“THE NEW FRAMEWORK OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN TURKEY IN THE POST-FEBRUARY 28 ERA’’

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I. WHAT DOES THE THEORY HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS?

Civilian supremacy is taken for granted especially in Western liberal democratic states. In other words, there is an assumption that the military should be subordinated to the civilian rule. Military is expected to accept civilian rule unconditionally in a consolidated democracy. As a result, any regime that has a reserved place for the military is thought to fall short of complete democracy. However, among such assumptions one question seems to go unnoticed: Why would the military be subordinated to the civilians since the military has the means to control the society? Answers to this essential question structure the nature of the civil-military relations literature.

As Peter D. Feaver (1999) points out the question ‘‘who will guard the guardians?’’ is the central dilemma of the civil-military relations subfield. The question is the result of a very plausible reasoning. As Feaver (1999) states ‘‘the very institution created to protect the polity is given sufficient power to become a threat to the polity.’’ After all, soldiers have the arms. As Eric Nordlinger (1977, p.5) states ‘‘although guns are only fired in a small proportion of coups, there is always the possibility that they may be, and they are always in the foreground as forceful threats.’’ Since the military needs to be strong enough to deter enemies and fight wars when necessary, it is not reasonable to keep the army vulnerable. Nevertheless the more autonomous and powerful the military is the more difficult to sustain civilian supremacy. Predictably the following questions emerge as Feaver (1997) points out: ‘‘Even if the military does not destroy society, will it obey its civilian masters, or will it use its considerable power to resist civilian direction

and pursue its own interests?'' His suggestion to ''make the government strong enough to protect the citizens, but not so strong as to become tyrannical'' (1997) seems like the ideal goal for every polity. Since there is often a gap between the ideal and practice as Michael Desch (1998, p.391) states ''the best indicator of the strength of civilian control is who prevails when civilian and military preferences diverge.'' Because civilians are elected and are accountable to public they should be superior to the appointed soldiers in an ideal modern state. As Feaver (1997) states ''the hierarchy of *de jure* authority favors civilians over the military, even in cases where the underlying distribution of *de facto* power favors the military. Regardless of how strong the military is, civilians are supposed to remain the political masters'' (1997). In a democratic regime ''the military assesses the risk, the civilians judge it'' (1997) The prerogative to make the ultimate decision is given to them by the people. In other words as Feaver (1997) says ''civilians have a right to be wrong.''

However, the fact that civilians are accountable for their mistakes would make them more cautious than the appointed ones. Yet ''the protection by the military and from the military are in tension because efforts to assure one complicates the other'' as Feaver (1997) summarizes the dilemma in an imperfect world.

Feaver (1997) points out that traditionally, ''civil-military relations theory has focused on the direct seizure of political power by the military. Coups are the traditional focus of civil-military relations, because they so dramatically symbolize the central problem of the military exploiting their coercive strength to displace civilian rulers'' (1997).However, for Feaver (1997), looking only at coups can underestimate military influence. A coup may indicate military strength, at least compared to the other political

actors the military suppresses. But it can also indicate military weakness, reflecting the military's inability to get what it wants through the normal political process (1997). Especially the last part of his statement provides an alternative and insightful perspective since coups are usually considered manifestations of military's power.

Feaver (1997) says that the end of the Cold War has sparked a renaissance of attention to civil-military relations in the US. The most well known studies are Samuel Huntington's *The Soldier and the State* (1957) and Morris Janowitz's *The Professional Soldier* (1960). Feaver (1997) thinks that ''because the coup/no-coup dichotomy misses much of the interesting give and take in the civil-military relations, some theorists have preferred to study military influence instead'' (1997). For example, for Huntington (1959, p.20) ''the problem in the modern state is not armed revolt but the relation of the expert to the politician. The cleavage between the military and civilian spheres and the resulting tension between the two are phenomena of distinctly recent origin.'' Huntington's two classic works touching on civil-military relations constitute something of a debate between explanatory variables; his early work (*The Soldier and the State italics mine)* emphasizes a military factor, namely the degree of professionalism in the officer corps, and his later work *(Political Order in Changing Societies italics mine)* emphasizes a civilian factor, namely the degree of institutionalization within civilian society as Feaver (1997) summarizes. According to Huntington (1959, p.7) professionalism distinguishes the military officer today from the warriors of previous ages. Consequently, for him (1959, p.79) civilian control is essential to military professionalism because the military ethic emphasizes it. Huntington states that there are two types of civilian control and hence two ways to attain them: Subjective civilian control and objective civilian control.

According to Huntington (1959, p.80), ‘‘the simplest way of minimizing military power would appear to be the maximizing of the power of civilian groups in relation to the military.’’ On the other hand, the letter type of civilian control leads him argue that ‘‘it is the distribution of political power between military and civilian groups which is most conducive to the emergence of professional attitudes and behavior among the members of the officer corps’’ (Huntington 1959, p.83). However, as real world cases indicate, professionalization and/or institutionalization, as Huntington defines, do not necessarily lead to civilian supremacy.

Except Rebecca Schiff’s *Theory of Concordance*, as Feaver (1997) says the ‘‘existing political science literature tends to treat civil-military relations as dichotomous variable-civilians in control/not in control- and does not explore the different causal effects of other forms of societal-military relations.’’ Indeed, according to James Burk (2002) also directs attention to the blurring lines between the military and civilian spheres and argues (2002, p.8) that ‘‘ unlike Huntington, Janovitz recognized that the boundaries between the military and political spheres were blurred and as a consequence there would be new forms of tension between military and political elites.’’

Huntington inaugurated this line of study with his argument that professionalism was the key to the civilian control, but he included in his definition of professionalism acceptance of the ethic of subordination, so his argument, for Feaver (1997), was in some sense tautological and defined away the problem. According to Feaver (1997) ‘‘the civil-military field has been dominated by ideational and norm-based explanations for 40 years, and some of the best new work is instead exploring the rationalist and interest-based aspects of civil-military relations.’’

According to Feaver (1997), along with Huntington, traditionalist theorists such as Janowitz (1960) and Welch (1976) all emphasize various measures aimed at the disposition of the military: professionalizing it and/or keeping it integrated with society, establishing social contracts that delineate spheres of influence, and so on. Welch (1976), in contrast, emphasizes efforts aimed at the military institution itself. He favors the boundaries, mission, values, organization, recruitment, and socialization of the military so as to foster ‘‘a mutual sense of political restraint on part of officers and politicians alike.’’ Nordlinger (1977, p.2-19) refers to interventionist officers as praetorian soldiers who ‘‘portray themselves as responsible and patriotic officers.’’ He (1977) invented a tripartite typology of praetorianism that consists of moderators, guardians, and rulers.

According to Nordlinger’s (1977, p.25) levels of military intervention, moderators exercise a veto power over a varied range of governmental decisions and political disputes and try to preserve the status quo. However, over time, praetorian moderators regularly transform themselves into guardians or rulers. Praetorian guardians on the other hand, ‘‘intend to correct what are seen to be the malpractices and deficiencies of the previous government. They are ‘iron surgeons’ ready to make some incisions into the body politic, but doing little to replace what has been cut out.’’ Praetorian rules however, do ‘‘not only control the government but dominate the regime, sometimes attempting to control large slices of political, economic and social life through the creation of mobilization structures ’’ (Nordlinger 1977, p.26). In addition to them, Boene contributed to the oldest debate in civil-military relations over fusionism which argues that the line between the military and the political has become so blurred that the distinction has lost its meaning (Feaver 1997).

Another prominent traditionalist, Samuel E. Finer lays out the tenets of his theory in *The Man on Horseback: The Military in the Politics of Today* by analyzing the 1960 coup in Turkey as well. Finer first makes a regime distinction based on their position in relation to military. For him, in the first place, there is a distinct class of countries where governments have been repeatedly subjected to the interference of their armed forces. They are certainly not subordinated to the civilians. Nor are they despotisms or autocracies of a totalitarian type where the military are subordinated to the civilians as much as or even more than in the liberal-democratic regimes. These regimes of military provenance or military rule are *sui generis*. On the other hand, the military as an independent political force constitutes a distinct and peculiar political phenomenon. The regime of military provenance or direct military rule is a distinctive kind of regime; and the military as an independent political force is a distinctive political phenomenon (Finer 1962).

Finer (1962) also points out to the political strengths and weaknesses of the military. For him, the armed forces have three massive political advantages over civilian organizations: a marked superiority in organization, a highly emotionalized symbolic status, and a monopoly of arms. Finer (1962) follows with the familiar question of the civil-military relations theory. He says that ‘‘the wonder is not why the military rebels against its civilian masters, but why it ever obeys them.’’ However, he diagnoses two crippling weaknesses in the armed forces. One weakness is the armed forces’ technical inability to administer any, but the most primitive community. The second is their lack of a moral title to rule. Yet in some countries –such as Turkey- the military seems

competent enough to administer successfully and even have the legitimacy to rule in the eyes of the people.

Along with the features of the military, political culture is a determinant in military interventions for Finer. According to him, in countries with low political culture, where civilian organization is feeble however, this paradox operates in a kind of reverse sense. The sheer absence of civilian counter pressures encourages the military to set up a full-blooded military oligarchy; on the other hand, the sheer invulnerability of the military leaves this as a matter of choice, not of necessity. Examples of the first paradox, countries with relatively strong civilian organization, are provided by Argentine; by Turkey since 1960, by pre-war Greece, and in some degree, by the course of events in Egypt between 1952 and 1954 (Finer 1962, p.119).

In an attempt to make a comparative analysis on military interventions, Morris Janotivz (1971, p.308) focuses on the emergence of the military in the West and the Middle East. Given the importance attributed to the professionalization of soldiers, Janovitz states that ‘‘the military professional is rooted in the historical experiences of European feudalism.’’ As he points out ‘‘the military operated or were created as a civil service type establishment of the central government without the social and personal connection to a landed upper-strata. Mostly in the Ottoman Empire, it was a long-standing practice for the Sultanate to recruit and develop a distinct bureaucratic stratum from various social groups including the very lowest to staff the military. There was a strong emphasis on wide geographic dispersion of recruitment. As a result these officers had primary attachments to the government’’ (Janovitz, 1971).

An important point to bear in mind is mentioned by him (1972): ‘‘Feudalism as it was known in Western Europe was not to be found in the Ottoman Empire. Bernard Lewis describes the elements of feudalism that existed; and he uses the term ‘bureaucratic feudalism’ which helps highlight the essential differences.’’ Janovitz’s (1972) analysis of the Middle Eastern armies particularly the nature of the military in the Ottoman Empire provides a basis for understanding the strong ties between the state and the soldiers: ‘‘Within the Ottoman Empire which became the base of modern Turkey, there was no feudal tradition nor did the colonial power encounter an aristocratic based military, when the dismembered portions of the Ottoman Empire came under Western rule.’’

The Janisseries were the epitome of this type of military as Janovitz (1972, p.313) reminds us. ‘‘In the Ottoman Empire the conception of statism was central and the military an integral part of this ideology. Social origins and professional indoctrination served to perpetuate and strengthen such thinking.’’(Janovitz 1972, p. 318)
Obviously they were not recruited in the way Western armies were formed. Janovitz (1972) seems right to argue that ‘‘using the Turkish case as the modal type and the case for which some of the best data exists, there is reason to believe that there has been a great deal of stability in the social recruitment from the end of the nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century. The first source for the officer corps is the sons of the officer corps itself. In part, this is the normal process of occupational inheritance in any profession which is particularly strong in the military profession.’’ He (Janovitz, 1972) strengthens his comparison by applying to different observations:

> The comparability with the Turkish data and with the ‘ideal typical’ pattern of the Middle East can be seen from Be’eri’s observation that there was

> not a single officer from the top hundred great landowning group, nor were any related to the ‘few hundred families of great landowners, bankers, industrialist and big business.

To the contrary, even the proportion living off the rents from landed property- even small estates was limited; rather two thirds of families whose relatives were salaried employees’’(Janovitz 1972, p.314).

However, it would be useful to bear in mind that all the land belonged to the sultan in the Ottoman Empire until late 19th century except his grants for achievement. Ergun Ozbudun’s argument about the modern Turkish army that Janovitz refers to is an accurate one. ‘‘The military …has always offered better avenues of advancement to the sons of lower and lower-middle classes. The appeal of the military profession to what is identified as the ‘growth elements’ of the society- modern intellectuals, technicians, the innovators and entrepreneurs- has never been great during the history of the Republic and was even less so in the 1950s’’(Janovitz 1972, p.350).

As Janovitz (1972, p.316) points out in the Western polities ‘‘in general, the military does not attract men who have strong symbolic interests and skills which are part of the requirements of political leadership.’’ He seems to have a strong point in arguing that ‘‘this is less the case for the Middle East because of the traditions of the military; and in specific cases, men have even entered the military with political interests in mind because other avenues were blocked.’’ After having said all these Janovitz (1972, p.317) states one of the root causes of lack of professionalization and isolation in some militaries as follows:

> While in Western Europe the social origin factors worked to support the professional education and social origin factors in producing political isolation and a conservative commitment to the status quo, the interaction of these two

> dimensions in the Ottoman Empire, and subsequently, in other parts of the Middle East, worked in the opposite direction.

