

NON-MATERIAL SOURCES OF  
TURKISH ARMED FORCES' POLITICAL POWER:  
A "MILITARY IN SOCIETY" APPROACH

A Master's Thesis

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The Institute of Economics and Social Sciences  
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ANKARA

September 2007

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in International Relations.

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## **ABSTRACT**

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September 2007

This thesis is an attempt to understand the non-material sources of Turkish Armed Forces' political power. For that purpose, the thesis looks at theories of power and relevant civil-military relations literature and illustrates that the current civil-military relations literature employs an institution-based formal decision-making approach to military's political power, where non-material sources of armed forces political power is mostly overlooked. Moreover, current literature presumes the existence of a conflictual relationship between the military and the society where interests of the society and the military clash. Therefore, there is a theoretical gap which makes it problematic to study armies like Turkish Armed Forces, which enjoy a long-term and considerable support from their societies. In order to provide for an answer to such a gap, the thesis develops a "military in society" approach and establishes that the political power of the Turkish Armed Forces emanates from its distinctive relationship with its society which has historical, cultural, social and discursive dimensions.

Keywords: political power, power sources, civil-military relations, Turkish Armed Forces, military intervention, military, army, society

## ÖZET

### TÜRK SİLAHLI KUVVETLERİ’NİN POLİTİK GÜCÜNÜN MADDİ OLMAYAN KAYNAKLARI: BİR “TOPLUM İÇİNDE ASKER” YAKLAŞIMI

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Danışman: Doç. Dr. Ersel Aydınlı

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Bu tez, Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri’nin politik gücünün maddi olmayan kaynaklarını anlamaya yönelik bir çabanın ürünüdür. Bu amaçla, bu tez güç teorilerine ve ilgili sivil-asker ilişkileri literatürüne bakmakta; mevcut sivil-asker ilişkileri literatürünün askerin politik gücüne kurumsal tabanlı bir resmi karar alma yaklaşımıyla baktığını göstermektedir. Bu bakış, askerin politik gücünün maddi olmayan kaynaklarını büyük oranda gözden kaçırmaktadır. Bunun ötesinde mevcut literatür, toplumun ve de askerin çıkarlarının birbirleriyle çatıştığı bir asker- toplum ilişkisinin varlığını farz etmektedir. Bu yüzden, toplumdan uzun zamanlı ve dikkate değer destek gören Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri gibi ordular üzerine çalışmayı güçleştiren bir teorik boşluk mevcuttur. Bu boşluğa bir cevap oluşturmak için bu tez bir “toplum içinde asker” yaklaşımı geliştirmekte ve Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri’nin politik gücünün, toplumuyla arasındaki tarihsel, kültürel, sosyal ve söylemsel boyutları olan ayrıcalıklı ilişkisinden kaynaklandığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: politik güç, güç kaynakları, sivil-asker ilişkileri, Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri, askeri müdahale, asker, ordu, toplum

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In eighty four years of Turkish Republic's history, Turkish military has made two outright coup d'états in 1960 and 1980, ousted the government by sending a memorandum in 1971, and it engineered the removal of an Islamic-oriented prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan, in 1997. Most recently, on 27 April 2007, at the pinnacle of presidential elections, Turkish military issued a press release from its website, which stated that Turkish Armed Forces is ready to intervene if the secular nature of the Republic is compromised. The statement has been regarded as a clear warning to the government and called as "e-coup".

This historical record of military interventions, along with Turkish military's prevalence in political discussions, illustrates that the Turkish military still enjoys a considerable political power despite the recent legal and institutional changes which aimed at reducing Turkish military's political power to the level of its equals in EU countries. This thesis is an attempt to understand the nature and sources of such political power and tries to answer the following questions: "what are the sources of Turkish Armed Forces' political power and where do these sources originate from?"

In the next chapter, power as defined and analyzed by different branches of social sciences, mainly sociology and political science, will be discussed in order to understand the sources of political power. It will be argued that consensual power theories, which argue that the main source of a group's political power is society, can be useful in understanding the political power of militaries which enjoy considerable amount of support from the society.

In the third chapter, theories of civil military relations and the studies which focus on the role of military's power on politics will be analyzed with an underlying lens of power approaches they utilize. It will be argued that most theories of civil-military relations are based on a formal decision-making view of military's power exercises. As such, they lay emphasis on institutional and legal sources of military's power. The current literature is mostly based on the competition between the civilian and the military on attaining more control over these sources.

Due to its institutional focus, the current literature portrays the society as a secondary player, which may have no influence independently of the political elite. Since society is presumed to side always with the political elite, they employ a conflictual view of military's political power, where interests of the military and the society constantly clash. Therefore, the literature suffers from a gap, resulting from disregarding the role of the society in enhancing or curbing the political power of the military, which makes it problematic to theorize on popular armies which receive considerable and long-term support from the society, even in their attempts to undermine civilian authority.

In order to provide a theoretical framework to answer such a gap, a

“military in society” approach, which employs a more society-based consensual understanding of power, with relevant contribution by the civil-military relations literature will be established. It will be argued that the political power of the Turkish Armed Forces emanates from the bond that it establishes with the society. The society, rather than using its power over military through elected politicians, may establish informal bonds through which it may augment or limit the political power of the military.

In order to test the dominant “institutional prerogatives” approach, the thesis will also include a chapter on the material sources of Turkish Armed Forces’ political power. The fourth chapter will focus on these material sources which are legal, economic and judicial sources. In the fifth chapter, the historical sources of Turkish Armed Forces political power will be discussed. And in the sixth chapter, Turkish Armed forces political power will be analyzed with respect to its cultural, social and discursive sources. These sources constitute a three-layered formation. On the basis, there are military motifs embedded in the culture of Turkish society which enable the establishment of a strong bond of identification between the military and the society. Secondly, social interaction between armed forces and the society on various spheres maintain and enhance this bond. Lastly, through discursive practices the military is able to reflect the anxieties and expectations of the society.

In the seventh and last chapter, it will be concluded that the bulk of political power of the Turkish Armed Forces originate from its specific interaction with the Turkish society which has roots in the culture of the society and society’s evaluation of future risks and opportunities. This chapter also includes theoretical

implications of a society-based approach to civil military relations and practical implications for the Turkish case.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **POWER**

Power is without doubt the oldest, the most central and disputed concept of social sciences. Since most of the relations among humans are related to power of one sort or another, any understanding of social science should have at least an implicit theory of power. Among them, the studies of civil-military relations try to find a solution to the paradox of a powerful military that is subordinate to the civilian control. Therefore, the main question that informs civil-military relations literature can be reformulated in terms of power as “How to curb military’s political power while not limiting its force?” In order to give an answer to this question, one must first investigate the nature of the power that the military has or exercises. Without such an analysis, all theories of civil-military relations will be inadequate.

In this chapter, I will look at power as defined and analyzed by different branches of social sciences, mainly sociology and political science in order to arrive at some analytical categories. In the subsequent chapters, these categories will help me to assess the power conceptualizations utilized by different civil-

military relations theories in order to understand nature and sources of the political power of militaries.

In this chapter, I will try to find answers to the following questions: Who is powerful? Where does the political power of a person, a group, an institution originate from? Is power a capacity (sources) or an action (exercise)? Why is power exercised? Is a conflict of interests inevitable in a power relationship?

## 2.1. THE PROBLEM OF POWER

Although power is one of the most disputed concepts of social sciences, it is probably the concept least agreed upon. Most scholars use it without definition, and when they do, it is ambiguous whether they refer to power resources, the scope of power or exercise of power. Nevertheless, there is a limited common understanding of the term, for otherwise; it might be of no use. This limited agreement, according to White, is on the fact that “power is concerned with affecting”<sup>1</sup> of a significant nature. Parsons calls it “a core complex of meaning”<sup>2</sup> while Dahl and Polsby refer to same core as they argue that power, influence and control are “serviceable synonyms.”<sup>3</sup> For Russell, power is “the production of intended effects”.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, power is a diffuse concept, which connotes a general capacity to do things irrespective “of the media employed or of the status

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<sup>1</sup> D.M. White, “The Problem of Power,” *British Journal of Political Science* 2, no. 4 (1972): 481.

<sup>2</sup> Talcott Parsons, “On The Concept of Political Power,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 107, no. 3 (1963): 232.

<sup>3</sup> A. Robert Dahl, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in the American City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961) and Nelson Polsby, *Community Power and Political Theory* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1963), 3-4.

