller, *Press Briefing*, Moscow, Russia, 9 September 1993.
- 55 Interview with *PBS* (Public Broadcasting Company, USA), 18 April 1995.
- 56 Arat, “A Woman Prime Minister in Turkey”, p. 12. Arat also observes that Çiller ‘justified’ her militarism, or more specifically her hawkish policies on the Kurdish problem, with reference to being a mother, Arat, “A Woman Prime Minister in Turkey”, p.16.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 58 BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, “Premier Says Flags and Soldiers ‘Must Go’ from Disputed Islet”, 30 January 1996.
- 59 Interview with Mehmet Ali Birand, *Show TV*, 13 February 1996.
- 60 Interview with *PBS*, 18 April 1995.
- 61 Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p. 314. Also, on Çiller’s “dirty fight against the PKK”, see Cizre, “Tansu Çiller”, p. 205.
- 62 “Prime Minister Warns Armenia of War if “One Inch” of Nakhichevan Harmed”, *Agence France-Presse*, 4 September 1993.
- 63 Arat, “A Woman Prime Minister in Turkey”, p. 11.
- 64 Hermann, “Assessing Leadership Traits”.
- 65 *Ibid.*, Hermann reports that 87 heads of state from around the world have an average Task Focus score of .590 with a low of .460 and a .710 for the highest score.
- 66 Margaret G. Hermann, Thomas Preston, Baghat Korany, and Timothy M. Shaw, “Who Leads Matters: The Effects of Powerful Individuals”, *The International Studies Review*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Summer 2001), pp. 83-131.
- 67 According to Hasan Kösebalaban, this is the single-issue area Çiller had control over free of the military’s involvement. Hasan Kösebalaban, *Turkish Foreign Policy: Islam, Nationalism, and Globalization*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp. 130-132.