As a result ‘‘in the Middle East, the military is a bureaucratic group, and like other such groups, it is more directly involved in administrative politics. When the Turkish army began to accept the notion that it was above politics, it was the result of the efforts of a charismatic leader; it was a norm which, during the period of modernization, had to be developed’’ (Janovitz 1972, p.317).

Both Huntington’s and Janovitz’s theories that are among the main theoretical work in civil-military relations are thought to have flaws according to Burk. He (2002) argues that they:

> Each treats only part of the problem that a democratic theory of civil-military relations confronts. Huntington’s theory focuses on the matter of protecting democracy, but neglects the problem of sustaining democratic values and practice. Janovitz’s theory focuses on the matter of sustaining democratic values, but neglects the problem of protecting the democratic state.

Having said all these it is clear that there is sort of a ‘path-dependency’ in military’s perception of the civilian world. The ways the militaries are formed and operate determine the course of relations with the civilian world. Since the militaries historically hold an enormous amount of power, at least the arms, it is worth to question the reasons to expect them to obey the civilians in the first place. As Feaver (1997) states ‘‘any military strong enough to defend civilian society is also strong enough to destroy it. It is therefore essential that the military choose not to exploit its advantage, voluntarily submitting to civilian control.’’

As far as the civilian control is concerned, according to Feaver (1997) civilian control techniques can be grouped into two broad categories: a. those that affect the

ability of the military to subvert control, and b. those that affect the disposition of the military to be insubordinate. He follows:

> Societies that do not face grave external threats may choose to keep the regular army small in size or rely on a mobilized citizenry for defense; this was the preferred option of the United States until the twentieth century. Countries that face an external threat, or regimes that feel the need for large forces to preserve power, may deploy sizeable armed forces but keep them divided, perhaps by setting various branches against each other using secret police and other parallel chains of command to keep the military in check (Frazer 1994, Belkin 1998). In fact, the use of counter veiling institutions such as border guards, secret police, paramilitary forces, militias, presidential guards, and so on is one of the most common forms of control, used by both by autocracies (the Ottoman Empire).

However counter divisions within a country's military to prevent concentration of power in one institution might lead to cleavages. Instead efforts towards an obedient army, in other words military disposition, sound more fruitful. According to Feaver (1997), the most prominent mechanism is the principle itself, which is variously called the 'cult of obedience', the norm of civilian control or simply professionalism. In civil-military terms this translates to a. adjusting the ascriptive characteristics of the military so that people inclined to obey will populate it, and adjusting the incentives of the military so that, regardless of their nature, the members will prefer to obey (Feaver 1997). Another way to assure military disposition is strengthening the legitimacy of the civilian government according to Holsti.

Rebecca Schiff lays out a different theory that rules out the assumption of the traditional interpretations for ideal civilian-military relations. *Theory of Concordance* does not aim to have military disposition and provides a new perspective for countries that suffer from military's intervention in the civilian realm.

According to Schiff (1995), a major conclusion of current civil-military relations theory is that militaries should remain physically and ideologically separated from political institutions. Her theory, however, sees a high level of integration between the military and other parts of society as one of several types of civil-military relationship.

Concordance theory achieves two goals: first, it explains the institutional and cultural conditions that affect relations among the military, the political elites, and society; second, it predicts that if the three partners- *namely the military, the political elites, and the society*- agree on the four indicators, domestic military intervention is less likely to occur (Schiff 1995). Nevertheless, such thinking raises the following question: Why would the military intervene if it were already in charge? Would incorporation of the military in the civilian affairs live up to the democratic standards?

Schiff (1995) seems right to say that ‘‘the current theory is derived largely from the experience of the United States, and assumes that American institutional separation should be applied to all nations to prevent domestic military intervention.’’ However she (Schiff 1995) argues that ‘‘concordance theory, by contrast, considers the unique historical and cultural experiences of nations and the various other possibilities for civil-military relations, which maybe different from the American example.’’ Also, Schiff (1995) believes that ‘‘the current theory argues for the separation of civil and military institutions. It fails to take into account the cultural and historical conditions that may encourage or discourage civil-military institutional separation. Concordance moves beyond institutional analysis by addressing issues relevant to a nation’s culture’’ (Schiff 1995) Ottoman Empire, indeed, is a good example of the military’s embeddedness in the state.

Among the cultural factors that Schiff (1995) emphasize are the values, attitudes, and symbols informing not only the nation's view of the military, but also the military's own view of that role which would be very relevant to the Turkish military. According to Schiff (1995) ''the theory of concordance highlights dialogue, accommodation, and shared values or objectives among the military, the political elites, and society.''

Unlike the traditional dichotomy ''concordance does not assume that separate civil and military spheres are required to prevent domestic military intervention''(Schiff 1995) and brings a new approach, but takes the role of the soldiers in politics for granted. Despite this shortcoming, her theory has value for providing a new perspective since as Schiff (1995) states ''relationship between civil and military institutions is not enough to explain the dynamic interactions taking place among the political, military, and social sectors of society.''

In the Turkish case, popularity and the embedded nature of the military in society make one think that the *Theory of Concordance* has more explanatory power in Turkey. Turkish military constantly directs attention to the unique conditions of the country that makes Turkey vulnerable and look for exception in complying with democratic standards. In August 2005, while talking about the relationship between the Turkish military and Turkey's civilian authorities, Hilmi Ozkok, Chief of the General Staff of the Military revealed the same mentality that gives an idea about the military's view: ''[it may be an] exception to the standardized civil-military relationship, but every country has different needs, conditions, values, histories, societal concerns, and dynamics '' (Aydinli et al.2006).

Having summarized the main pillars of the civilian-military relations literature it is now relatively easier to get started with the Turkish case.

II. CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN TURKEY

It is not a secret that Turkish democracy has not yet met the ideal standards of a consolidated democracy. In other words, democracy is not always 'the only game in town' in Adam Przeworksi's terms. The rule of law and accountability are often undermined and the military's role in politics is almost taken for granted. Since the transition to the multi-party system in 1946, Turkish political system has been generating a mixed performance. Even after relatively stable and democratic periods of governance, political fragmentation, polarization, and deadlocks are likely to appear and result in the restlessness of the military and the 'reluctant' interventions of the Turkish General Staff (TGS).

It is hard to disagree with Dunkwart Rustow (1979) in his observation that ''Turkey's situation is complex and in some respects paradoxical.'' It seems that the reasoning behind his conviction is the clash between the introduction of democracy in late 1940s and the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism as a minor but persistent theme as Rustow (1979) observes. However this theme is not minor since early 1990s and occupies the agenda of the military and sets an obstacle in front of full civilian control of politics. Indeed, the big question of this thesis involves the very same issue: Securing the Republic at the expense of democracy.

Turkish democracy's mixed performance and hybrid nature deserve to be analyzed thoroughly. For Tim Jacoby (2003), after the World War II, there was the ''the formation of a hybrid regime combining different elements of autocratic militarism and

semi-authoritarian incorporation.'' Similarly, Ahmet Insel (2004, p.45) argues that ''it is possible to define the hybrid nature of the regime as praetorian republic. In such a structure, the privileges and the rights are not personal, but tied to class.''

In terms of democratic consolidation Turkey, still needs to pass a high threshold that is formed by the strong influence-if not the hegemony- of the military. The minute Turkey removes the giant shadow of the soldiers from politics, the chances to become a full-fledged democracy will increase dramatically. Given the fluctuations in the degree of democracy and the high costs paid by the civilians in the past, it seems that we do not and will not witness a linear and always positive progress.

It is not only the perception of the soldiers, but also the 'civilian' approach towards the military that causes democratic breakdowns. Even as of 2006, the Turkish public opinion takes the role of the military in politics for granted. As Nilufer Narli (2000) points out ''a majority of Turks accept the military as guardian of democracy, secularism, and national unity and approve of the military's involvement in politics. One explanatory factor for the army's rising prominence throughout the 1990s is the decline in support for Turkey's center-oriented parties since the late 1980s.'' In a supportive argument, Jung and Piccoli (2001, p.100) portray the central dilemma of Turkish politics: ''The negative image of Turkish political parties and the positive reputation of the Turkish armed forces are two sides of the same coin.''

It is only usual to read debates over the possible consequences of the new military appointees, their stance towards soldier's involvement in politics or statements of a high-ranking general about a social phenomenon, a political issue, or even a person in the leading newspapers of the country, regardless of the relevance of the generals' area of a

responsibility. Obviously, in a proper democracy people are not expected to pay attention to the appointments within the army since the duty of the military and the procedures are designated by the system.

In Turkey, progress in democratization bogs down because of the power struggle between the military and the civilians. As Tanel Demirel (2004) also states ‘‘civil-military interaction, which is a power relation on top of everything involves tension and conflict like all other power relations.’’ In this power struggle, so far the TGS seems to have the upper hand. As Demirel (2004) argues ‘‘the TGS has gone a long way in making its extraordinary role acceptable to other societal actors. The TGS is perceived as an institutionalized, trustworthy, and desirable institution.’’ Although a combination of factors -that will be analyzed throughout this chapter- led to the privileged position of the TGS, as Umit Cizre (2004) accurately discovers ‘‘the real secret of the rising political autonomy of the TGS does not stem from its control-centered strategy, but focusing on the project to *‘create a citizen consents to hegemony’ (italics are mine)* with the help of the media and civil-society’’ and unfortunately the project was successful especially during the February 28 era. It seems true that ‘the limitations to the freedom of the press have contributed to a culture of self-censorship, according to which sensitive topics such as religious liberties, the cult of Ataturk, the Armenian massacres, Kurdish identity and the role of the military have been deliberately avoided for many years’’ (Jung 2001).

In *Turkiye’de Ordu* that collects various studies on the Turkish military, editors Ali Bayramoglu, Ahmet Insel and Omer Laciner (2004) direct attention to the lack of transparency in the TGS- which is in adverse with the institution’s prestige- and believe that it is not a coincidence. For them, ‘‘the TGS is an institution that talks more compared

to the militaries in the other countries, but is disturbed about having talked about itself at the same time …What is really demanded most by the society in Turkey's authoritarian democracy is either to be silent about the TGS or only praise it'' (Bayramoglu et al. 2004). Consequently, the majority of the people tacitly approve the military interventions when the conditions 'require' them just like the way the TGS want them to do which reinforces the following argument: '' the military and the bureaucracy view a democratic society not as pluralistic, but as a unitary community based on a legal authority''(Jung 2001). What makes their support unconditional for the army is their gradual loss of the 'center' and the privileges that came along coupled with ideological bigotry. However there is a smaller, but stauncher advocate of the military's intervention in politics in Turkey regardless of the state of the country.

In Ersin Kalaycioglu's (2001) words, ''the majority that made up the Periphery was forced to live under the law, while those connected to the classical Center of RPP (Republican People's Party) elite could often receive exceptional and favorable treatment by the political authorities in the one party era.'' Tanel Demirel (2004) voices similar and accurate arguments:

> Small but influential elite groups which believe that secularism and gains by Kemalism were more important than the democratic regime and regard the advent of democracy as nothing more than the age of concessions from the golden age of single party years, had been re-invigorated as the threat of political Islam loomed large. One comes across statements that a coup d'etat is acceptable if the 'gains' of the Republic are threatened.

Apparently, the first privileged class of the Republic, which is composed of bureaucrats and soldiers, were in the 'center' and some considered the 1950 elections as a 'counter-revolution.' The authoritarian elements of the one party era did not disturb them

because they enjoyed being the dominant force in the society without any involvement of the ‘periphery.’

It would not be unfair to argue that what we witness in Turkey is almost the tyranny of the minority under the government of majority. As Jung and Piccoli (2001) state ‘‘Turkish army is the key institution that holds up the authoritarian, state-centered and paternalistic spirit of the Turkish modernization process.’’ Hence letting the state become technocratic and completely democratic means the loss of both psychological and material supremacy of the military. However, the military has and will always let the civilians lead daily business of the country and manage areas which have secondary significance as long as the ‘interests of the nation’- as they see fit for sure- are not threatened. As Ali Bayramoglu (2004, p.117) argues ‘‘In the Turkish state structure the main reference point is the TGS. It is the right of the TGS, its members and the National Security Council (NSC) to take initiative which makes political institutions only sources of legitimacy and ratification points.’’ In such a structure, ‘‘no political group could eliminate the TGS’ ability to intervene in politics by redefining the dominant ideology on the grounds to protect the existence of the state’’ (Cizre 2004). Indeed, the civilians should be able to debate and redefine the taboos of the official ideology to win supremacy over the soldiers.

Given the problematic of Turkish democracy, the following question becomes relevant as Bayramoglu (2004, p.118) raises: Is it because the civilians are passive that the soldiers are embedded in the political system or vice versa? He believes that the answer is given in a military publication: ‘‘Legitimacy is an abstract concept. Elections do not always reflect legitimacy.’’ Although the statement is self-explanatory, it affirms

the mistrust of soldiers in civilians. It also proves Demirel's (2004) brilliant analysis on the distinction in Turkish politics between spheres of 'government' and spheres of the 'state' who says that ''the first refers to the daily business of governing, particularly the economy and the distribution of resources, and is the responsibility of the elected government. The second refers to long-term (and allegedly higher) interests of the state; particularly internal and external security issues and is the responsibility of the civil-military bureaucracy, or the state.''