<sup>4</sup> Russell Bertrand, *Power: A New Social Analysis* (London: Unwin Books, 1960), 25.



of authorization to make decisions and impose obligations.”<sup>5</sup>

Although all scholars may agree on significant affecting as the core element of power, not surprisingly, what makes any affecting “*significant*” is controversial and there is no agreement between the scholars with respect to definition of power. What is more, the definition of scholars and their own focus of study can be different from each other. For example, Dahl prefers to define power *per se* as a capacity, but his focus of study is on “power as an exercise” as observed in decision-making arenas.<sup>6</sup>

In his study to understand what core elements are necessary to include in a definition of power, Debnam analyzes six definitions and distribution of fifteen elements among these definitions.<sup>7</sup> He concludes that, four core elements are needed for a definition of power: actor, action, intention and outcome. When it comes to the question of whether power is a capacity or an exercise, he chooses to collapse them both under the concept of “action” since power as a potential is practically undistinguishable from power as a manifest action. While existence of conflict and sanctions are usual in exercises of power, they are not core elements for any power exercise can exist without them. Some elements like value, asymmetry, compliance and decision are all related to the consequence of power exercise, Debnam regards them as “outcome”. Since “it is not possible to study power independently” without referring to an outcome, or effect, outcome is a inevitable element of any power definition.

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<sup>5</sup> Parsons, “On The Concept of Political Power,” 232.

<sup>6</sup> Dahl, *Who Governs?*

<sup>7</sup> Geoffrey Debnam, *The Analysis of Power: Core Elements and Structure* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1984)

Despite the difficulties, the main clusters could be identified with regard to the questions that scholars of power try to answer. In the subsequent sections, we will try to group theories of power with respect to their answers to questions:

- a. Who is powerful?
- b. Is power a capacity (sources) or an action (exercise)?
- c. Is a conflict of interests inevitable in any power relationship?

## **2.2. WHO IS POWERFUL?**

The first question that arises when thinking about power is probably the question of “*Who is powerful*”. Any student of power is inescapably obliged to define who is powerful. An early answer to this question is given by Aristotle: Powerful are those “at whose will that which is moved is moved and that which changes, changes”<sup>8</sup>. Yet, in specific circumstances, it is more than hard to understand what the will is, whose will it is, and whether the outcome is identical with the initial will.

The answers to the question of “*Who is powerful?*” can be grouped into two. The first group of scholars depicts a certain group of people as the powerful. These social groups can be defined with respect to their material well-being, class, status, membership to an organization or their position. This first group is known as elitist theories of power. The second approach, known as the pluralist theories or community power theories, has a more systemic understanding of power, where power belies with the whole society, where no permanent power structure

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<sup>8</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1998), 74.

exists. But, before dwelling on elitist and pluralist conceptions of power, one should look at Weber's account of power which inspired them both.

With respect to power, Weber argues that there are three orders which make up the modern society: the economic order, the legal order and the social order.<sup>9</sup> While the economic order is merely the way in which economic goods and services are distributed, the legal order is the order established by law through which a "specific staff of men who use physical or psychical compulsion with the intention of obtaining conformity with the order or of inflicting sanctions."<sup>10</sup> For Weber, social order as distinct from economic and legal order is "the way in which social honor is distributed in a community between typical groups participating in this distribution"<sup>11</sup>

In his account of rationalization and bureaucratization of societies, Weber argues that the structure of legal order influences the distribution of power in society.<sup>12</sup> However, it is an additional factor that enhances the chance to hold power or honor: but it cannot always secure them.

Based on Weber's account of three orders, elitist theory argues that power is concentrated on the decision-making elite within a society. According to Mills, one of the leading scholars who work within this approach, the most important question about power is the problem of who is involved in making the big

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<sup>9</sup> Max Weber, "Class, Status and Power," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 180-195.

<sup>10</sup> Weber, 180.

<sup>11</sup> Weber, 181

<sup>12</sup> Weber, 180

decisions of national and international life.<sup>13</sup> As such, his focus is on the question of “who”.

Mills states that there are three broad levels of power in a society. At the top level there is the power elite composed of the leading men of political, military and economic institutions, which he depicts as “the high military, the corporation executives and political directorate”<sup>14</sup> The people of the middle and lower levels of power, according to Mills, play only very minor and limited roles in decision-making. Therefore, for Mills although the individual members of these three broad levels of power changes over time, the power structure is rather stable, enabling the membership only to those who are successfully socialized into their respective institutions.

Among the three important sectors, Mills thinks, the economic sector has the largest power for “the growth of executive government...means the ascendancy of corporate elite into political eminence.”<sup>15</sup> Especially after WWII, the corporate men come to dominate the political directorate. In addition to the corporate sector the military sector has gained a decisive political and economic relevance at the expense of the politician: “Not the party politician but the corporation executive is now more likely to sit with the military to answer the question: what is to be done?”<sup>16</sup>

Other theoreticians of power question Mills’ assumptions of the existence

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<sup>13</sup> C.Wright Mills, “The Structure of Power in American Society,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 9, no.1 (1958): 29.

<sup>14</sup> Mills, “The Structure of Power in American Society,” 32-33

<sup>15</sup> Mills, “The Structure of Power in American Society,” 33

<sup>16</sup> Mills, “The Structure of Power in American Society,” 33-34

and rigidity of the power elite. Pluralist (community power) scholars, state that power is diffused within a society. They criticize the elitist conception that ruling elite makes key political decisions in a given social group. They argue that different groups of people have more influence in making key political decisions. These groups are not always the same. Dahl argues that in any society there are people more powerful than the others, yet these people do not consequently form a ruling elite.<sup>17</sup> They argue that there is a group of people who have a *potential for control*, that is, there is high probability for their decisions to prevail, does not mean that they have a high *potential for unity*. When, as Mills argues, leading military men and business men, agree on a policy, it is highly probable that that alternative will be chosen. Yet Dahl contends that it is wrong to assume that they will agree on an alternative, since their interests and preferences are diverse and hard to coalesce.<sup>18</sup> In other words, for Dahl, despite the great extent of power resources at their hand, these leading men cannot form a permanent power elite, since they hardly -if ever- have a *potential for unity* in terms of their preferred ways and goals about operationalizing those resources.

Dahl's and other pluralists' conception of power differs from the Mills' in the sense that it does not presume the existence of a single ruling elite. Contrary to static and bureaucratic analysis of Mills, they think that the power distribution within a society is not a permanent aspect of the social structure. Rather, the power that a group successfully exercises is subject to change according to time and issue areas. Mills argues that the socialization of the elite within institutions is

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<sup>17</sup> Robert Dahl, "A Critique of the Ruling Elite Model," *The American Political Science Review* 52, no. 2 (1958): 463.

<sup>18</sup> Dahl, "A Critique of the Ruling Elite Model," 464

an important aspect of the elite's unity and he assumes that every member of the elite is inescapably indoctrinated through social processes, so that they have similar if not identical interests. Dahl and Polsby question this assumption and argue that such unity is challenged from time to time and from one issue to another. So any permanent power elite which prevails on the key political issues, is unlikely.<sup>19</sup>

### **2.3. POWER SOURCES vs. POWER EXERCISE**

The next question about analyzing power is whether to treat power as an ability/capacity or as an exercise. If one gives priority to the former, the analysis would necessarily lead to question of "having power": *Who has power?* Hence, the first cluster. Accordingly, if one gives priority to the latter, the research focus becomes mechanisms of power exercise, whether they are formal or informal.

One major obstacle in answering whether power is a capacity or exercise is to differentiate between sources of power and power per se without being entrapped in describing exercise of it. Indeed, White plausibly argues that there is no power as distinct from exercise of power.<sup>20</sup> Foucault shares this view and argues that power per se does not exist.<sup>21</sup> Consequently, those who attempt to describe power *per se* indeed define power sources. Others argue that such sources may or may not be translated into political power, thus one should look at power exercises, as they are manifestly observed in decision-making arenas.<sup>22</sup> For

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<sup>19</sup> Nelson Polsby, "How to Study Community Power: The Pluralist Alternative," *The Journal of Politics* 22, no. 3 (1960): 476.

<sup>20</sup> White, 480.

<sup>21</sup> Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (1982): 777-795.

<sup>22</sup> Polsby, *Community Power*, 121

example, a person who is wealthy enough to affect certain political decisions may not choose to do so; therefore focusing on his/her economic assets may be irrelevant in assessing his/her political power.

In this section, following White and Foucault, I will disregard power per se and will look at approaches which focus on either power sources or power exercises.