A. History of the Military's Role in Turkish Politics

The idea of 'army nation' is taught at schools in Turkey from the early ages on. The military has always been the founder of Turkish states. Sixteen months of military service for males over the age of twenty is still obligatory and many Turks perceive it as a part of manhood, maturation as well as an honorable citizenship duty. Also, in almost all public opinion polls military is the most trusted institution by the nation. Currently, Turkish military is the second largest in NATO after the US. All these sociological and historical factors prepare a conceivable basis for a politically influential military.

As Metin Heper and Aylin Guney (1996) state ''during the nineteenth century, the military had been both the object and subject of modernization. Initially the aim was to create a military that was trained, disciplined, and obedient to central authority. The military as the initiator of modernization is accepted unanimously. Rustow wrote that ''the political modernization of Turkey occurred for the most part under military aegis. For nearly hundred years, the soldier has been Turkey's foremost modernizer'' (cited in Tachau&Heper, 1993).

As a result it is not surprising to witness military's predominance in public life as a long and strong tradition in Turkey as Lerner and Robinson (1960) suggest. For them (1960) ‘‘the Ottoman government had been an army before it was anything else. In fact, the government and army were one and these themes are still resonant when one considers the founding of the Turkish Republic.’’ Ataturk himself was a soldier, but as Gareth Jenkins (2001) points out ‘‘he moved quickly to differentiate between soldiers and politicians in the belief that active involvement in politics would corrupt the military as an institution.’’

It is essential to understand how the military in Turkey perceives itself. As Jenkins (2001) states ‘‘the Turkish military sees itself as the guardian of the Turkish state with a moral and legal obligation to protect ‘the Turkish Republic’ against every kind of threat or danger which might threaten the existence of the state.’’ The military thinks that the Kemalist state is entrusted to the soldiers and they should be ready to protect especially the ‘secular’ nature of the Republic against internal and external threats. According to Omer Laciner (2004, p.21), however, ‘‘Ataturk reforms are nothing, but the ideological means for the military-bureaucratic class to place itself as the indispensable sovereign element of the new society order.’’ Such a mindset places a strong barrier in front of complete civilian governance. It seems true that ‘‘although the TGS thinks that it has the right to comment on every issue in the society and constantly raise its voice, the opposite is not thinkable’’ (Insel&Bayramoglu, p.9). Clearly, as Aydinli, Ozcan and Akyaz (2006) state, for the Turkish public, the military is inseparable from the idea of the nation. They argue that ‘‘the military shares the public's perception of its role, seeking itself as the guardian if Turkey's stability.’’ Although the former argument has a strong

validity, it would be inaccurate to claim that the nation appointed the military as the guardian rather than the other way around.

The roots of the guardianship role date back to late Ottoman times although the military is primarily concerned about the protection of the secular Republic, which was established in 1923. Soldiers enjoyed such a privileged place in the Ottoman Empire that Rustow (Demirel 2004) depicted the Ottoman State as a 'military camp and educational institution.'' Modernization movements in the Ottoman Empire in early 19th century started in the military. Since the currency of power was military might during the glorious times of the Empire, the ruling class thought that they could restore the state by modernizing the military first and foremost. Although the involvement of soldiers in politics would be expected in a collapsing empire, Ataturk was careful to exclude politics from the army to protect the unity of the Armed Forces. His decision was a sound one, but Maniruzzaman does not seem to reach accurate conclusions on Ataturk's decision. Maniruzzaman claims that Ataturk purposely neglected the development of the Turkish armed forces. The scholar argues that ''this was partly because of Kemal's belief that officers' involvement in politics would harm the nation's politics as well as its armed forces. Kemal also feared that officers' involvement in politics might lead to military coup by other popular generals''(Maniruzzaman 1992). However the evidence does not support such an argument. The military has been one of the most developed institutions of Turkey and until Turgut Ozal, the country did not have a civilian president, but generals.

Theoretically it is assumed that increased professionalism in the military brings about withdrawal from politics which did not happen in the Turkish case. As Narli (2004,

cited in Bayramoglu et al.) points out ‘‘the increased professionalism of the army is associated with greater military influence in the Turkish case rather than increased subordination of the military to the civilian authority.’’

B. The Self-Ascribed Duty of TGS: Guardianship of the Regime

The civil- military relations in Turkey cannot be comprehended without analyzing the reasons and results of the military’s guardianship role. Consequently, the students of Turkish politics have repeatedly expressed the ‘guardianship of the military’, which is almost a self- ascribed duty by the soldiers themselves. The military perceives itself as the ultimate protector of the secular regime from both external and internal threats. Indeed, the National Security Course that is required at secondary level education is a good example of military’s mentality. As Gul Altinay (2004) states ‘‘the general message that is given in the curriculum is that politics is a military matter and it should be conducted from a military point of view.’’ It is true that this course is the only one that politics is discussed at the high schools (Insel&Bayramoglu 2004, p.11).

In accordance with this perception and self appointed duty, the military did not hesitate to intervene starting from 1960s when the periphery began to have a say in the decision making process. In Rustow’s (1979) words in 1950s ‘‘democracy has also spread to the rural and urban masses what used to be the privileged possession of small educated elite.’’ Indeed, Ahmet Insel (2004) considers the TGS to be a social class and summarizes the reasons behind civilian subordination as follows:

> Since 1960 military intervention, the civilian powers and the bureaucracy are subordinate to the autonomous power of the TGS. The main reason for this is the military interventions in the last fifty years. The second reason for the subordination to the TGS is that the official ideology still takes advantage of the War of Liberation which naturalizes the dominant position of the TGS. The third factor is the patriarchal societal norms that are compatible with the position of the TGS.

Despite the military's interruptions since 1960, Jenkins (2001) seems right that the military ''prefers to exert influence within the governmental and constitutional framework rather than trying to bring down and replace the government from outside, what it terms as 'fine tuning' the system rather demolishing and rebuilding it.'' He (2001) argues that civilian authority is primary, but not supreme. Military achieves supremacy, as Bayramoglu (Bayramoglu et al. 2004) argues, by differentiating the state rule and government. According to him ''this differentiation has been producing an order that rules out the social demand- political decision relationship, suffocates the existence of the political parties, narrows the political space down and gains power from the presence of soldiers that represent the state rule.''

There are scholars who have milder reservations on the TGS however. For example Gareth Jenkins (2001) argues that ''the military rarely dictates policy to the civilian government; and then usually only as a last resort when it believes that the situation has become critical.'' It is clear that the frequency of the intervention or the reluctance of the soldiers does not make a difference as far as the quality of the democracy is concerned. Indeed such arguments fall short of a consolidated democracy. Acceptance of such an assumption would make any democracy conditional and leave it to the mercy of non-democratic groups that are able to determine the course of events. Jenkins (2001) supposes that ''the military will try to galvanize public opinion to apply

pressure to the government, issuing expressions of concern either in public speeches or in carefully prepared on- or off-the record briefings to selected journalists.'' However, even such indirect exercises of power are not part of the picture in a full-fledged democracy. For instance, nobody expected the generals to intervene in the US when there was a deadlock after the Presidential elections of 2000. The trust in the system and the judiciary in particular prevented crisis as expected in any consolidated democracy.

Similar to Jenkins, Karakartal (1985) argues the large Turkish army has always been subordinated to the civil power. For him (1985) '' this army established two constitutional monarchies, fought a war of national independence, created the modern secular Turkish state, presided over the transition to pluralist democracy and politics in normal times is in the domain of civilian politicians.'' However it is problematic for soldiers to differentiate normal and abnormal times.

Despite the military's strong conviction about their role in terms of securing the Republic they are not obsessed about 'direct rule.' Rather, after each military coup the military sought to restore elections and multi-party system of course at their own pace and terms. During the breaks, interim governments that were composed of non-partisan technocrats were in charge until the nation was ready to return to civilian rule. As Kalaycioglu (2001) states ''military regimes never tried to justify their prolonged rule as an alternative to democratic government. Periods of military rule were exceptions rather than the rule and never challenged the merits of democratic government.'' It is almost as if there is a 'big brother' of Turkish democracy who keeps an eye on and warns it at times of disconformities. As Kalaycioglu (2001) acknowledges as well ''despite Turkey's long record of democracy, its system has failed to provide the expected continuity and

stability.'' It seems that as long as the Turkish General Staff (TGS) acts like the over protective mother of a young boy as far as the Turkish democracy is concerned; it will never have the attempt or confidence to mature on his own.

At this point it is essential to elaborate more on the attitude of Turkish military since it did not build a bureaucratic authoritarian regime in O'Donnell's terms, except the 1980-1983 period which was characterized by strong emphasis on order. As Tanel Demirel (2004) points out ''even when they acted in authoritarian manner, they stressed that it was to be temporary and they resorted to it only to eliminate obstacles on the way towards modern civilization. The dominant tendency within the army was not to flirt with the idea of long term military dictatorship but instead to return to barracks with relative ease.'' While such arguments sound valid, it is not only the military's intention, but also the confidence that civilians always step back in case of a reaction that makes the military seem moderate compared to others. After all despite the increasing voice of civil society, as Sefa Simsek (2004) points out, ''the civil society's qualitative impact on political life is relatively trivial.'' Like all the other sound analyses he also suggests that ''Turkey's official ideology should be more flexible, the control of politics by the military should be minimized, and the education system should be reformed substantially in order to increase the contributions of civil society to democratization''(Simsek 2004). There is no doubt that Turkey needs more political liberalization in the sense that O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) define: ''By liberalization we mean the process of making effective certain rights that protect both individuals and social groups from arbitrary or illegal acts committed by the state or third parties.''

C. The Most Influential Tools of the TGS: Autonomy and Lack of Accountability

There is a consensus in the literature of Turkish politics on the autonomous position of the TGS. It is true that ‘‘Turkish Armed Forces established themselves in Turkey’s polity as an autonomous political force whose political role is not subject to the imponderables of electoral processes’’ (Jung 2001). Unlike the democratic polities where rules are pre-determined, in Turkey, as Bayramoglu (Bayramoglu et al. 2004, p.117) states ‘‘While the government is accountable to the TGNA, the minister to the prime minister, and the TGNA to the people, military institutions are not accountable despite their extreme political rights.’’ As Narli (2004) also observes, for the TGS, ‘‘Its (TGS’) privileged position has guaranteed it a generous budget earmarked for reforms, modernization and technological advancement.’’ Such statements only affirm the argument that ‘‘the striking autonomy that the Turkish military has developed in the political, economic, and educational realms makes it virtually a state within the state’’(Jung 2001).

Expectedly, such a wide autonomy that the military enjoys remains as the biggest obstacle for total civilian supremacy. As Umit Cizre (1997) points out ‘‘the military’s institutional raison d’etre is to preserve its integrity, unity, and modernity.’’ For her (1997) this goal can be subsumed under the rubric of political autonomy which she defines as ‘‘the military’s ability to go above and beyond the constitutional authority of democratically elected governments, can include not only direct but also indirect influences on the government.’’ The most visible example of the military’s autonomy is the lack of accountability for the defense budget: In Turkey ‘‘the defense budget has

never been subjected to parliamentary debate. It has not been discussed in the press. It has never been criticized''(Cizre 1997). Cizre (1997) seems right to claim that ‘‘the privileged position of the military forms the core of the Turkish military's political prerogatives'' and in the 1990s civilian politicians were unable to control the military. Indeed for Bayramoglu, Insel, and Laciner (2004, p.10), the secrecy over the military spending in Turkey does not serve the military purposes, but rather the TGS as a class.

In countries where the military has a privileged status, material gains and benefits become a determining part of the equation. The military reinforces its position by means of constitutional protections, immunities, and bureaucratic supremacy. However according to O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) ‘‘these are not likely to have much impact upon the deeply rooted self-images and attitudes of the officer corps.'' Such privileges bring about material issues and they become an integral part of the power structure. O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986)direct attention to this crucial point: ‘‘There is also the issue of the armed forces' role in running state and Para state enterprises, a role that has been quite extensive in several of our cases (Brazil, Argentina, Peru, and Turkey).'' Being aware of the economic interests involved in the discussion, Tanel Demirel also focuses on the increasing economic power of the military in Turkey. For him (Demirel 2004):

> From the 1960s and increasingly after each coup, the military managed to carve out for itself legal and institutional privileges. It also came to control independent economic resources. The initial idea was to ensure that no government could deprive the military of the vital resources it needs to perform its sacred duty. As well as minimizing civilian influence in the internal organization of the military, it established an independent holding company (OYAK or Armed Forces Trust and Pension Fund), and a proliferation of shopping centers, recreational facilities, officers' clubs and special residences.

According to Taha Parla (2004), ‘‘OYAK (Armed Forces Trust and Pension Fund) is a new dynamic in Turkish politics that would increase the tendency of the military to intervene in the political development of the country.’’ By the same token, Umit Cizre (1997) points out that ‘‘the privileged position of the military forms the core of the Turkish military’s political prerogatives.’’ The autonomy of the TGS is not limited to defense expenditures. As will be analyzed further, ‘‘the TGS could have more institutional autonomy in foreign affairs than domestic politics and perceive itself as a superior authority in the conflictual issues like Cyprus, Aegean conflicts, Northern Iraq, relations with Israel’’(Bayramoglu&Insel 2004). With such a wide autonomy it is unlikely for the military to sublime to the civilian control or feel accountable for any of its actions.