### **2.3.1. Power Sources**

#### ***2.3.1.1. Material Sources of Power***

Marx believed that history is and will be determined by class conflict driven by power derived solely from economic resources.<sup>23</sup> Marx has seen the origins of power in the material substructure and concluded that who has the means of production has the power. Therefore, for Marx, the sources of power are inherently material.

Mills also put more emphasis on material sources of power.<sup>24</sup> Rather than the nature of power that decision-makers have, Mills tries to investigate the sources of power they utilize. For Mills, their power essentially stems from their position in their respective organizations. The power of these elites rests on the high bureaucratization and centralization of the modern societies which provides with them the means of power. Their power emanates from institutional trends by

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<sup>23</sup> Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*, ed. David McLellan (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000)

<sup>24</sup> Mills, "The Structure of Power in American Society," 29

which “the men at the top have been selected and formed”.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, their formal and informal ways of cooperation and explicit co-ordination enables them to realize their converging interests.

The lower level of power, which is merely composed of the public, does not possess the instruments for decision. Contrary to the classic image of democracies, where the people are presented with problems, discuss them, formulate viewpoints, organize, and compete; in modern societies, the public is politically fragmented, unorganized and thus, unable to make decisions. The public is “increasingly powerless”<sup>26</sup>

Mills approach to power is based on institutions and organizations as “means of power”. He states that “In the modern world,... ideas which justify rulers no longer seem so necessary to their exercises of power.”<sup>27</sup> So power is not authoritative. Authority, the form of power that is justified by the beliefs of the voluntarily obedient,

“has less relevance in modern day politics, which ceases to be an arena in which free and independent organizations truly connect the lower and middle levels of society with the top levels of decisions.”<sup>28</sup>

Mills’ approach has very little reference to ideas and ideational factors, not because that they are not relevant in analysis of power. Rather, he has a practical reason: the main channels of communication between organizations and lower levels of society, which is crucial for authority, have begun to collapse. In other

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<sup>25</sup> Mills, “The Structure of Power in American Society,” 34

<sup>26</sup> Mills, “The Structure of Power in American Society,” 41

<sup>27</sup> Mills, “The Structure of Power in American Society,” 29

<sup>28</sup> Mills, “The Structure of Power in American Society,” 37



words, since channels for social interaction cease to function, forms of power like authority, which originate from ideational sources, have lost their prevalence.

### ***2.3.1.2. Ideational Sources of Power***

Weber does not agree with Marxian materialist understanding of power and argues that the power as such is different from “economically conditioned” power. Power can be derived from social and cultural sources, as well as from economic situation. Indeed, he argues that even economic power may be the consequence of power existing on other grounds.<sup>29</sup>

Weber states that ‘class’ which is described according to the material well-being of the group, is not the only phenomena of power distribution within a community. He introduces the concepts of ‘status groups’ and ‘parties’ as additional ways to stratify society and to understand the power distribution.<sup>30</sup>

Parties are groups of people who came together with the aim of influencing a communal action no matter what its content may be. Rather than enjoying a similar source of power, parties are groups of people, coming from different status groups or classes, who strive for power.

In contrast to parties, ‘status groups’ is based on a specific source of power: in status groups, the power distribution is based on social estimation of honor. Those who belong to the same status group share a specific style of life. As such, social honor may be informed by the material condition of the person in

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<sup>29</sup>Weber, 180

<sup>30</sup> Weber, 187

question. Yet, Weber states that propertied and propertyless people can belong to the same status group, who share an equality of social esteem. Therefore, wealth is not a prerequisite for having social honor. The real source of the power of a person is the opinion of the other people as to how much social honor that person deserves. Therefore, in Weber's account, honor operates as a form of ideational source of power, which is established during social interaction and rooted in the perceptions and attributions of others. For Weber, "an occupational group" -like military for example- is also a status group, since "it successfully claims social honor only by virtue of the style of life which may be determined by it"<sup>31</sup>

Another approach, which focuses on the sources of power, is by Hannah Arendt, who finds the sources of power in ideational phenomena. According to Arendt, "power cannot be measured in terms of wealth."<sup>32</sup> Nor she thinks that power arises from other physical phenomena that may be converted into instrument of violence. Contrary to Marx and Weber who regarded violence as the ultimate form of power upon which the government rests,<sup>33</sup> she states that violence is the opposite of power.<sup>34</sup> Indeed, she establishes her theory of power as diametrically opposed to the concept of violence.

For Arendt, the power "can only be actualized but never fully materialized"<sup>35</sup> since it is not "an unchangeable, measurable, and reliable entity." Therefore, it has an ideational character, which exists as a potential.

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<sup>31</sup> Weber, 193

<sup>32</sup> Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (London: Allen Lane, the Penguin Press, 1970), 11.

<sup>33</sup> While Marx regards government as an instrument of oppression, Weber thinks that the form of violence that government executes is at least "allegedly legitimate" see Arendt, *On Violence*, 11

<sup>34</sup> Arendt, *On Violence*, 56

<sup>35</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 200.

For Arendt, power is the capacity of the people to act in agreement. As such, power is inherent in the very existence of political communities. While violence is a means to an end and always requires the justification of it, power is an end in itself. It is “the condition enabling a group of people to think in terms of the means-end category”.

The core element of power for Arendt is support of the people. She states that it is the people’s support and the continuation of the societal consent that brought the laws into existence that lends power to the institutions of a country.” For Arendt, a republic is where “the rule of law resting on the power of people, would put an end to the rule of man over man”. Mills assumption of the obedience and indifference of the masses is challenged by Arendt’s argument that society is not simply submissive, on the contrary, due to its active support, it is indeed the very source of power that the government and its institutions rests on.

As emanating basically from the opinion of society, what power needs is not justification of an end or promise of a future prospect, but legitimacy: “Power springs up whenever people get together and act in concert but it derives its legitimacy from the initial getting together, rather than from any action that then may follow.”<sup>36</sup> Legitimacy of the power, Arendt argues “bases itself on an appeal to the past”, that is to say, the history of the political community. Since legitimacy is *sine qua non* of power, and legitimacy is tied to the past practices of the society, power has also a historical source.

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<sup>36</sup> Arendt, *On Violence*, 52

Arendt points to the fact that power in its pure form is hard to find in practice. She states that “institutionalized power in organized communities often appears in the guise of authority”, without which modern societies cannot function.<sup>37</sup> Since authority “requires respect for the person or the office.” respect can be regarded as another ideational source of political power.

### 2.3.2. Power Exercises

White argues that any definition of power should answer the following question: “What must be added to affecting someone or something for there to be an exercise of power?”<sup>38</sup> Polsby, define power as “the capacity of one actor to do something affecting another actor, which changes the probable pattern of specified future events.”<sup>39</sup> While his definition of power refers to power as a capacity, it is clear that for Polsby, the power holder should *do* something which directly or indirectly affects the power yielder, whether the effect is on his/her ideas, status, behavior, material/physical well-being or something else. Not surprisingly, Polsby’s own research focus is on decision-making mechanisms.<sup>40</sup> Like Polsby, Dahl also concentrates on the negotiations and discussions between parties in a decision-making setting, and argues that the one who is able to implement his/her initial preferences is the powerful.<sup>41</sup>

Bachrach and Baratz, tried to make distinctions between the concepts of power, influence, authority and force, and argued that the interchangeable use of

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<sup>37</sup>Arendt, *On Violence*, 46

<sup>38</sup>White, 482

<sup>39</sup>Polsby, *Community Power and Political Theory*, 3-4

<sup>40</sup>Polsby, *Community Power and Political Theory*, 113,121

<sup>41</sup>Dahl, *Who Governs?*

power and influence on the one hand and neglect of authority and force on the other handicapped scholars of power, in their studies.<sup>42</sup> For the former, they hold responsible pluralists (Dahl and Polsby) who mostly do not differentiate between power, influence and control, since they think they are “serviceable synonyms”.

While Polsby and other pluralist scholars focus on observable decision-making mechanisms, Bachrach and Baratz argue that an analysis of “the exercise of power” as decision-making is inadequate. They introduce a *non-decision-making* approach to power, since “power may be and often is, exercised by confining the scope of decision-making to relatively ‘safe’ areas.”<sup>43</sup> Referring to Schattschneider’s concept of organization as the “mobilization of bias”<sup>44</sup> Bachrach and Baratz proposed to analyze, before dealing with actual decision-making process, the dominant values and the political myths, rituals that are built into the political system in question. They claim that these values, myths and rituals are what give real meaning to those issues which enter the political arena. This, they call, as the second face of power:

“Power is also exercised when A devotes his energies to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A.”<sup>45</sup>

The approach which argues that power is also exercised when confining

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<sup>42</sup>Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz, “Decisions and Nondecisions: An Analytical Framework,” *The American Political Science Review* 57, no.3 (1963): 633.