D. Problems with the TGS’s Concept of Guardianship

What is problematic with the guardianship role is that the military sincerely believes that it knows the ‘best interests of the nation.’ However as O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986) point out in their study of transitions this disease is not unique to Turkey:

> What is even more fundamentally at stake in this issue is the change of the armed forces’ messianic self-image as the institution ultimately interpreting and ensuring the highest interests of the nation. Such a conception, frequently linked to ideologies of ‘national security’ implies that the armed forces should have an indisputable monopoly on determining what those interests are, and when and how they are being menaced.

It is essential to understand the process that led to the ultimate domination of the military. As Demirel (2004) states they succeeded by segregating soldiers who tended to form a close-knit community from the civilian world and thus reinforcing the guardianship mentality.

It is an accurate observation that ‘‘the military is sensitive to threats directed at Kemalism, since that ideological framework is their source of legitimacy. In other words, the system of values inculcated by the armed forces is deemed to be inseparable from Ataturk’s conception of the secular state. When those ideals have been threatened, a public order threatens the stability of the Kemalist republic; senior military officers have felt it necessary to intervene’’(Demirel 2004). There is a consensus that in all interventions the military acted to ‘protect’, ‘save’ or ‘cure’ the regime. However this is almost like a self appointed assignment. In no consolidated democracy military holds itself responsible for fixing the problems of the system. Military’s only and foremost duty should be providing military and territorial security. Turkey seems to suffer from a problem Huntington (cited in Albright, 1980) describes as follows: ‘‘The problem with the modern state is the relation of the expert to the politician- that is ‘the cleavage’ produces ‘tensions’ between the two spheres.’’

The military’s perception of democracy does not necessarily coincide with the liberal systems in the Western sense. Heper and Guney touch upon the military’s understanding of democracy, which could indeed be highly subjective. They (1986)say that ‘‘officers concluded that an important component of Westernization was democracy. However, they favored ‘rational democracy’, that is, taking democracy as an intelligent debate among the educated for the purpose of deciding upon the best policy option.’’ A

similar assessment of Turkish military is made by Kemrava who says that ‘‘Turkish military has a self ascribed mission of protecting the Republic and it is reinforced when the elected civilians to divert from military’s conception of ‘rational democracy.’ For Kemrava (2000) the Turkish military turned into what Perlmutter calls an ‘arbitrator army.’’

The military, which acted as, the modernizer initially in a praetorian society turned out to be an obstacle in front of further political liberalization in Turkey. Especially in 1990s the conflict between the establishment, which wants to keep its privileges and the newly emerging Muslim bourgeoisie, became evident and the military evidently was on the formers side. As Umit Cizre (2002) points out:

> A political class threatened by the formal and informal role of the military as the ultimate guardian of the regime has critical problems in relinquishing patronage resources. In that guardianship model, the political class constantly weighs the political pay-off derived from a reform in the system- to put an end to the powerlessness, incapacity, corruption and stasis- against the costs of giving up power based on patronage. It is more than likely that the civilian political class will not choose to terminate rent- seeking networks by reforms that would reduce the prominence of the military in politics. Its foremost concern will be a short rather than a long term one.

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It is true that -as Cizre argues (2004)- after the announcement of Islamic activism and Kurdish nationalism as the new security threats ‘‘the TAF (Turkish Armed Forces) has expanded the scope of its guardianship mission by securitizing the country’s serious, but essentially political problems, and as a result, has distanced itself even further from its vanguard mandate.’’ As long as the internal threats are intact, the military tends to have political immunity in the public eye and interventions are justified. There is a strong basis for Cizre’s (2004) argument that military’s enlarged guardianship by means of

internal security problems might stem from the extant civil-military imbalance. Given the unequal distribution of power Cizre (2004) seems right to argue that:

> The TAF is careful not to give any signs of relinquishing its guardianship role, even after the 1999 Helsinki Summit's decision to announce Turkey's candidacy for the EU. Through the National Security Council (NSC), the military continues to have an important influence in many areas of public life…Given that Turkey's NSC is not just a body for established for defense and security issues, but also for the preservation of the official ideology, the strictly institutional diagnosis of the problem and the remedy suggested is insufficient.

E. The Role of the Political Culture in the Military's Supremacy

Turkey's poor and mixed record in ultimate transition to democracy would require an analysis of its political culture especially in terms of the general attitude towards the military's role. Although Kalaycioglu (2001) argues that ''not only does protest potential exist in the Turkish political culture, but it also tends to take the form of contestation, or outright negation of authority'' It seems that almost the opposite is valid given the widespread conformity of Turkish society to authority and uniform in particular. Indeed, Kalaycioglu's (2001) following statement supports the argument on the apolitical nature of Turkish people:

''Certain restrictions on political action are imposed through the opportunity structure (constitutions, laws and regulations), which discourage citizens from being involved in politics.'' However it would be unfair to Turkey to underestimate the progress in the level of political liberalization and the increase in pluralism in the recent decades. Yet as Kalaycioglu (2001) out ''the political regime of the country, and most specifically its

constitution stands out as the impediment for the consolidation of a more pluralist context.''

Even today, on the brink of negotiations for the EU, the ruling party, which has the majority in the parliament, quickly draws back its suggestions on 'sensitive subjects' with the fear of possible reaction from the military. It is not fair to blame solely them although O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) tend to held civilians responsible. For the authors ''the political tradition of such countries has been plagued (and continues to be plagued by) civilian politicians who refuse to accept the uncertainties of the democratic process and recurrently appeal to the armed forces for 'solutions', disguising their personal or group interests.'' It is true that such groups exist in Turkey as well.

Sometimes even before the military itself, some pundits in the media react almost on behalf of the military and prevent any discussion on the role of the military by means of provocative news and comments. There is a point in the argument that ''it is the civilians who are confused about the extent of discussion that should take place on the military issues and its role in politics'' (Koru 2005). However even the military's shadow will be sufficient to intimidate the governments as long as there are ardent supporters of the military among the relatively educated and civilized segments of the society. After an EU official's remarks on Ataturk, Guneri Civaoglu (2005), a well-known columnist of *Milliyet*, wrote that ''if politicians do not raise their voices to respond to the criticism from the EU on Ataturk, the military should talk, even if the soldiers are not supposed to talk about politics'' and praised Yasar Buyukanit, the Chief of the Land Forces, for his comments on defense of Ataturk. It is only expected to have reservations about the

progress of democracy in Turkey when a columnist -who by nature is supposed to be progressive-, takes refuge in the military.

Although the military is primarily responsible for preventing further and full democratization by keeping its weight on politics, the perception in society that sees the engagement of soldiers in politics normal encourages them. As Kalaycioglu (2001) points out ‘‘opportunity to influence, or exchange of votes for services and benefits from the state budget, make the game of democratic politics attractive to the masses.’’ It would not be inaccurate to claim that not all civilians are uncomfortable with the violations of human rights or lack of liberalization unless they are affected at a very personal level. Kalaycioglu (2001) seems right to claim that democracy is maintained at the expense of the rule of law. Unfortunately the expectations of the Turkish public reinforce the general picture. According to a global survey conducted by BBC and Gallup, the respondents were asked which segment of the society they would prefer to grant more prerogatives and in Turkey 40% of the people said the military and the police while the average global response was the intellectuals with 35%. Based on this outcome, columnist Gulay Gokturk (2005) duly argues that ‘‘the Turkish nation, would like to control the politicians by increasing the power of the military.’’ In Turkey, as she claims, ‘‘we defend transition to civilian life not only against the military, but also 40% of the nation’’(Gokturk 2005). A supportive argument is made by Aydinli, Ozcan and Akyaz (2006): ‘‘The brief military coups of 1970 and 1980 only confirmed the public’s impression that the military seizes civilian power to project it.’’ Although it is ironic enough that the military protects democracy from civilians, even more ironic is that despite the tacit approval of the

interventions, no political party endorsed by the TGS after the coups gained popularity or came to power.

Equally ironically, in addition to the nation's mistrust in the civilians, but confidence in the military, the problems with democratization also stem from the army's lack of confidence in the nation. However the military does not completely rule out the merit of civilian government. As Demirel (2004) states that ‘‘although they have some deep reservations in respect of civil control, it would be unfair to suggest that they favor long-term military rule or pseudo democracy.’’ He (2004) says that ‘‘the military worry that a full fledged democratic regime might jeopardize the existence of the secular and unitary Turkish Republic.’’ Although Demirel's analysis is correct and the military has sincere concerns, it is hard to grasp such a conditional understanding of democracy. Such an argument means that only a certain group of people is eligible for governing as long as they do not bother the military and their understanding of democracy.

Similarly, a prominent scholar of Turkish politics, Heper (2003) points out that ‘‘in Turkey, the military accepts the fact that final authority constitutionally belongs to the civilian government, but on the other hand, it intervenes in politics if, in its opinion the country faces the threat of political Islam as well as separatist nationalism.’’ What makes this game work in Turkey is that, as Demirel (2004) successfully diagnoses, ‘‘civilian leadership has been hesitant, if not extremely timid, in questioning the prevailing power configuration.’’ Unfortunately civilians have always been the compromising party in fear of further chaos and certain groups even encouraged more involvement of the army in politics. Indeed as Gulay Gokturk (2005) suggests we have to look at the debates around the promotions and appointments in the army and how much

place they occupy in the agenda to understand the weight of the military in Turkish politics. After the rumors on the possible extension of Chief of the TGS Hilmi Ozkok's term in order to push harder liner Yasar Buyukanit to retirement in November 2005, Gokturk (2005) rightfully wrote that people has taken this role of the army for granted and this acceptance reinforces and legitimizes the de facto situation that needs to be changed. Names and timing may be different, but such debates only serve to reinforce the military's supreme position over the elected. It is true that ''in a proper democracy it does not matter much who the next chief of general staff or the other armies would be because no matter who is in charge, soldiers mind their own business under the command of the civilian authority''(Gokturk 2005).

Unfortunately such a submission even by the politicians seems to prove Demirel's (2004) argument that civilians believe that democracy is possible only to the extent that the military approves. The secure place of the Armed Forces among the most trusted institutions in the public opinion surveys shows that the military still has the power to act like an overprotective parent of an immature child. It is true that ''civilians are apprehensive of the military and therefore do not commit to policies that are likely to instigate military reaction. Civilians might be quite content with the existing state of affairs''(Demirel 2004). This does not necessarily mean that the new urban middle class approves the military's intervention, but they prefer to remain silent and stay away from tension. It is the members of the establishment who try to keep their prominence in the center and applauds the military's involvement in politics whenever a threat becomes visible according to their evaluation.

The reason why the military is the most trusted institution most of the time is probably the reaction to the corrupt politicians who are concerned about patronage and nepotism along with the ages old respect for the army. As Demirel (2004) states ‘‘it is difficult to ensure civilian control if the military carries the burden of a fight against a separatist resurrection, or if there is a large gap at the level of trust in the citizens’ display towards the politicians and the military.’’ However, fed up with the decade’s long instability and wide range corruption the public did not let the existing main parties enter the parliament in the 2002 elections. Instead, and to a certain extent surprisingly, the newly founded Justice and Development Party (JDP) gained the majority. The second runner was the RPP, party of the center left and the state elite, however following behind the JDP with a wide margin. In a recent article in the Economist the RPP was accused of remaining oblivious to the changes in Turkish society. According to the analysis ‘‘as religiously conservative Anatolians migrated to the cities, the handful of pro-secular ideologues running the RPP condemned them to political irrelevance.’’

The JDP on the other hand emerged as the representatives of the periphery led by the former mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan. A protégé of Erbakan, Erdogan was sentenced to prison due to a poem he read in a public address. The poem allegedly encouraged the people to ‘hatred and animosity’ toward each other. Indeed the imprisonment made Erdogan a bigger political figure and after his short stay in prison he emerged as the leader of the JDP, which was composed mostly of the moderate members of Erbakan tradition. In reaction to doubts over the JDP’s sincerity on the secular principles of the Republic, the leading members of the party kept renewing their loyalty to the Kemalist secular state. However the often-overt mistrust toward the governing

party has never been disappeared despite the JDP's unprecedented efforts in the EU membership process. Indeed as Gareth Jenkins (2004) states ''so long as the Kemalist establishment continues to restrict the JDP's maneuver, it will be difficult to know whether the governing party's avowed enthusiasm for democracy and EU accession is genuine.''

On the other hand such a commitment of the military to be involved in politics when 'necessary' makes civilians insecure about changing the status quo. Turkish society at large simply cannot feel sufficiently confident to challenge the military's privileged place contains a significant element of truth (Jenkins 2004). Although the military coups were not completely considered legitimate in the eyes of the public and even by the military, the military has always been on top among the most trusted institutions. This contradiction seems like a good evidence to display how hybrid the Turkish political culture is.

It seems that Turkish military's perceptions of threats to the secular and unitary state are mostly illusions and this keeps them from adopting a universally accepted idea of a democratic regime. For instance the military often perpetuates its commitment to democracy, but as Jenkins (2004) states ''the military's conception of democracy is shaped by what it sees as specific conditions in and threats to Turkey and is based on its own perception of the expression of the national will rather than just ballot- box results.'' Obviously the idea that Turkey is unique in terms of security threats and has 'special conditions' makes all kinds of restrictions on democracy legitimate at least on the part of the military. One recent example took place on December 8, 2005. A member of the ruling Justice and Development Party (JDP) and the TGNA, Resul Tosun, wrote in a

column that the capital Ankara does not look civilian enough and suggested the TGS to replace its national guard in the TGNA with a civilian one.[1] Before even allowing the public debate his suggestion, the military issued an official declaration and called such attempts 'individual delirium.'[2] Needless to say, such seemingly harmless interventions prevent democracy from maturing.

All of the aforementioned examples and statements coupled with the emphasis on the soldier's moral superiority and contempt for the civilians as Jung and Dietrich (2001) observe, provide evidence for the shape of the civil-military relations in Turkey that is far from the idea of subordinated military-subordinating civilians. Indeed, it seems that concordance theory ''between the military and the citizenry is key to understanding civil-military relations in Turkey'' (Narli 2004). However as Narli (2004) argues this concordance among the military, the government, and society is fragile, fluctuating and imperfect.

Overall, the wide political and economic autonomy of the TGS, its self-perception as 'the' guardian of the secular Republic, the lack of accountability, mistrust in civilians and, even worse the civilian perspective that legitimizes military involvement in politics, coupled with the long differentiation between the right to state and to government, seem to be major obstacles in front of democratic consolidation in Turkey. The military coups and the TGS's constant involvement in politics cannot be grasped without knowing the root causes of the Turkish democracy's dilemmas.

[1] Yenisafak Daily Newspaper
[2] www.tsk.gov.tr December 8 2005

III. MILITARY INTERVENTIONS IN TURKEY

A. May 27, 1960 Military Intervention

Turkey has witnessed military interventions almost with regular intervals in each decade after the transition to the multi-party system. Yet, Lerner and Robinson (1960) argued ‘‘the maintenance of civilian supremacy in republican Turkey has been a historical fact of the first order. Only in the Turkish Republic had there been no military coup, nor indeed any effective military challenge to civilian supremacy. The coup of May 27, 1960 was the first significant break with the Ataturk tradition.’’ Such statements are seemingly right, but on the other hand we should keep in mind that military’s supremacy was not challenged until the government of the Democratic Party (DP), which came to power as a result of wide peasant support in 1950, and the military intervened the minute it felt threatened. In other words, before the DP, there was no reason to disrupt the military’s hegemony. However, according to Paul Henze (1993), ‘all three interventions resulted not from a military desire to exercise political power but from fear on the part of military officers that democracy was going to fail.’’ Such an argument leads one to conclude that the soldiers interrupt democracy for the sake of democracy pretty much like an overprotective parent who claims to know the best interest of her/his child.

For Ben Lombardi (1997) ‘‘since the reforms of the late 1940s, Turkish democracy has repeatedly been confronted by the threat of political extremism, and the armed forces has- as a consequence- overthrown democratically elected governments on three separate occasions.’’ However letting the military define what extremism is and operate on that

only help to justify the interventions, which drags the country into a vicious cycle. The Turkish military may seem reluctant to stage coups and be less authoritarian compared to the ones in Latin America, but its influence could be explained by its strengthening ties with corporate capitalism, its resistance against the challenge posed by the rising counter elite as well as its self-duty to protect the regime.

What is significant about the first military intervention of May 27, 1960 is that in terms of both organization and intervention process it took place outside the hierarchical structure of the TGS (Akyaz, 2002, p.75). For instance, one of the strongest signals of an approaching intervention was the march of the Military Academy students rather than reactions of high-ranking generals. After May 27, the military officials exercised power by establishing the National Unity Committee (NUC). However, in a short time, the NUC was divided into two between the moderates and the radicals. Generals headed by Cemal Gursel comprised the moderates while the lowest ranking officials were mostly radicals (Akyaz 2002, p.140). In order to restore discipline and hierarchy within the army, another unit was established: Armed Forces Union *(Silahli Kuvvetler Birligi).* According to Dogan Akyaz, the main motive was to eliminate the influence of the NUC. Despite the incidents and power struggles followed the formation of those units, what is significant here is the fragmentation within the army.

An attempt for a military intervention took place on May 21, 1963. After this failed attempt, in order to discourage further cleavages among the military officials Talat Aydemir who was the Chief of the War Academy and Fethi Gurcan were executed.

According to Akyaz (2002, p.234), such a message, although effective for a while, could not completely stop new movements, but changed their structure. The new

organizations focused on the character of the regime rather than the personal ambitions or the professional concerns of the soldiers. Regardless, what was significant in this era was the coup attempts that were formed independent from the hierarchical structure of the TGS.

Return to civilian rule did not take a long time after the first coup in 1960. People supported the return in 1961, but generals warned that ‘unless a strong and credible government was formed; the armed forces is determined to take over the administration of the state’’ (Rustow 1979). With the changes made in the new 1961 constitution, the military regained its independence. The most important changes that gave the military more autonomy were making the military authority responsible to prime minister directly instead of the minister of defense and formation of the National Security Council as a constitutional body. Consequently and in accordance with the aforementioned warning, the military stepped in whenever civilians showed ‘incapacity.’

B. March 12, 1971 Military Intervention

After the first intervention of 1960 which spoiled the hierarchical structure of the TGS, the generals were determined not to ‘‘stay out of the game’’ as Akyaz (2002) stated. From 1967 on rumors of a coup started and the Chief of Staff Cemal Tural, who was thought to be in preparation for an intervention, was replaced by Memduh Tagmac (Akyaz 2002).

As a result of the nature of the 1961 Constitution that was relatively liberal, the TGNA became more pluralistic which ultimately led to radicalism because the political

system was not ready to absorb fragmentation in the TGNA and increasing voice of different groups in society. Coupled with the need for an ideology for the TGS and the rise of anti-capitalism among the officers (Akyaz 2002, p.389), another intervention became inevitable, at least in the eyes of the military.

The second military coup took place in 1971 after the escalation of right-left cleavage and political polarization. Indeed, later it became evident that an intra-army struggle took place before this breakdown and the extreme leftists and rightists in the army were purged. According to Akyaz (2002, p.432), the role of the military within the system and ideological concerns were visible in the internal purge after 1971, compared to the post-1960 period which was basically about restoring order and hierarchy of the junior officials.

The second military rule by means of an interim government was longer. It was in 1973 that civilian parties were allowed to form governments. According to Ali Bayramoglu the March 12 intervention brought about three important consequences in terms of the civil-military relations:

> Military judiciary expanded at the expense of the civilian judiciary. As a result, legal accountability of the military has increased and a separate judiciary system became the catalyst for the autonomy of the TGS. With a constitutional amendment the function and the weight of the National Security Council have been increased. With another constitutional amendment, the control of the properties that the TGS owns was taken away from the civilians and left to the inner-control mechanisms of the TGS.

Such changes, as Bayramoglu (2004, p.80) underlines, strengthened the centralization and the autonomy processes for the TGS. However, on top of everything, for him, the most significant results of the March 12 intervention were the expansion of the state authority and restriction of rights and freedoms (Bayramoglu et al. 2004, p.82).

C. September 12, 1980 Military Intervention

The last official military intervention in 1980 has been the most destructive one in terms of its results because of the severe and arbitrary punishments, tight measures against ‘anarchy’ and strong emphasis on order and restrictions in the rights and freedoms. According to Bayramoglu (2004, p.82) ‘‘this era is a period that the TGS has become the institutionalizing, in other words, law-making power.’’

The relatively liberal constitution of 1961 that was designed with the advice of the intelligentsia let different segments of society enjoy their political rights. However the extreme polarization between the rightists and leftists could not have been prevented. The streets became the battlefield of the opposing groups that the public was almost relieved with the intervention of the military in September 12, 1980. The generals took fierce measures against ‘anarchy’ and thousands of people were arrested, some were killed before a proper due process and of course all political activities were banned along with the politicians. Kenan Evren’s statements- the then Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces and who later became the seventh president of Turkey-shed light to the arbitrary and unjust killings of the time. In a TV documentary he said that in order not to be unfair to neither the leftists nor rightists, they were careful about the evenness of the number of people they hung. They treated them equally when it came to capital punishment.

As a result, as Kalaycioglu (2001) say ‘‘the 1982 Constitution was almost fully determined by the military rulers of Turkey. Such an orientation toward stability and order eventually resulted in establishing a political regime that over-emphasized order,

stability, rule enforcement and executive effectiveness.'' The 1982 Constitution is the only Western constitution that reversed the 'freedom is the rule, restriction is the exception' principal with its clause 13 (Bayramoglu 2004, p.80).

Obviously one of the most critical change of the era was Law Number 2945 which has made the National Security Council an indispensable part of the decision making process in the Turkish political system. Indeed Bayramoglu (2004, p.87) calls the General Secretariat of the National Security Council and the National Security Policy Document (NSPD) the heart of militarism in Turkey.

In the post-1980 period the military acted quite pragmatically to achieve order. Despite the military's extreme sensitivity about secularism after the 1980 coup religion courses were required at schools against the threat of 'Godless Communists.' As Pinar Tank (2005) stated ''although the military condemns the use of religion for political purposes, it has, in the past used religion as a political tool to serve national interests'' which apparently not compatible with the previous version of secularism.

According to Akyaz (2002, p.431), there are two general impacts of the military interventions on the TGS. First is the decay in the military system in terms of hierarchy and discipline and second is the gradual increase in the political autonomy of the TGS. Consequently, the September 12 military coup was organized in accordance with the order and command chain of the TGS.

D. The So-Called Post-Modern Military Intervention: February 28, 1997

There is a widely accepted statement – now almost a cliché used by elderly to criticize the youngsters- that the generation of 80s is extremely depoliticized. Indeed the opposite was unthinkable given the measures that were taken by a military administration. Indeed, the military introduced a law, namely the Law on the National Security Council of November 1983 that limited the civilian space. According to that law national security entails protecting and safeguarding the state against any foreign or domestic threats, including any aspect of political, social, cultural and economic life (Jung 2001). It took three years until the soldiers let an elected civilian government come to power. They had already designed a constitution and surprisingly enough it was approved by over eighty per cent of the population in a referendum. According to Simten Cosar (2004) this era witnessed 'the dominance of the military and the state in politics and the maintenance of the statist mentality.'' In the first elections after the coup the electorate did not pay attention to the 'advice' of the military. Instead of the Nationalist Democracy Party (NDP) that is headed by a retired general, Turgut Sunalp, and favored by the soldiers, the newly founded Motherland Party (MP) led by a relatively conservative technocrat, Turgut Ozal had a surprising victory. The contradictory reactions of the public tend to reveal a hybrid aspect of the Turkish political culture. Although they approved the undemocratic constitution, they did not bring the party backed by the military into power.

Unlike the relative political stability of 1980s, especially the second half of it with the single party government, 1990s displayed a chaotic and unstable political

environment. The whole decade witnessed two- sometimes three- party coalitions. However, in 1990s more important than the political fragmentation, the priority of the threats for the military has changed. The resurgence of Kurdish separatism and political Islam dominated the agenda. In Tanel Demirel's (2004) words they ''generated, once again, an occasion for the military to re-emphasize its guardianship of the Republic.'' The military's discomfort with the increase in the support of the pro-Islamic political parties had peaked when Necmettin Erbakan's Welfare Party (WP) became the bigger party of the coalition government with Tansu Ciller's True Path Party (TPP) in 1996. As stated earlier, the military do not hesitate to intervene and uses the breakdown in the political system to justify its intervention when it deems this necessary. Apparently, some of Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's acts and statements antagonized the soldiers further. By the same token Demirel (2004) argues that ''ingrained in such a culture'- *read as the mentality*- 'soldiers tend to regard the overthrow of elected governments as lamentable, but nevertheless necessary when certain conditions are obtained.'' When such conditions were there again, according to the military in late 1990s the intervention became necessary.

Unlike the violent methods pursued in the previous military interventions of 1960, 1971 and 1980, the military resorted to a relatively subtle method. It was almost like a very rigorous public relations campaign. As Narli (2001) underlines ''the army also engages in public relations work by promoting 'national security concept' to raise citizens' consciousness about internal and external threats that it identifies.'' In accordance with that, during the process certain newspapers, TV channels, columnists and intellectuals that were thought to be affiliated with political Islam and separatism

were isolated by the military. Some liberal journalists were laid off due to the military's discomfort with their unorthodox stance on sensitive issues. The lists of the companies or institutions that were thought to be the enemies of the secular Republic were circulated in the media. Some firms were labeled as 'green capital' (green representing the fundamentalist Muslims) and the military openly asked people not to do business with them. It is hard to grasp how the criteria to determine the color of capital are set let alone the absurdity of such categorization for the functioning of a market economy.

According to Ali Bayramoglu (2004, p.97), February 28 is an attempt for the soldiers to seek legitimacy not only by means of arms and the support of legislation, but also by the mobilization of public opinion with the help of the media. Consequently, the TGS adopted a new action plan which aimed to follow and scrutinize the activities that might threaten the secular nature of the Republic by means of memoranda named *andic* and units like *Bati Calisma Grubu (BCG)* both of which created by the military mainly to scrutinize the reactionary activities. *Andic* was the tool of directing media to fabricate news for serving the TGS' purposes. BCG was named by General Cevik Bir and responsible for reporting reactionary activities prior to the Feb 28 post-modern coup. Finally on February 28, 1997, after a long National Security Council (NSC) meeting in the Presidential Cankaya Palace the military strongly warned the Erbakan government. Soon later the resignation of Erbakan followed. Indeed, as Soli Ozel (2003) states ''with the threat of an actual coup hanging in the air, the military waged a relentless public relations campaign that turned society against the Welfare-True Path coalition government and eventually forced the resignation on June 18 of Erbakan and his cabinet.'' As columnist Cengiz Candar named and one of the high ranking and influential

generals of the February 28 era, Erol Ozkasnak, confirmed later this was a *'post-modern'* military coup. Under such circumstances it was understandable for the military not to welcome impositions on its role in politics even though the EU project is totally compatible with Ataturk's legacy.