<sup>43</sup> Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz, “Two Faces Of Power,” *The American Political Science Review* 56, no. 4 (1962): 947.

<sup>44</sup> E.E. Schattschneider, *The Semi-sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America*, cited in “Two Faces Of Power,” Bachrach and Baratz, 949.

<sup>45</sup> Bachrach and Baratz, “Two Faces Of Power,” 948

the scope of the decisions, has taken into account more general aspects of power relations in a society where not only formal but also informal ways of exercising power are at play. The power to shape and reconstruct the myths and values of the society indicate that prior to utilization of material sources or institutional means of power, which show itself in concrete decision making mechanism, ideational processes of exercising power define the context of decision-making.

Another approach which focuses on non-behavioral ways of exercising power is that of Steven Lukes, who criticizes the behavioral assumption of Dahl and Polsby. He states that Bachrach and Baratz made a positive move in depicting more subtle ways of exercising power.<sup>46</sup> Yet, their approach is bound by their focus on concrete decision-making situations and the outcomes of the discussions thereof.

Lukes introduces an interest-based approach according to which not only behaviors of the power yielder and outcomes of the decisions but also the very interests of the power yielder are shaped by the power holder through power exercise. This is, for Lukes, “the supreme exercise of power” which is “to get another or others to have the desires you want them to have -that is, to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts and desires.”<sup>47</sup> He argues that the fact that there is not an overt conflict between the parties will lead to ruling out the possibility of false or manipulated consensus. As such, his approach to power is radical one, where interests of the power yielder is harmed even he/she may not

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<sup>46</sup> Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* (London: Macmillan, 1974)

<sup>47</sup> Lukes, 23

be aware of it.

Is it not the most insidious exercise of power to prevent people to whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things either because they see no alternative to it or because they see it as natural and unchangeable, or because they value it as divinely ordained and beneficial?<sup>48</sup>

While Lukes' approach to exercise of power is relatively free of shortcomings that is related to confinement of power exercise to behavioral decision-making situations, it is not immune to criticism. For example, Hay argues that the main problem with Lukes' formulation of the exercise of power is

...the deeply condescending conception of the social subject as an ideological dupe that it conjures. Not only is this wretched individual incapable of perceiving his/her true interest, pacified as s/he is by the hallucinogenic effects of bourgeois (or other) indoctrination.<sup>49</sup>

Despite the methodological problems in identifying where the conflict lies in a power relationship, most -but not all- theoreticians of power regard it as an indispensable element of the definition of power. In the next section, I will try to analyze these two approaches to power.

#### **2.4. CONSENSUAL vs. CONFLICTUAL THEORIES OF POWER**

Another question to answer in analyzing power is whether a power relationship necessarily involves a conflict of interests and preferences. While conflictual view of power focuses on "power over" and thus structures the power

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<sup>48</sup> Lukes, 24

<sup>49</sup> Colin Hay, *Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 179.

relationship as one that exists between the power holder and power yielder, the consensual power theories focus on “power to do something” and depicts the power relationship as one that exists between the .empowered and empowering.

#### **2.4.1. Conflictual View**

Most of the theoreticians of power mentioned so far, portray power relationship as conflictual, where the interests of the parties in question clash. In contrast to Debnam’s argument that a conflict of interests or preferences is not inevitable in a power relationship, the conflictual view stresses that when there is no conflict between the parties, the relationship ceases to be a power relationship. For example, pluralists like Dahl and Polsby argue that in order to investigate the differences in influence, there should at least be two groups with different initial preferences about a key particular issue. In their search for analyzing cases of *significant* affecting, they set the criterion as significance of issues for the parties for selecting the cases. For pluralists the criterion for identifying whether an issue as significant are as follows: The researcher should be able to demonstrate that the issue areas are “very important in the life of the community”.<sup>50</sup> Dahl contends that Mills analysis, which depicts a powerful elite and an indifferent mass (whose interests clash but not in an overt form) is inadequate in the sense that the existence of an indifferent mass implies that the issue at hand cannot be described as an important one. Nevertheless, he’s able to foresee a possible criticism of his position. In the case of so powerful elite (hegemonic) elite that has the ability to shape the ideas, attitudes and opinions, a kind of “false consensus” could be

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<sup>50</sup> Dahl, “A Critique of the Ruling Elite Model,” 463-469



established. This can be achieved through manipulated and superficially self imposed adherence of broad sections of a community to the norms and goals of the elite. Dahl responds to this possible criticism by arguing that when interest and goals of the elite are adhered by the mass, it will be impossible to differentiate the elite and the mass, and consequently a power elite ceases to exist.<sup>51</sup>

Bachrach and Baratz also identified the power relationship as inherently conflictual. The conflict between the parties may be overt, which can be perceivable in their disputes within concrete decision-making settings, but it can also be veiled, when power holder is able to silence the power yielder, and limit the agenda to the issues deemed as safe by the power holder.

Like Bachrach and Baratz, Lukes stressed the importance of less overt forms of confliction, in which even the interests of the power yielder is shaped by power holder in order to preempt overt confrontation. In the end, grievances by the power yielder against power holder are eliminated from occurring; there is no apparent collusion between the parties. Yet, according to Lukes, their “true” interests clash.

#### **2.4.2. Consensual View**

The consensual view focuses on collective action and perceives power as the capacity to make a communal action. As with the conflictual view, we find origins of this view in Weber’s writings on power, status and society.

For Weber power is “the chance of a man or of a number of men to realize

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<sup>51</sup> Dahl, “A Critique of the Ruling Elite Model,” 467

their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action.” Debnam argues that this definition of power does not necessarily include a conflict of interest between groups of men who strive for power.<sup>52</sup> On the other hand, scholars like Presthus<sup>53</sup> contend that this definition necessarily implies the existence of a conflict of interests.

Torbert, as opposed to classical understanding of “balance-of-power”, which eventually rests on competition and conflict between the parties, offers a “power of balance” theory, where the power of balance refers to capacity “to create a whole without obliterating differences and to balance wholes of different kinds.”<sup>54</sup>

For Torbert, unilateral force, which is simply the power to succeed in exercising one’s own will, is the least effectual and least legitimate power form of all, while power of balance, which is based on consent and reason, is self-legitimizing.

Power of balance can also be regarded as “mutual power” which “can be exercised to balance oneself in relation to others and to cultivate the capacity for such mutual self-balancing.”<sup>55</sup> Since the power of balance “...invites mutuality and empowers those who respond to this invitation with initiatives of their own” it is a consensual power, which ultimately rests on the support of the power yielder.

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<sup>52</sup> Debnam, *The Analysis of Power*, 7

<sup>53</sup> Robert Presthus, *Men at the Top: A Study on Community Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 4.

<sup>54</sup> Michael Torbert, *The Power of Balance: Transforming Self, Society, and Scientific Inquiry* (London: Sage, 1991), 2.

<sup>55</sup> Torbert, 5

As a sociologist who focuses on the factors which hold society together, Parsons argues that “power is the ability of a society to do”. He prefers to “treat power as a specific mechanism, operating to bring about changes in the action of other units, individual or collective, in the processes of social interaction.”<sup>56</sup> As a product of society the “actorness” of the agent is presumed by society through enabling him/her with the power it produces. Therefore Parsons’ theory is a systemic theory of power which assumes that power is socially not only distributed but also produced. For Parsons, power in polity is analogically comparable to money in economy, the circulating medium upon which the polity can be based. Therefore, Parsons’ focus is on the circulation and production of power, but not necessarily on distribution.