What was disappointing during the whole February 28 process was the attitude of the intelligentsia and civilians in general. As Demirel (2004) states:

> During the February 28 process, main opposition parties (The Motherland Party and the Party of the Democratic Left) were rather circumspect and consented to the military's increased role. When soldiers' words and deeds harassed not only the incumbent coalition but the democratic political system as a whole, they did little to protest.

As of today, Turkey witnessed three military interventions in 1960, 1971 and 1980 and a so-called 'post modern' coup on February 28, 1997. After all the military interventions military chose to return the rule to civilians. Indeed some scholars think that these short military rulings are the proof of military's commitment to democracy. Umit Cizre (1997) thinks that ''the most crucial feature of the Turkish military's political autonomy, which in turn distinguishes it from armies elsewhere in the Third World, is its acceptance of the legitimacy of both democracy and civilian rule…It is not praetorian: it has not tried to undermine democracy or usurp civilian authority.'' This observation is accurate, of course, as long as we settle for a comparison with the authoritarian rules, not consolidated democracies.

It should also be noted that their duty is almost a self-appointed one. As Jenkins (2001) summarizes Turkish Armed Forces Internal Service Law of 1961 superficially charges the military with responsibility for protecting the nature of the Turkish regime,

including the Kemalist principles of territorial integrity, secularism, and republicanism. Article 35 states: ‘‘the duty of the Turkish Armed Forces is to protect and preserve the Turkish homeland and the Turkish Republic as defined in the constitution. Article 85/1 of the directive states: ‘‘it is the duty of the Turkish Armed Forces to protect the Turkish homeland and the republic, by arms when necessary, against internal and external threats’’(Jenkins 2001).

The Armed Forces declares the enemies of the Republic by means of the National Security Policy Document (NSPD) which is updated in every five years. It is well known by now that the military is the guardian not only against the external enemies, but also the internal ones. As Jenkins (2001) elaborates ‘‘the definition of security is expansive and includes perceived dangers to both the country and the character of the regime. As a result, national security is seen not just as the defense of Turkey’s territory and its political and economic interests, but also the preservation of its Kemalist legacy.’’ Consequently, all the three official coup d’etats and the post-modern intervention of Feb 28, 1997 targeted internal enemies. As Demirel (2004) points out ‘‘in the language of Turkish military the civilian world was characterized by disorder, the pursuit of naked self-interest, corruption and imprudence.’’ Predictably, as Demirel (2004) continues, ‘‘this perception of the civilian world impedes military acceptance of civilian supremacy.’’

In addition to the NSPD- which is updated in every five years unless an unexpected threat emerges- the military exerts power by means of the National Security Council (NSC), which was also established after the 1960 coup. The last policy imposition by the military took place on February 28, 1997. On that date, as Lombardi

(1997) points out the NSC, which is dominated by the armed forces, demanded that Erbakan, the then Prime Minister, curtail the 'tide the radical Islam.' It is still early to evaluate all dimensions of this latest intervention, but the Turkish media, recalling the events of 1971, referred to the outcome of the NSC meeting as a 'soft coup.'

As much as the military enjoys a wide range of autonomy, it is not possible to argue for a monolithic structure within the army. Occasionally rumors on the internal division within the TGS come to the surface when a conflictual issue is on the agenda although the high commanders vehemently reject such rumors. For instance, when a high ranking general Cetin Dogan criticized the possibility for Turkey to send troops to Iraq in August 2003, The Chief of Staff, Hilmi Ozkok, said the following: 'It'd be better if he (Dogan) made such a comment after he retired. The prerogative to talk on behalf of the TGS is designated. There is no disagreement within the TGS.'' [3]

However, in *For the People, Of the People and By the Military: The Regime Structure of Modern Turkey,* Jacoby (2003)claims that ''the divided nature of the officer corps is essential to understand the regime types that have emerged in Turkey since the Second World War *(semi-authoritarian incorporation and autocratic militarism).* He focuses on the military elite's growing economic interests and the effects of this on the civilian sphere as well as concluding that bifurcated governmental approach contributed to the internal divisions within the officer corps and the perpetuation of the high command's position in the domestic and international order.'' However such divisions have not grown to threaten the military's unity at large.

Although the Turkish military has almost a monolithic ideological stand in compliance with the Kemalist principle obvious differences among the high rank generals

[3] Hurriyet August 25,2003

intensified in the 1960s. After the successful purge of the 'extremist' leftist and rightist officers starting from late 1960s, there as almost no dissident voices left. Indeed, the 1971 intervention was seemingly against the Suleyman Demirel government, but it was a result of a struggle between intra- military fractions.

Today, rather than a soft liner vs. hard liner distinction, it is possible to talk about a *hard liner vs. harder liner* disagreement over the reaction to the civilian world and the JDP government in particular. However, it would be inaccurate to argue that the discomfort of the harder liners -such as the current Chief of the Land Forces Yasar Buyukanit or the retired hawkish generals like Aytac Yalman, Tuncer Kilinc and Hursit Tolon – only stems from a ruling party with a troublesome legacy. It is not surprising to hear warning messages from those generals. Former National Security Council General Secretary Tuncer Kilinc often raised the red flag over the Shariah threat. During his handover ceremony in August 2003 he stated that ''although the secular Republic is 80 years old, Turkey should be loyal to principles of Ataturk, there are still some circles seeking the Shariah.''[4] A couple of days before him, the Chief of the Aegean Army Hursit Tolon warned the people with fundamentalist aspirations without giving specific names and said that they saw the sneaky disguise.[5]Another harder liner claimed that ''the TGS is not only the guarantee of the Republic, but also democracy''[6] while the relatively moderate Chief of Staff Hilmi Ozkok confessed that ''the military interventions are not the solution. Then solution should be sought in the people.''[7]

[4] Milliyet August 26,2003
[5] Radikal August 21,2003
[6] www.turkishpress.com September 09,2003
[7] Hurriyet August 27,2003

Apparently, the shape of military interventions in Turkey changed depending on the priorities of the TGS and the intra-power struggle. Whether Turkey will be prone to other democratic breakdowns is quite dependent on its EU bid which will be analyzed in the next section.

IV. THE EU CHALLENGE TO THE MILITARY SUPREMACY IN TURKEY

Given the long and troublesome history of civil-military relations and the supremacy of the TGS in Turkey, there is little doubt that the demands and reforms that the EU membership requires are a challenging test for the Turkish democracy. In other words, the EU membership is the ultimate battleground between the proponents of the status quo and a totally civilian democracy.

As far as the role of the military in Turkish politics is concerned, during the EU accession process, there seems to be almost a consensus that the military will have to diminish its weight and withdraw from politics. Ersel Aydinli, Nihat Ali Ozcan and Dogan Akyaz (2006) stated such an expectation as follows: ‘‘ The EU reforms have called for a virtual revolution of the military’s mindset, requiring that the military’s traditionally expansive interpretation of its mission to protect the country be redefined in a much more narrow way.’’ It is worth to consider their article seriously because of the authors’ widely- believed access to insider perspective of the TGS.

Even after the 1980 coup, the idea that ‘‘should an intervention happen, military government is likely to be as brief as it was earlier, for at least the military have learned their lesson.’’ (Klieman 1980) was there. Before the imposition of the Copenhagen Criteria on Turkey, there was an optimistic belief that military was ready to go into the barracks. For example in 1996 Heper and Guney (1996) wrote that:

> The Turkish military has increasingly extricated itself from politics primarily because (1) it had historically been an instigator of the project of Westernization that included democratization; (2) it came under increasing pressure from both Turkey's western allies and a group of intellectuals in Turkey to adopt a hands-off policy in politics; (3) the military itself came to the conclusion that democracy cannot be consolidated through military intervention and (4) the military's involvement in politics leads to its loss of prestige in the polity and society and to a lowering of morale within the military.

Despite the accuracy of some of the above diagnoses and the military's often-supportive stance towards the EU and merit of the civilian democracy, especially the EU battle has been proving that the military has not made its mind yet and is not ready to withdraw from politics since the stakes are high. Indeed the following statement supports such an argument:

> If Kurdish separatists, failing to see a future for themselves in a European Turkey, continue to resort to violence, the Turkish military might hang on to its remaining prerogatives in the name of national security. Should the Islamists begin to fill in the gaps in state institutions created by the military's retreat, the TGS could decide to cling on to its power (Aydinli et al. 2006).

Unfortunately the increasing terrorist activities in the Southeast coupled with the provocative statements by Kurdish politicians of the region as well as the ascending tension over the protection of the regime provide the TGS sufficient excuses to keep its dominance in politics. Indeed it is obvious that the military will always consider itself the ultimate guardian: '' As the country's ultimate guardian, the military will carefully balance he EU's demands for reform, especially those regarding cultural diversity with national security'' (Aydinli et al. 2006). It seems that Turkey needs to go a long way to debate whether there is a need for a 'guardian' to protect the regime -especially from its citizens- in the first place.

The EU membership is indeed in compliance with the goals Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the Founder of the Turkish Republic set for Turkey. Consequently as Aydinli et al. (2006) state ‘‘like the civilian authorities the Turkish military supported the EU membership. Not only would accession be the crowning achievement of Turkey’s modernization, but the process leading to it would also offer a way to respond to several challenges facing the country.’’ Although after the Helsinki Summit of 1999, then Chief of Staff Huseyin Kivrikoglu announced the TGS’s support for the EU membership process and Turkish- EU relations soon became the most discussed items at NSC meetings and the council’s press releases declared EU membership as a national goal and official ‘‘state policy’’ (Aydinli et al. 2006) it seems that the establishment in Turkey is not at ease with the prospective compromises on the issues like Cyprus, expansion of religious expressions, the Kurdish problem, and the subordination of the military to the civilians. As the EU membership negotiations continue intermittently, high-ranking generals send conflicting messages which engender to the rumors of disagreement within the TGS. However, the following remark could be read almost like a response to such rumors: ‘‘Despite slight divergences of opinion among some of its generals, the Turkish military basically makes decisions as a unitary, rational actor and speaks with one voice’’ (Aydinli et al. 2006). Regardless of that, at the end of the 1990s, the civilian and military elites found a common cause- EU membership- behind which to rally (Aydinli et al. 2006). As Ozel (2003) portrays in his *After the Tsunami* the traumas of the 1990s - frustration with the corrupted state, the post-modern coup, devastating earthquakes and economic crises contributed to the commitment for the EU.

Given the high stakes involved in the EU membership for both the civilians and the military, it is essential to understand the background of Turkey's journey to the EU. Turkey has been flirting with Europe since 1958, a period of almost half a century which is full of break ups and disappointments on the part of the former. The relationship turned into an obsession for Turkey to the extent that it almost began to desire the membership in spite of the Europeans.

For over two centuries Turks associated modernization with Europeanization despite the existence of a love-hate relationship with Europe. Even today, many Turks believe that Europeans would be happy with a divided and weak Turkey due to the fears that date back to the end of World War I during which a partition plan of Anatolia was forced on the defeated Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless a rejection from the ideal role model leads to more frustration than Europeans could imagine. As Jenkins (2001) states ''accession means more than mere economic or political benefits. It is a question of identity, of being able to number themselves amongst what they perceived as the elite of nations: which is why criticism by, and continued exclusion from the EU often triggers such emotional reactions inside Turkey.''

Although Turkey's direction has been westward officially since 1920s as Mustafa Kemal Ataturk set to become a modern state it is hard to say that all segments of the society wholeheartedly support the full EU membership. On top of the list of skeptics is the politically powerful Turkish military. Supposedly the goal of EU membership fits the objectives of the Turkish military since it means to become westernized. However what we witness is a power struggle between the conservative JDP government that seems to adopt the EU project for its own pragmatic purposes and the establishment at large.

Especially after the rapid reform movement that was undertaken by the JDP government with the support of country's business class and the media left the military almost alone along with a couple of retired and militantly Kemalist bureaucrats who claim that the EU will harm the independence and sovereignty of Turkey. However there is a point in the argument that ‘‘none of the reforms the EU still requires of the Turkish government can be achieved without the military's backing’’(Aydinli et al. 2006). Yet it is worth questioning the degree of power loss for the TGS given the wide autonomy that it still enjoys notwithstanding the reforms.

There is no doubt that the Turkish elite decided to turn its face towards Europe starting from the late Ottoman era. Since the 1830s, reform movements of the Turkish political elite have been marked by a close link between modernization and westernization. The political elite of that period, observing the forces unleashed by European revolutions, concluded that pre-modern Ottoman institutions would not survive the onslaught of Western modernity (Ugur, 1999). Turkey joined NATO in 1952 and since then tried to be a part of post World War II Western institutions. For Mehmet Ugur (1999) ‘‘relations with the West became not only a reflection of the Turkish political elite, but also an anchor that would reduce the probability of deviations from the modernization trajectory.’’ He (1999) also acknowledged that ‘‘the Turkish policy makers of the time came to realize that the lack of popular support for the state-led modernization strategy was a major weakness that would be exacerbated by the introduction of a multi-party regime.’’ More than the increasing frustration of the non-elite majority at home, the international conjuncture marked by democratization movements forced Turkey to transition to the multi-party system which could beg a separate discussion.