In politically underdeveloped societies the main means of securing the compliance of others is through force. With the development of a more complex system the need to ensure effectiveness is greater and deterrence of force becomes less and less significant compared to the symbolic value of such power. Parsons even states that “the threat of coercive measures, or of compulsion, without legitimation or justification, should not properly be called the use of power at all...”<sup>57</sup> This symbolic value of power is based on its productive capacity and the confidence of the society in the ability of the polity to fulfill certain needs, i.e. effectively contribute to the attainment of collective goals.<sup>58</sup>

Arendt, like Parsons, has a consensual view of power and focuses on the

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<sup>56</sup> Parsons, “On The Concept of Political Power,” 232

<sup>57</sup> Talcott Parsons. *Sociological Theory and Modern Society* (New York: Free Press, 1967): 331

<sup>58</sup> Parsons. *Sociological Theory and Modern Societ*, 318

“power to do something” rather than “power over somebody” and argues that power

...corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together. When we say of somebody that he is 'in power' we actually refer to his being empowered by a certain number of people to act in their name. The moment the group from which the power originated to begin with (*potestas in populo*, without a people or group there is no power), disappears, 'his power' also vanishes.<sup>59</sup>

As such, Arendt's understanding of power is different from the previous theories where there is an inevitable clash of interest between the actors in question, and where the exercise of power involves threatening or damaging another's autonomy, and thus domination. Arendt's formulation of power rejects any form of relation that includes some sort of domination. So for Arendt, force, strength, coercion and manipulation are not forms of power, because they all include relations of domination. She rejects the claims of those who argue that relations of power essentially rest on a command-obedience relationship and that it necessarily involves a conflict of interests. In contrast, Arendt's understanding of power is based on the principle of equality and the ability of acting and speaking together. It works through a process of argumentation.<sup>60</sup>

Power is actualised only where word and deed have not parted company, where words are not empty and deeds are not brutal, where words are not to veil intentions but to disclose realities and deeds are not used to violate and destroy but to

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<sup>59</sup> Arendt, *On Violence*, 44

<sup>60</sup> Hannah Arendt, "What is Authority?," in *Between Past and Future* (New York: Viking Press, 1968), 92.

establish relations and create new realities.<sup>61</sup>

Arendt, as explained in the previous section, conceptualizes power as something having inherently social resources, which is based on the support and cohesion of a group. As such, power is always social and based on social interaction, since the power of certain people among a group depends on the relationship between the “empowering” and the “empowered”.

In this chapter I have looked at theories of power and built some categories of power. In the next chapter, I will look at theories of civil-military relations in order to understand how they conceptualize power of the military.

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<sup>61</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 200

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **MILITARY IN SOCIETY**

The studies of civil-military relations try to find a solution to the paradox of a powerful military that is subordinate to the civilian control. In other words, it tries to find the possible ways to curb military's political power while not limiting its force. In order to understand these ways, any student of civil military relations must -at least implicitly- utilize an approach to the nature of the power that the military has or exercises. Therefore, it is plausible to expect that that the theories of power presented in the first chapter have a direct connection to theories of civil-military relations. The answer to the question of where the political power of a nation's military (in this thesis, particularly Turkish Armed Forces) originate from, can be found where these two distinct literatures overlap. In this second chapter, in order to provide a framework which would enable me to find an answer to my question, I will look at some leading theories of civil-military relations with a lens of their underlying approaches to power and try to reveal the intersection between the two.

The civil-military relations problematic rests on two conflicting principles.

The first one is that the military must be strong enough to prevail in the society's wars. It exists as a guard against any disaster that the society may face. Thus it must be always ready and its strength should be proportionate to the threat that challenges the society. Secondly, the military must conduct its own affairs so as not to destroy the society it is intended to protect. The necessity that it must have coercive power to enforce its will on society's enemies implies that the same coercive power may also be exercised against the society. The possible ways of the military's exercise of its coercive power detrimental to the society are a direct seizure of political power (coup); depletion of society's resources in a quest for more power as a hedge against the enemies of the state; involvement of the society in unnecessary wars and conflicts by a rogue military or there may be a simple concern over the matter of obedience, where the military may resist direction or abuse delegated authority in other ways.<sup>62</sup>

The civil-military problematic gets complicated, since over time the military has come to serve multiple purposes, especially man-power intensive programs like disaster relief and construction. It has the ability to redistribute wealth through defense budget and coercively change individual attitudes. While before, the main concern for scholars and practitioners was to avert a possible direct seizure of power by the military, after the collapse of many military authoritarian regimes in developing parts of the world, the concern has shifted to

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<sup>62</sup> Peter Feaver. "Civil Military Relations" *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 211-241

maintain a reliable military under the democratic control of civilians. Consequently, less direct ways of military's exercise of its power has gained more attention.

### **3.1. CLASSICAL CIVIL MILITARY RELATIONS THEORY**

Huntington's much cited work on civil-military relations *The Soldier and the State* concentrates on the officer corps and rise of professionalism.<sup>63</sup> He acknowledges the tension between the civilian desire for control over military and the requirement to retain the military force to ensure the country's overall security.

From American experience, Huntington draws two forces, which shape the distribution of power between civilian and military elites. The first one is "functional imperatives" which are related to the level of the external security threat.<sup>64</sup> When the level of external threat is high, the military enjoys more power, due to the increase in their importance in dealing with such a threat.

The second force which affects the amount of power that military enjoys is societal imperatives, composed of "the social forces, ideologies and institutions dominant within the society."<sup>65</sup>

Societal imperative has two main components: prevailing world-view (ideology) within the society and the legal-institutional framework. In American

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<sup>63</sup> Samuel Huntington. *The Soldier and The State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1957)

<sup>64</sup> Huntington, 4-5

<sup>65</sup> Huntington, 87-88



case, where the ideology of the society is liberal individualism, the military does not enjoy as much societal support as it would enjoy if it were realism.<sup>66</sup> Therefore, the ideology of the society is important in determining how much power a nation's military may exercise. In other words, societal support, which is function of society's ideology, operates as an ideational source of military's political power.

The second component of societal imperatives, legal-institutional framework, also affects the power of the military through determining its place within the internal hierarchy of state apparatus.<sup>67</sup> Thus, in Huntington's account, military's ability to translate its force into political power depends on both ideational factors and material factors. While legal-institutional framework operates as the material source of military's political power, ideology operates as the ideational source.

Huntington's answer to the question of how to ensure military obedience has also two components. First one of them is "subjective control" that is, to assure that those who share the same political ideology with the civilians hold important military posts.<sup>68</sup> Through aligning the military with the political ideology of the civilian elite, civilians may ensure that military will obey their directives. Nevertheless, Huntington does not favor this option, since it may lead to excessive civilianization of the military, which will reduce the military's strength in countering threats, and thus state's military security.

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<sup>66</sup> Huntington, 94-95

<sup>67</sup> Huntington, 95

<sup>68</sup> Huntington, 90

The key to Huntington's favorite option to control military "objective control", is to maintain military professionalism. He defines elements of objective control as civilian recognition of autonomous military professionalism and respect for independent military actions. When the institutional borders between military and civilian spheres of expertise are effectively delineated, Huntington predicts that "a highly professional officer corps stands ready to carry out the wishes of any civilian group which secures legitimate authority within the state".<sup>69</sup>

Huntington's analysis is rich in both ideational and material factors that help to understand the sources military's political power. Moreover, he underlines the importance of the ideational bond between the society and the military, which may both enhance and limit military's political power. Nevertheless, he assumes that society's world-view will be shared by the elected politicians, and if "subjective control" is exercised, he argues that it would have a negative effect on the civilian-military balance of power which would eventually put the security of the country in jeopardy due to excessive politicization of the military. As such, he does not perceive society as an independent actor, who may seriously affect the political power of military. Rather, his analysis is based on a two-actor model, where society and its worldview may affect the military's power only through elected politicians. As such, in Huntington's picture, the most powerful actor is the political elite.

Like Huntington, Alfred Stepan, in his book "Rethinking Military Politics", focuses on the military as an institution, its corporate interests and

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<sup>69</sup> Huntington, 84

influence in the Brazilian politics from 1964 to 1985.<sup>70</sup>

According to Stepan, the military's political power has two dimensions: the dimension of military's articulated contestation to the policies of the civilian regime and the dimension of military's institutional prerogatives.<sup>71</sup> These dimensions together portray the relationship between the civilians and the military in a country.

Inspired by a Dahlian conception of power,<sup>72</sup> Stepan argues that the degree of articulated military contestation is affected by whether or not there is a conflict of interests between the civilian elite and the military over 'key political issues'. Following the pluralist conviction that these 'key issues' should be identified prior to any analysis of power, Stepan defines these key issues as: the policies over the human rights violations committed by the military, government's initiatives over the organizational mission, structure and control of the military and military budget.<sup>73</sup> As such, all 'key issues' are military issues, pertaining to decision-making areas whose immediate and foremost affect is on the interests of the military as an institution rather than those areas which has a nation-wide importance, like issues of national security, foreign policy or economic and social policy. However, in developing part of the world, the military is mostly criticized because of its interference in purely political matters, which reside under the civilian sphere of decision-making. Therefore, it is rather unrealistic to presume

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<sup>70</sup> Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998) xi

<sup>71</sup> Stepan, 98-100

<sup>72</sup> Stepan, 98

<sup>73</sup> Stepan, 68-69

that the army will only contest over policies that are expected to have a direct effect to military's corporate interests.