As far as Turkish foreign policy is concerned, there is a consensus on its nature as Jenkins (2001) points out ‘‘the overall orientation of Turkish foreign policy has remained unchanged since the 1920s when Ataturk identified becoming a modern, Westernized, European state as an ideal to which Turkey should aspire. Today most Turks regard the EU membership as the criterion for being truly European.’’ Hence Turkey applied to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1958 after the Treaty of Rome and became an associate member in 1963. However since then the accession process turned into a gridlock and Turkey has been convinced that Europe was reluctant to admit it in the first place. As Arikan (2003) stated ‘‘Turkish point of view tended to highlight the failures of the EU to fulfill its obligations under the Association Agreement (AA) and the Additional Protocol (AP).’’ On the other hand, the EU started to investigate human rights violations and raise the issue of democratization in Turkey after the military coup of 1980. However like so many others Arikan (2003) believes that ‘‘the EP used these vexed questions as a pretext to discourage Turkey’s membership expectation by sending a message to Turkey through its resolution that she should not rush towards full membership.’’ Even though Turkey’s application for full membership was rejected in 1989 it was determined to join the EU. After the rejection Turgut Ozal, then Prime Minister, asked the question loud in everybody’s mind: Is it we are Muslim and they are Christians and they don’t say that?

Indeed, in terms of identity, Huntington (1993) seems right in his juxtaposition of Turkey as a torn country. In his *Clash of Civilizations* he argues that ‘‘some countries have a fair degree of cultural homogeneity, but they are divided over whether their society belongs to one civilization or another.’’ In the EU case as Ugur (1999) suggests

‘‘Turkish elite’s claim that Turkey is a Western country is shared neither by the Turkish population nor by the Western elite.’’

Turkey signed the Customs Union agreement in 1995, but then again the EU chose to pass over Turkey’s candidacy for full membership in December 1997. It took until the Helsinki Summit of 1999 for the EU to accept Turkey officially as a candidate. Indeed, only after Helsinki, Turkey began to realize the serious compromises that it is asked to make regarding Turkey’s chronic problems. Although the Europeans, both in informal and formal documents and negotiations, had consistently criticized the role of the military in Turkish politics, talk of actually curbing it did not begin in earnest until after 1999 (Aydinli et al. 2006).

On December 17, 2004 Turkey was given a date to discuss whether to start the negotiations or not despite mutual doubts on both Turkey and the EU about the other’s commitment. In the end of an equally tough period marked by crises, mutual mistrust and doubts, on October 3, 2005 the EU granted Turkey to start the accession negotiations without a membership guarantee, a process, however, ended in membership for the other candidates.

Obviously some European states led by France have strong reservations for Turkey’s admission. Former President of France Valery Giscard d’Estaing even claimed that Turkey’s membership would be ‘the end of Europe.’ Similarly, in the aftermath of the October 3 decision, French President Jacques Chirac stated that Turkey needs a cultural revolution while the Christian Democrats in Germany were in favor of a formula that they called ‘privileged partnership.’ Indeed it was Austria that openly expressed strong reservation on Turkey’s membership almost on behalf of the bigger countries in

the EU and it finally managed to add the phrase 'absorption capacity', which was not used for any other candidates. According to the Council of European Union's decision dated October 3, 2005 one of the most significant governing principles for the negotiations is as follows:

> As agreed at the European Council in December 2004, these negotiations are based on Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union. The shared objective of the negotiations is accession. These negotiations are an open-ended process, the outcome of which cannot be guaranteed beforehand. While having full regard to all Copenhagen criteria, including the absorption capacity of the Union, if Turkey is not in a position to assume in full all the obligations of membership it must be ensured that Turkey is fully anchored in the European structures through the strongest possible bond.[8]

Following such official statements, high-level EU politicians kept making remarks on Turkey's obligations and about the nature of the negotiations. The President of the EU Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso said that ''Turkey has to win the hearts and minds of the Europeans given the low support level for Turkey's membership in many EU countries.''[9] Despite the EU's close scrutiny, Turkey seemed to fall into the trap of complacency with the relief of the October 3 decision which was also recognized by Olli Rehn, EU Commissioner for Enlargement, who made a wake up call by saying that ''the party is over and it is time to work.''[10] Given all these statements it seems that reservations on Turkey will not be over any time soon and the negotiations process will be full of intermittent crises. Indeed, as Aydinli et al. (2006) point out ''the EU itself may be the main threat to further reform. If it fails to show as great a commitment as

[8] Council of European Union Enlargement: Accession negotiations with Turkey: General EU Position October 3,2005
[9] http://europa.eu.int/comm/index_en.htm October 3,2005
[10] Milliyet November 24,2005

Turkey has shown so far, the EU could jeopardize the grand consensus that brought Turkey's military and civilian authorities together.''

However it is not only the Europeans who have suspicions about the consequences of Turkey's membership. As Jenkins (2001) points out ''the military has adopted a more ambivalent attitude towards EU membership'' since ''the wording of the offer effectively made Turkish accession conditional on the resolution of all of its disputes with Greece, either bilaterally by 2004 or, if this proved impossible, by allowing them to be settled by the International Court of Justice at the Hague; something which Ankara had previously refused to do.'' Yet the Turkish government, and even the military regime, responded positively to the European concerns and criticism as Arikan (2003) states. His argument that Turkey was interested in the EU, not only for economic reasons, but also for political, security and ideological reasons (Arikan 2003) has a strong point. This seems to partially explain the military's support for the accession efforts. In response to criticisms towards the military that it constitutes one of the biggest barriers in front of Turkey's desire to become a EU member, Yasar Buyukanit, Chief of the Land Forces and a vocal and radical general, responded in a way to support the above argument: ''The European Union is the geo-political and geo-strategic ultimate condition for the realization of the target of modernization which Ataturk chose for the Turkish nation.''[11] However he did not forget to make a warning by adding that ''those who see the European Union and the supreme ideals of this union as a means of realizing their archaic and separatist goals are doomed to be disappointed.''[12]

[11] Turkish Daily News May 30,2003
[12] Ibid

Unexpectedly, for many observers of the Turkish politics, Turkey has started an ambitious reform movement to fulfill the Copenhagen Criteria and is proud of what it has achieved in a short time period:

> Thus, the vigorous agenda of reform pursued by Turkey and the colossal legislative effort realized, which has included such measures as the comprehensive Constitutional amendments in October 2001 and May 2004, new Civil and Penal Codes and eight reform packages, has been acknowledged by the Commission's recommendation.[13]

However it is possible to see Turkey's resentment for additional demands and double standard in the MFA's official statements:

> While some of the Commission's proposals relating to the negotiation process and procedures differ from past practice and criteria and methods applied to the other candidates, Turkey believes that at the end of the day the principle of *"pacta sund servanda"* and the letter and spirit of the Helsinki European Council Conclusions referred to above will be upheld by the EU Member States.[14]

Despite the government's pride in the reform packages adopted in a short time, hard- line generals made their unrest clear such as the former National Security Secretary General Tuncer Kilinc. In the aftermath of the reforms curbing the power of the NSC by limiting the duties of the NSC secretary general to secretarial organization, as opposed to his previous tasks which included 'monitoring' and 'coordinating' the implementation of government decisions on security matters, Tuncer said that 'with the reforms, the council…has kept its place legally, but was left functionless.''[15] Notwithstanding the military's existing supremacy, the reforms were unprecedented and hard to absorb for the TGS. Aydinli et al. (2006) argue that ''not all these adjustments have been greeted with open arms, but the TGS has largely compiled with the EU's demands even though doing

[13] www.mfa.gov.tr
[14] Ibid
[15] Agence France Presse August 25, 2003

so has forced it to let go of power it had felt necessary to build up and carefully guard for decades.''

Needless to say, prevailing military supremacy is one of the main impediments in front of EU membership. As Cizre (2004) states ''in all EU originating reports and documents on Turkey, there are four strictly institutional areas that are targeted for reform: the position of the Chief of the General Staff, the role of the National Security Council, the composition and jurisdiction of the State Security Courts and the emergency rule in the Southeast.'' The last two problems were ameliorated during the last reform period. However, Cizre (2004) argues that ''the high command, being perfectly aware that the voice of the military cannot be altered just by changing the composition of the Council, has supported the idea of including more civilian ministers into its folds.'' Cizre's argument seems more convincing than claiming that '' recent changes have already dramatically curbed the power of the Turkish military in several of its traditional areas of influence and reduced its long-standing authority in some civilian institutions''(Aydinli et al. 2006) given the *de facto* influence of the TGS on every aspect of Turkish state as well as the people's mindsets.

In the 1990s the military began to perceive Kurdish nationalism and Islamic resurgence as the most important threats against the unitary secular Republic. For Jacoby (2003) Turkish Armed Forces often have a contradictory vision of Islam which is ''suitable for a sense of individual morality and order, but inappropriate for a shared sense of collective consciousness.'' As a result of such a perception, the generals often react to statements by the politicians and the EU demands. In August 2003, The Chief of the First Army, General Cetin Dogan, directed attention to the external pressure and their

changing nature by accusing foreign countries of being a Trojan horse in Turkey and said that they would ‘‘break the hands that threatens the TGS.’’[16]

It is apparent as Jenkins (2001) states that ‘‘the military’s main fear is that the relaxation of Turkey’s often draconian restrictions on freedom of speech would fuel anti-secular and separatist, primarily Kurdish nationalist, sentiments.’’ Military officials try to justify their reservations by arguing that ‘‘no other European country faces the same threats as Turkey and that the Copenhagen criteria should be implemented taking into consideration the interests and realities of the country’’ (Jenkins 2001). For the soldiers, their role as the guardian and the protector of the regime makes it a natural reflex to take the measurements against threats. As a result of skepticism about the EU’s motives ‘‘in early 2000 the Turkish General Staff (TGS) established a Working Group on EU membership. But it soon made it clear that it had reservations not about the principle of EU membership- which it sees as the realization of Ataturk’s dream of Turkey being accepted as a modern, European state- but rather the possible impact of the fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria on the nature of the Turkish regime’’ (Jenkins 2001).

Contrary to his previous statements on the EU and as if supporting the above argument, Yasar Buyukanit lashed out at the European Parliament in September 2005. He said ‘‘I strongly condemn the mentality and expression of the European Parliament which labeled our struggle against terrorism as aggressive military operations.’’[17] In the same speech, like all of his colleagues, he warned Turkey against the two big national security threats. Predictably they were religious fundamentalism and Kurdish separatism. On the other hand, Turkey-European Union Joint Parliamentary Commission Co-Chair Joost

[16] Aksam 19 Agustos 2003
[17] Sabah September 26, 2005

Lagendijk has been accusing the military of blocking the way to Europe. In December 2005, he claimed that ‘‘the military does not mind fighting with the PKK because the armed struggle keeps the military on the agenda and in the center.’’[18]

In contrast, some scholars of Turkish politics seem to hold naïve ideas about the military. For instance Frank Tachau (cited in Heper&Guney 1996) argues that ‘‘the military tried everything it could so that they would not feel obliged to escalate their moderating role to a guardianship role- taking power into their hands, clearing up ‘the mess’, and then returning to their barracks.’’ Yet Heper and Guney (1996) think that ‘‘in Turkey, despite the increased democratization of the regime, the military’s prerogatives were kept almost intact. And the military continued to use the NSC to influence government policy in those matters that they considered critical for the internal and external security of the country.’’

To circumcise those powers Turkey, as Gorvett (2001) points out, has to ‘‘wind down the military’s political role, grant rights to Kurds and other minorities, and dramatically shrink the size and power of the state’’ in order to meet the Copenhagen Criteria which is a set of economic, social and political rules.

During the highly controversial ‘Operation White Energy’ which was undertaken in the 1990s as a result of corruption charges for some politicians in slate bids, the Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz claimed that ‘Operation White Energy’ was a veiled attempt by those opposed to EU membership to discredit Turkey’s pro-EU civilian rulers. As a response, the General Staff statement categorically denied that the military was anything but staunch Europeans. However, on the same day, across town, War Academies Commander General Nahit Senoglu was voicing his doubt over the EU membership

[18] Milliyet December 17,2005

during a seminar on the proposed new European defense force that ‘‘ no single EU country is willing to accept Turkey’s EU membership.’’ According to the general the transition toward a European defense identity, and the exclusion of NATO member Turkey from its decision making structure, were evidence of ‘unfair and disloyal attitudes’ toward Turkey. For him decisions on Cyprus and the Aegean in Turkey’s EU accession requirements were ‘of such a nature as might harm Turkey’s national interests’’(Gorvett 2001).

A. A Threshold: Helsinki Summit and its Aftermath

It should be clear by now that it would not be rational for Turkey to alienate itself from the European security system and rely totally on the US not only for ideological, but also strategic reasons. When this rationale was combined with the JDP’s possible interests- such as not facing the threat of being banned from politics and being less cautious about its constituency’s demands- from an irreversible process of democratization, acceleration in the reforms took place.