Stepan also notes that when he uses the word "articulated" he does not mean that military's contestation is publicly stated.<sup>74</sup> Rather, he deems sufficient that the military clearly and persistently convey its contestation so that it becomes intelligible to relevant military and civilian political actors. Therefore, contestations that are delivered in discussions which are held between military elite and the civilian elite behind the closed doors are also deemed as "articulated". This definition disregards the importance of the public/societal reaction and/or support to the positions of the civilian and military elite in these discussions and consequently eliminates society as a political actor which may affect the political power of the military.

The second and most cited dimension of the military's political power found in Stepan's work is the scope and level of military's institutional prerogatives in:

...areas where, whether challenged or not, the military as institution assumes they have an acquired right or privilege, formal or informal, to exercise effective control over its internal governance, to play a role in extra military areas within the state apparatus or even to structure relationships between the state and political or civil society."<sup>75</sup>

These prerogatives, according to Stepan, constitute the bulk of sources that the power of the military originates from:

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<sup>74</sup> Stepan, 68

<sup>75</sup> Stepan, 93

Are prerogatives power? Yes, if the exercise of these prerogatives helps to turn potential issues on the political agenda into non-issues, if their existence sets boundaries to political conflict in the polity, if their existence facilitates the appeal to their exercise by civilians who have interests to protect and thus want the military to remain strong players in the political system or if the strong defense of the prerogatives prevents major political initiatives from being implemented once they have begun.”<sup>76</sup>

Stepan makes a full fledged definition and he bases his in analysis on both *de juro* and *de facto* prerogatives of the military. He states that the most important potential military prerogatives are constitutionally sanctioned independent role of the military in preserving internal law and order, military’s relationship to the chief executive, coordination of the defense sector, active duty military participation in the cabinet, role of legislature in military budget, role of the military in implementing national security policy, in intelligence, policing, military promotions, state enterprises, and the legal system.<sup>77</sup>

Although Stepan acknowledges that “A dynamic, contextually sensitive analysis... entails the assessment of power relationships between three interactive, but conceptually distinct, arenas of the polity: civil society, political society, and the state”<sup>78</sup> his analysis falls short of entailment. He employs an agent-based approach to military’s political power, where most of the time military and its corporate interests are at the focus to the expense of civilian elite and the

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<sup>76</sup> Stepan, 106

<sup>77</sup> Stepan, 94-97

<sup>78</sup> Stepan, 12

citizenry. At other times, he tries to grasp the nature of the interaction between the military and the civilian decision-making elite, almost totally disregarding the wider society. However, as seen in the previous chapter, it is equally probable that the societal support may be crucial in understanding the nature and level of military's political power. .

Following Stepan, Pion-Berlin looks at the military's prerogatives, yet he differentiates them according to the outcome that military seeks to attain in exercising these prerogatives. He acknowledges that the interests and motivations behind the actions of the military may not always be detrimental to the interests of the civilian elite and the society. For example, he argues that in Latin America, military may sometimes be "more interested in carving out a political niche within democratic order, than overturning it".<sup>79</sup>

According to Pion-Berlin, the motivations of the military can range on a continuum from preserving the integrity of their institution to confronting the civilian elite for political domination. Within this continuum of motivations, the autonomy of the military takes different characteristics. On the defensive side, military has an institutional autonomy where the military's basic determination is to protect its boundaries from outsiders and prevent unwanted interferences. On the other side, there is military's political autonomy, where military is determined to "strip civilians off their political prerogatives and claim these for itself."<sup>80</sup> Both forms of autonomy, which Pion-Berlin defines as "decision-making

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<sup>79</sup>David Pion-Berlin, "Military Autonomy and Emerging Democracies in Latin America," *Comparative Politics* 25, no.1 (1992): 83

<sup>80</sup> Pion-Berlin, "Military Autonomy" 83

authority”, are important dimensions of military’s power.

In order to understand whether a military institution has defensive or offensive motivations, and thus aims institutional or political autonomy, Pion-Berlin looks at a number of decision-making areas. The military’s professional/defensive sphere of power consists of the areas, which include the core issues of the military: junior level personnel decisions, military doctrine, military education and military reform. The professional/political gray area includes issues of arms production/procurement, military budget, defense organization and senior level personnel decisions. Lastly, political sphere consists of issues of internal security, intelligence gathering and human rights (judicial immunities of the military personnel).<sup>81</sup>

Despite his careful differentiation between prerogatives of the military in terms of military’s purpose in utilizing them, Pion-Berlin’s analysis suffers from putting disproportionate emphasis on formal decision-making arenas. Unlike Stepan, who regards military’s verbal articulation of its contestations as one of the channels which military can exercise its power, Pion-Berlin employs a uni-dimensional, formal decision-making view of power, where more subtle forms of power are disregarded. Indeed, Pion-Berlin points to this lack of scholarly interest in less overt forms of military’s power. He acknowledges that the civil military relations discipline is based on explanations that dwell on the effects of corporate interests of the military institutions on military’s power exercises rather than those of their ideological beliefs and perceptions. Therefore, he argues that specialists

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<sup>81</sup> Pion-Berlin, “Military Autonomy” 93

on this issue lack a perspective on subjective and thus ideational side of the military's power.<sup>82</sup>

The "institutional prerogatives" approach suffers from a lack of interest on the part of the society. The material and ideational interests, motivations, ideological orientations and beliefs of the society and their convergence or divergence with those of the military is almost totally disregarded. As such, the various forms of relationship that military may establish with the wider society, based on the level of such convergence or divergence, and their subsequent effect on military's political power is overlooked.

As expressed before, the civil military relations theories are normative theories, which try to find ways to reach the democratic ideal where military's political power is limited while its strength in countering threats is retained. The second generation in the field recognizes this fact and argues that that the existence of civilian control of the military may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for an ideal. They argue that just "civilian" control is not sufficient since such control should also be democratic.<sup>83</sup> For example, while Soviet Union could be perceived as a state in which civilian control of the military is firmly established, yet such was not a democratic control of the military, which requires the active participation of the citizenry. Therefore, the classical civilian elite vs. military elite dichotomy is not sufficient to understand the complete picture from

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<sup>82</sup>David Pion-Berlin, "Review: The Armed Forces and Politics:Gains and Snares in Recent Scholarship" *Latin American Research Review* 30, no. 1 (1995):148-149

<sup>83</sup> Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmonds, Anthony Forster. "The Second Generation Problematic: Rethinking Democracy and Civil-Military Relations" *Armed Forces & Society* 29, no.1 (2002): 31-56



which the political power of the military originate and in which it is exercised.

Recognizing the necessity to take into account democratic nature of the relationship, Wendy Hunter criticizes the scholarly focus on the military institution in civil military relations discipline and argued that the other actor of the game, the civilian elite and the democratic environment which surround and shapes civilian elite's capabilities, their intentions, interests and power is mostly understudied.<sup>84</sup> While previous works focus on the aspects, structure, prerogatives and/or power of the military as an institution, Hunter focuses her research on civilian elite and its relationship with the citizenry.

She argues that in democratic or democratizing societies, the political elite have a strong incentive to curb the political power of the military: to win the support of the electorate.<sup>85</sup> She gives Brazil as an example where politicians under unrestrained electoral competition, have sought to embrace popular causes and distribute patronage.

Hunter makes a contribution to the literature not only by focusing more on the civilian elite, but also by going further than simple civilian elite vs. military elite dichotomy and including the society -the electorate- to the picture. She establishes an electoral-dynamic hypothesis and focuses on civilian elite's interest in attracting mass support on the one hand and military's interest in containing mass mobilization on the other. Therefore, she may be said to establish a three-actor model at which relative power of the civilian and military elites are shaped

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<sup>84</sup> Wendy Hunter, "Continuity or Change? Civil-Military Relations in Democratic Argentina, Chile and Peru" *Political Science Quarterly* 112, no.3 (1997): 453-475

<sup>85</sup> Hunter, 474

by their respective relationships with the society. In her analysis she demonstrates that initial institutional prerogatives of the military is not sufficient to account for a decrease or increase in the political power of the military, since the maintenance of these prerogatives is a function of the societal support once the process of democratization is at play.<sup>86</sup> Therefore, any analysis of the military's political power, which solely focuses on institutional prerogatives of the military and disregards the societal dimension, will be insufficient.

Unfortunately, probably due to the selection of countries in her case studies, Hunter's electoral-dynamic hypothesis suffers from the presumption that the relationship between the society and the army has a conflictual nature. While she adds society into the classical "civilian elite-military elite" dichotomy, and bases her analysis on the relationship of the society with the civilian elite through democratic elections; she does not dwell into many dynamics that are at play between the military and the society. The shortcomings are due to two main factors. Firstly, her analysis is based on a uniformly conflictual understanding of power, where the interests of the society and the military are at constant conflict, making the interplay a zero-sum game. For example, one of the ways that civilian elite would increase is through cutting the material resources of the military and bribing the electorate. The electorate in return supports the civilian elite at the expense of the military. However, this assumption of the mechanistic interplay between the society, military and civilian elite may not always hold true, since in other circumstances ideational and/or material interests of the society and the

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<sup>86</sup> Hunter, 454

military may converge. Following her example, the supposed clash of interests may not occur in a country where the army and constant supply of its expenditures are deemed crucial for the very existence of the state by the majority of the electorate.

Although Hunter was able to have a more structure-based approach through arguing that the relationship of the society with the civilian elite is important in limiting the institutional prerogatives of the military, she misses the opportunity to understand how military's relationship with the society may be important as well in bolstering military's political power. Military, like politicians, may also establish links with society to gain their political support. Therefore, their relationship is not necessarily shaped by a conflict of interests.

Secondly, Hunter's analysis suffers from an institutional approach to the relationship between the society and the military. Contrary to the fact that there is a direct institutional link between the civilian elite and the society through democratic elections, there is not such a visible link between the military and the society.<sup>87</sup> Yet, for example, in those states where military service is obligatory for male citizens, there is such an institutional link, which may even prove to be stronger than the elections.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, more informal types of interaction between the society and military are possible in various spheres.

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<sup>87</sup> All these shortcomings are in part due to the underlying understanding of democracy as a set of institutional checks and balances. A true democracy however, requires an active participating citizenry, who is able to exert control over civilian and military elite not only through elections and institutionalized regulations, but also through openly discussing and criticizing political and military issues.

<sup>88</sup> See Morris Janowitz, "Military Institutions and Citizenship in Western Societies" *Armed Forces and Society* 2, no. 2 (1976):185-187 and 189-204 for a detailed discussion of the effects of the type of military conscription and recruitment on civil-military relations.

Indeed, a formal decision-making approach, based on institutional channels of interaction is endemic to political scientists who study civil-military relations.<sup>89</sup> Rather than questioning why the military is ascribed to have a voice in political decisions in the first place, political scientists try to trace the increase and decreases in the political power of the military through observing the relative prevalence of military's preferences concerning formal decisions. They focus on the issue areas in order to understand whether the military has lost or owned new prerogatives. Such an approach distracts them from analyzing the power sources of the military, which may be ideational as well as institutional/material. Military's opinion-creating and/or enforcing ability as a source of its political power is overlooked.

Secondly, current literature on civil-military relations relies on an agent based model, which misses the more structural dynamics that are at play. Most of the time, military's political power is theorized as if it exists and is exercised independently of the social nexus it originates from. At other times, the civilian elite and its role in curbing military political power are more emphasized in the form of a principal-agent model.<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless, the society and its relationship to the military are almost totally neglected.

Thirdly, even when the military's relationship to the society is considered, it is assumed to be conflictual, where material interests of the society and the military clash, dismissing the possibility that the society may be willingly

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<sup>89</sup> Peter Feaver, 212

<sup>90</sup> Feaver, 226 232 232

directing its resources to the military, even at times of low external threat.

Therefore, most political scientists who study civil military relations, employ an agent based, formal decision-making approach that assumes a conflict of interests when theorizing about military's political power. This leads to a gap, which prevents to theorize about popular militaries, like Turkish Armed Forces, and their long-term influence in politics.

### **3.2. SOCIOLOGICAL SCHOOL: INCLUSION OF THE SOCIETY**

Sociological school, on the other hand, focuses on *societal* control over the military rather than the civilian elite's control over military. The leading scholar of this school Janowitz rejects Huntington's claim that the ideal-type division of labor between civilian and military is essential to professionalization of the military. He argues that in contemporary world the military is unavoidably politicized and it became like a constabulary force "when it is continuously prepared to act, committed to the minimum of force and seeks a viable international relations, rather than victory."<sup>91</sup> As such, military professionalism should be dynamic and it should be able to integrate new sociological conditions.

Janowitz regards the main problem concerning civil-military relations as emanating from military's material resources of power: "the capacity of the military to intervene in the domestic politics derives from its distinctive military format: its control over the instruments of violence."<sup>92</sup> Although bearing in mind

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<sup>91</sup> Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1971) 418

<sup>92</sup> Morris Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations* (Chicago:

the military's changing role and its diversified functions in the modern era and their effects on the scope of areas that military engages in, Janowitz claims that "the significance of force as the basis from which they exercise their political power" should not be overlooked.<sup>93</sup> The technology and organization of the army is also relevant. For example, an army which is mostly made up infantry battalions has the maximum potential to intervene in domestic politics since they can be deployed in urban centers and have direct access to the society. Another factor that affects the political power of the military is military's leadership skills in bargaining and political communication. Especially the increase in number and importance of the military managers (the professional with effective links to the society but who is still concerned with the calculus required for organizational and pragmatic dimensions of war-making) "produces greater capacity in the profession for involvement in politics"<sup>94</sup>. These leadership skills are also intertwined by unique experiences and assignments in political-military issues.<sup>95</sup> Since such military leaders are more knowledgeable about politics, they are more prone to intervene in politics.

Among the ideational sources of military's political power are the type of social recruitment (social composition), education, professional and political ideology, and cohesion of the military. Janowitz claims that the social origin of the military men is of less importance than education in shaping their political behavior. For armies that were set up during a national liberation movement, like

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University of Chicago Press 1988), 107

<sup>93</sup> Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion* 108

<sup>94</sup> Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion* 117

<sup>95</sup> Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion* 123

Turkish Armed Forces, the social composition of the military is heterogeneous, but mostly from middle or lower-middle class. As being products of national liberation movements, these armies have strong political inclinations. Although, social composition itself does not have any substantial impact on the ideology of the military, it establishes a strong link between the society and the military. This link serves as an important source of support and thus, is one of the ideational sources of military's political power.

In sharp contrast with Huntington's inclination to separate military from other spheres, Janowitz's proposal to control military's political power is to integrate military with the society's common values. This ideational form of power that society exercises over the military is achieved through a number of ways. Military education is the most important path through which community values are inculcated and military is socialized. Through this path, the military is civilianized: "...the trend in modern society –both in new nations and old- is toward a greater penetration of military into the civilian". For Janowitz, once a more dynamic and strong link is established between the society and the military, the military as well as the society would be empowered for he argues that "Civilianization is other side of the growth of power of the military."<sup>96</sup>

The empowerment of the military through civilianization should be distinguished from excessive political empowerment of the military at the expense of civilian. Due to the disagreements and diversification on the use of the concept of power, these two types military empowerment which are expected to produce

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<sup>96</sup> Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion* xii

opposite consequences can easily be confused. For Janowitz, while empowerment through civilianization supports greater civilian (societal) control of the military, the second type of empowerment deteriorates it.

Apart from the difference between their preferred ways to control military, the main distinction between Huntington and Janowitz is about their conceptualization of the power-holder and the power yielder. Janowitz's focus of study is societal rather than civilian control of the military in contrast with Huntington. While Huntington makes a dichotomy of military versus civilian elite, Janowitz structures it as military versus society. As such, similar to Arendt's conceptualization of power, Janowitz theorizes society as the actual power holder, who both empowers military and is able to control it, while for Huntington the main power holder is military since the change he proposes for successful control of the military is on the side of the civilian elite. It is the civilian elite from whom the military expects a more respectful stance toward its ideological and institutional autonomy.

Janowitz's emphasis on the convergence of the military and the society found resonance in Schiff's concordance theory. While classical theories of civil-military relations propose institutional separation of civilian and military domains for preventing military intervention, she argues that three actors, the political elite, the military and the citizenry can agree and act in concordance on a number of issues, which may or may not involve institutional separation of official civilian



and military domains.<sup>97</sup> Thus, her theory does not depict any civil-military relationship as the most desirable, leaving the organization of the relationship on the agreement of three actors.