Immediately after the November 2002 elections the JDP set the EU membership as the first goal for the government. The enthusiasm and commitment to change that marked the post 2002 elections might have made Ozel (2003) rightfully write that ‘‘the push for change, the claims of a rising counter elite to a place in the power structure, and the popularity of EU membership all point to a fundamental fact: Having undergone a rather unsettling two decades, Turkey is now ready to shake off the shackles of the 1982 military-drafted constitution as well as the mentality that framed it.’’

It is skeptical to doubt the JDP's commitment to the EU membership since it would secure its existence in a more open and politically liberal society although it has been stumbling in realizing all the legal changes that were aimed to ensure political liberalization not only because it does not have a structured roadmap, but also has been cautious not to alert the military.

In *Turks Say No to Europe: Can't We Just Come as We Are?* Craig Smith (2003) says that in Turkey in all instances short-lived interventions were designed to reestablish civilian rule and appreciates the reforms: '' In July 2004 the Turkish Parliament voted to curb the political power of the military and increase freedom of expression, signaling a significant step away from army domination of Turkish politics. The withdrawal of the military from politics appears to be a conscious decision designed to allow the emergence of a fuller democracy in order to secure the coveted prize of European membership.'' Although there have been important changes in the structure of the military dominated NSC it is hard to say that military's status is shattered. Demirel (2004) thinks that the lingering dilemma of Turkish politics, throughout the 1990s, was the restructuring of civil-military relations. Yet it has not really been on the agenda of Turkish politics. For him the government so far has ''hardly touched on essential military prerogatives such as making the Chief of the General Staff responsible to the Defense Minister instead of the Prime Minister, instituting real parliamentary control over defense spending and particularly military- backed foundations, subjecting the decisions of the Higher Council to judicial review and so on'' (Demirel 2004).

All these are fair arguments and obviously no government has shown the courage to question the 'sacred mission and prerogatives' of the Armed Forces. However when

we think of the collective memory as far as the military is concerned, politicians' reservations for a radical change are understandable. Even if the reform is made as O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) point out ''the most difficult immediate problems are how to administer justice to those directly responsible for past acts of repression and how to assert some degree of civilian control over decisions about promotion and resource allocation within the armed forces.'' Obviously the changes are only one dimension of providing complete civilian supremacy and in Turkey that seems out of sight no matter how much pressure the EU criteria brings unless they become irreversible for good. Despite the question of military dominance Rustow (1979) is right to assert that ''Turkey's liveliest cultural links have been with Europe rather than with the Middle East and Turkey's society and politics are profoundly committed to democratic elections, freedom of expression and political equality.''

Like many other students of Turkish politics Jenkins (2001) is convinced that ''the Turkish military is unlikely to be prepared to relinquish the future of the country to its civilian politicians. For the foreseeable future it is likely to remain in the political arena, not so much initiating policy as ensuring that it remains within what the military believes to be acceptable parameters.'' There is little doubt that the military's power has been challenged especially with the fulfillment of the European demands although most of the previous decade witnessed an increase in military's dominance as Ozel (2003) also acknowledges: ''The military gradually redefined domestic problems as national-security threats, with the influence of the armed forces visibly increasing throughout political life.'' Yet, the National Security Policy Document for 2001 included not only Turkey's goal of gaining membership in the EU, but also a major concession by the TGS on the

Kurdish question according to Aydinli et al. The document stated, ‘‘our citizens, who are united under the banner of Turkish national identity, should have their cultural and local linguistic characteristics be considered as individual rights and freedoms’’ (Aydinli et al 2006). Apparently, as Ozel (2003) states the EU helped democratization by asking Turkey to become more committed to democratic reform as a *sine qua non* of the membership process along with the influence of internal dynamics. The biggest evidence of those internal dynamics was the 2002 election results. As Ozel (2003) mentions ‘‘Turkish voters had swept aside a whole cohort of established, but corruption-tainted parties, possibly in defiance of the country’s politically powerful military, and opted instead for a group of self-avowed ‘Muslim Democrats’ led by the charismatic former mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.’’ According to a study conducted by political scientist Yilmaz Esmer (cited in Ozel 2003) most of the JDP voters favored the EU accession even if they doubted that the EU was sincere about the process. Yet again as Ozel states ‘‘the military issued its warning via the chief of the General Staff. In a speech citing the usual concerns about ‘national security’, he attacked the government’s Cyprus and EU policies and above all condemned the possibility of Islamic rule.’’

Although the military enjoyed extended exercise of power in the 1990s it was the decade that the business class withdrew its support in favor of the EU. As Ozel (2003) points out ‘‘the prominent industrialists’ and businessmen’s association known as TUSIAD, which had supported the 1980 military coup, added its voice to the democracy chorus, noting that Turkey’s future prosperity hinged on EU accession and thus on further democratization’’ which means the loss of one of the crucial fronts for the military.

As previously stated the JDP government will try to challenge the privileged position of the military by means of reforms demanded by the EU as much as it can. Ozel (2003) explains the logic behind the JDP's attitude as follows: ''the only way for this party to survive in power and endure is through a liberal transformation of the Turkish polity and its civilization. This explains why the JDP's drive for EU accession is genuine: It is a matter of enlightened self-interest.'' However along with the psychological barrier of politicians to challenge the authority of the military as Jenkins (2001) states, the JDPs inexperience in crisis management, the public's indifference or inability at large and the establishment's resistance make things at home harder as if there are not enough problems on the EU side of the equation.

It is true that full EU membership will help Turkey to consolidate liberalism both economically and politically. However the danger is that there is over expectation from what the EU would bring to Turkey, which might eventually lead to disappointment in society. As Ozel (2003) states ''EU membership became all the more prized as an aid to this cause *(drive toward an accountable, transparent, and efficient government ruled by law)*; some even saw it as a panacea.''

Although Turkey began to show signs of obsession with the EU issue and tries to become European despite Europe itself, the EU goal would serve as a strong catalyst for further liberalization, which would be in and of itself an achievement for Turkey even if it does not become a full member. However, since the stakes are higher than ever before, the EU battle seems to be the most severe one in the war between the center and the periphery. The Semdinli incident, the punishment for the prosecutor of Van who dared to insinuate responsibility for illegal acts by General Buyukanit in his indictment and the

efforts to sharpen polarization in society over the Kurdish question and secularism could be read as the reflections of the last battle. There is little doubt that the winner will determine not only the shape of civil-military relations, but the sanity and welfare of Turkish citizens as well as the nature of Turkish democracy.

CONCLUSION

The dominant role of the military in contemporary Turkish politics is almost a constant. Without a doubt, the Turkish military has always been in the center of politics. However, it would be inaccurate and insufficient to analyze civil-military relations in Turkey solely around the traditional literature. Since the Western civil-military literature is based on the feudal experiences of Europe, as well as the American case, it is misleading to expect that the weight of the military in politics would decrease with more professionalization in Turkey. In that respect, *the Theory of Concordance, which* considers the unique historical and cultural experiences of nations and the various other possibilities for civil-military relations, becomes more explanatory for the Turkish case. The theory does not assume that separate civil-military spheres are necessary to prevent military intervention. Despite its explanatory power, for the sake of Turkish democracy it makes more sense to aim for complete military subordination to the elected civilians. However, the coup/no-coup dichotomy is not sufficient to prove civilian supremacy. Often, the military exercised power in Turkey –in compliance with the definition of second face of power- without resorting to arms.

Turkish democracy seems to have a hybrid nature and a mixed performance despite the relatively early transition to democracy. For the establishment at large and the TGS in particular, it could be argued that the goal is to secure the Republic at the expense of democracy. The military perceives itself as the guardians of secular Turkey due to a self-ascribed duty. The TGS does not hesitate to intervene in politics when it deems it

necessary which is itself, quite an arbitrary criterion. However, it is not only the perception of the soldiers, but also the lack of a mature political culture that prevents civilian supremacy in Turkey. In almost all public opinion polls, the TGS is the most trusted institution while political parties and politicians- regardless of their affiliation- are considered corrupt. Consequently, in the power struggle between the military and the civilians, the former has great leverage. What is interesting is that the superiority of the military is often taken for granted in Turkey. Apparently, the TGS has been successful in creating citizens that consent to its hegemony. The most influential manifestations of military supremacy in Turkey are the lack of accountability for, and the high degree of autonomy of, the TGS. Coupled with the ideological shield of Kemalism, it is not surprising that the military enjoys power and acts like 'the big brother' of Turkish democracy. Yet, on top of everything, the military, and even the public, makes a distinction between the state and the government and reserves the former for the military. Ironically, despite the military's almost inherent right to be involved in politics, the public consistently opts for the parties that are least- liked by the TGS which makes Turkey an interesting case.

Turkey had three traditional military interventions in 1960, 1971 and 1980, as well as a different one in terms of its strategy in 1997, which has been called 'a post-modern coup.' Notwithstanding the consistently regular interventions, the TGS has always allowed return to civilian rule, however under its guidance. Yet, preference for a civilian but conformist government is often referred to as courtesy of the TGS.

It would be misleading to assume that the interventions in Turkey have the same pattern, particularly in terms of internal dynamics. The first intervention of May 27, 1960,

took place outside the hierarchical structure of the TGS since it was organized by the low-ranking officers. In that era, the internal organization of the TGS was disrupted and fragmentation within the military turned into an issue. Consequently, the second coup of March 12, 1971, was almost the manifestation of the power struggle between the radicals and the moderates in the TGS. With the intervention, the disobedient groups were eliminated and the future organizations within the military began to focus more on the regime character rather than on personal ambitions.

The September 12, 1980, intervention was the culmination of the military's efforts to restore hierarchy in the TGS. Not only the command chain in the TGS, but also the autonomy of the military gradually gained strength with each intervention. The post-modern coup of February 28, 1997, however, was a result of a successful public relations campaign to overthrow the government that the military despised. As the stages of the February 28 era unfolded it becomes clear that military acted with the Machiavellist motto that the end justified the means.

The two most important tools of the military's ability to exercise power are the National Security Council (NSC) and the National Security Policy Document (NSPD) or 'the Red Booklet' as it is informally named. Clearly, each intervention helped both tools institutionalize and become indispensable parts of political decision making. Although the interventions contributed to the consolidation of the hierarchy of the TGS, the difference in points of view among the high-ranking generals indicate that the TGS is not immune to internal cleavages.

In the war between the center and the periphery over the right to rule Turkey, the EU membership process seems to be the ultimate battleground. The outcome of this

process has a determining role in Turkish democracy's path. If Turkey becomes an EU member after successful completion of membership requirements, the norms of liberal democracy might become irreversible and the proponents of the status quo would lose their upper hand in the Turkish state structure. Given the seemingly compatible nature of the EU's principles with the establishment's desire to reach the level of Western contemporary civilization, it would be normal to expect the support of the military and bureaucracy for EU membership. However, as the extent of loss of power for the military becomes clearer, the covert, but occasionally overt- resistance of the TGS increases. Parallel to the long love-hate relationship of Turks with Europe, the high-ranking generals give mixed messages about the EU's agenda.

Although Turkey's journey to Europe started in the 1960s, until the Helsinki Summit of 1999 when Turkey's candidacy was accepted, there was not a strong belief in the transformation of the society. Consequently, the struggle for civilian supremacy gained pace only after 1999. With the inauguration of the JDP government in 2002, the desire for change had peaked since the JDP itself has a lot to gain from the EU process, not least to keep its existence in Turkish politics. As a result of this enlightened self interest, the JDP accelerated an ambitious reform package to curb the military's power while trying not to disturb the establishment which was already on alert.

Notwithstanding the unprecedented reforms of 2004 to restrict the military's power, the TGS still enjoys a wide amount of political and economic autonomy. For instance, the Chief of Staff is still not responsible to the Minister of Defense, but the Prime Minister instead. The TGS is still not accountable for its actions. The National Security Policy Document is still the main guidebook of politics and the National

Security Council still determines the agenda of the country. Indeed, more than the *de jure* prerogatives of the TGS, it is the *de facto* acceptance of the dominance of the military in politics that impedes civilian politics in Turkey. After all, the TGS perceives itself the sole and rightful guardian of the regime and does not hesitate to raise its voice no matter how much demand for reform there is. The Semdinli incident of 2006, the punishment of the prosecutor who included General Buyukanit's name in the Semdinli indictment and the reaction of the establishment after the shootings of the High Council judges all indicate that the war between the center and the periphery will become even more intense over the secular nature of the regime.

Although democracy in its minimal definition is stable in Turkey, the consolidation of a truly liberal democracy is destined to remain a dream for Turkey given the weak commitment to the rule of law and the supremacy of the elected, as well as the conformist nature of the Turkish people at large. What is ironic is that despite the military's overwhelming determining power over the fate of governments, the people consistently vote for the party that is despised by the TGS and the establishment at large. This mixed tradition in Turkish politics demonstrates the schizophrenic nature of Turkish society. In such a framework a strong engagement with the European Union and an irreversible change in the power practices in Turkey seem to be the remedy for the maladies of Turkish democracy. However, even more essential for the sanity and welfare of Turkey is the realization of a need for an open and unbiased discussion and redefinition of identity questions not only by the intelligentsia but the masses. Only in a country in which the people know what they desire, could the civilian supremacy be, permanently and irreversibly, instituted.

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