The relationship between the military and civilians (both elite and the mass society) is determined by a set of cultural conditions as well as institutional ones. As such, concordance theory “takes into account the cultural and historical conditions that may encourage and discourage civil-military institutional separation”.<sup>98</sup> The centrality of culture and its affect on political and military institutions as well as on the society informs the concordance theory. These cultural factors include values, attitudes, and symbols inform both the nation’s view of its military’s role and the military’s own view of that role.<sup>99</sup> Factors like “the characteristics of the general population may influence” the role and purpose and thus political power of the military. Through referring to the culture within a society, concordance theory is able to move beyond classical civilian-military dichotomy, by pointing to the links between military and the wider society.

...concordance theory... argues that three partners—the military, the political elites, and the citizenry should aim for a cooperative relationship that may or may not entail the separation of political and military institutions.<sup>100</sup>

Besides,

Concordance theory operationalizes the specific

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<sup>97</sup> Rebecca L. Schiff, "Civil-Military Relations Reconsidered: A Theory of Concordance," *Armed Forces and Society* 22, no.1 (1995): 12

<sup>98</sup> Schiff, 9

<sup>99</sup> Schiff, 11

<sup>100</sup> Schiff, 14

institutional and cultural indicators...and explains the empirical conditions under which the military, the government, and the society may agree on separate, integrated, or other forms of civil-military relations in order to prevent domestic military intervention.<sup>101</sup>

Rather than assuming and even prescribing a fully professional army which is institutionally and ideologically isolated from the civilian government and the society, the decision as how to organize the civil-military relations is left to the agreement of the military, civilian elite and the society on four issues: the social composition of the army, the political decision-making process concerning , recruitment method and the military style.

Despite the emphasis it puts on non-material factors like culture and history and its inclusion of the society into the picture as an active partner in civil-military relations, the concordance theory has also shortcomings. Firstly, the concordance theory can be criticized due to its focus on its prescribed issues of agreement: Social composition of the officer corps, the political decision-making process which “involves the institutional organs of the society that determine important factors for the military,” the recruitment method and military style are all military issues. What it implies is that when “...agreement occur[s] among the political elites, the military, and the citizenry over the political process that best meets the needs and requirements of the armed forces”<sup>102</sup> the military is satisfied and loses its interest in purely political issues so that a military intervention becomes less likely. While this expectation of satisfaction and subsequent loss of

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<sup>101</sup> Schiff, 14

<sup>102</sup> Schiff, 15

interest in politics may be true in the case of predatory militaries, it is less applicable to those militaries, which are criticized for their involvement in particularly political issues such as foreign, social and economic development policies of the states.

Secondly, while concordance theory does not prescribe any specific form of separation or integration between military and civilian spheres and rejects superimposition of any values upon a nation;<sup>103</sup> it prescribes agreement between the three actors, in order to avoid a military intervention. Thus, the concordance theory has an underlying assumption on the part of interests and opinions about the society: any military intervention should be prevented, it is impossible to be agreed upon, no matter what the culture, history, risk perceptions, anxieties and future expectations of the society are. According to concordance theory, the society may agree on anything about military, but not military intervention, since, Schiff may seem to think, it is unacceptable and in conflict with the interests of the society.

### **3.3. MILITARY IN SOCIETY APPROACH**

As illustrated in this chapter, the civil-military relations literature suffers from a gap: the current literature is mostly on a formal decision-making view of military's power. In other words, they emphasize the institutional and legal, hence, material sources of military's political power. The current literature is mostly based on the competition between the civilian and the military on attaining more control over these sources.

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<sup>103</sup> Schiff, 17

Secondly, the current literature depicts the society as a trivial player, which may have no influence independently of the political elite, on the political power of the military. It is depicted as if it can neither empower nor delimit the military's political power. This lack of interest with respect to society is attributable to the institutional focus of the current literature. While the formal institutional bonds that civilian elite establishes with the society through elections, and with the military in various decision-making processes are overtly visible as they are overly studied, the role of society in civilian-military balance and its relationship with the military is mostly left neglected.

However, with no doubt, an army which does not secure its society's support is fated to fail and perish. It is rather surprising that while society is deemed as the ultimate source of political power for the elected civilian politicians, the possibility that it may as well be main provider of the source of political power of the military is neglected. Society may indeed establish informal links with the military.

Based on the theories of consensual power approach, particularly that of Arendt, it is possible to hypothesize that the political power of the Turkish Armed Forces originate from the channels it establishes with the wider society. Through these mostly informal channels, the Turkish society may both attribute power and ascribe a specific role to the military. This attributive understanding of power underlies the basis on which "military in society" approach is established. As such, according to "military in society" approach, the political power of the military is socially constructed as a result of the social interaction between the

military and society through time on various spheres. There are historical, cultural, social, and discursive dimensions to this interaction.

The historical sources of military's political power originate from the past experiences of the society with its army. They are important in terms of the underlying basis upon which the legitimacy of the military's political power is established. The military's political power has also cultural, social and discursive sources. These sources constitute a three-layered formation. On the basis, the existence of military motifs embedded in the culture of the society may enable the establishment of a strong bond of identification between the military and the society. Secondly, social interaction between military and the society on various spheres contributes to maintain and enhance this bond. Lastly, discursive dimension is where military is able to reflect the anxieties and expectations of the society.

But before analyzing the sources of Turkish Armed Forces political power with respect to these dimensions, with the purpose of testing the dominant "institutional prerogatives" approach, which is based on material sources of political power, in the next chapter, I will look at legal, economic and judicial sources of Turkish Armed Forces' political power.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **MATERIAL SOURCES OF THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES' POLITICAL POWER**

The material sources of Turkish Armed Forces' political power can be grouped under three headings. First group of material sources are legal-institutional prerogatives of the army as set in the constitutional system. These are also the legal sources of Turkish Armed Forces' political power. The laws and regulations that determine functions, responsibilities and rights of the Turkish Armed Forces operate as an almost-material source of political power. These legal rules determine the borders of Turkish Armed Forces' autonomy and its relationship with the executive and the legislative as well as other constitutional organs.

The second area is the economic sources of Turkish Armed Forces's political power. The economic sources are intrinsically related to the legal sources since coordination of the defense sector, the share from the national budget, the processes of arms procurement are all regulated by legal rules. Nevertheless, Turkish Armed Forces' economic sources also include extra

governmental economic sources, like foundations, associations and other non-governmental establishments that have a role in advancing the economic interests of either the military as an institution or the military personnel individually. These economic sources can constitute an important element of the material sources of the Turkish Armed Forces' political power as long as their economic activities have important affects on overall Turkish economy, which can translate into a political leverage against elected governments.

The third material source of army's political power refers to the judicial status of the army. The extent and coverage of military jurisdiction, its level of penetration to areas of political and civil society and coordination of the military-court-system constitutes this group of sources. While independent military judicial systems makes civilian control of the army less effectual and ephemeral, thus adding to military's political autonomy, extensive military jurisdiction can be used as a tool to project military's power into civilian domains, changing the military-civilian balance of power.

In this chapter, I will try to group and analyze the above material sources of political power with a particular emphasis in their respective weight in the overall calculation of Turkish Armed Forces' political power. I will also try to understand the relationship between ideational and material phenomena as to understand how they interact and help to produce one another.

#### **4.1. LEGAL SOURCES**

Most of the work on Turkish Armed Forces and its prominent role in

Turkish politics refer to the institutional prerogatives of the army, most of which stem from its distinguished legal status in the Turkish constitutional system.

The most important document that can supposedly provide the Turkish Armed Forces with such a legal power base is the constitution. The constitution is the main legal document, which sets the constitutive principles along which the state organs are supposed to act. Moreover, it defines the functions, duties and responsibilities of state organs and their relationship with each other. As such, the status of Turkish Armed Forces and its relationship with executive, legislative and the judicial bodies are defined in the constitution.

The constitution of 1982 was drafted and adopted during the period of military rule following the September 1980 coup. Since the 1982 Constitution of Turkey was prepared under non-democratic conditions it is widely regarded as a military constitution. For this reason, it is often stated that the Turkish Constitution of 1982 grants some extra powers to the military.<sup>104</sup> It is argued that in order to “obtain certain guarantees for a share of power in the upcoming democratic system,”<sup>105</sup> the military has been able to include some guarantees into the constitution, which supposedly entrust them with a “tutelary” role.<sup>106</sup> Since the limits of these tutelary powers are ill defined, the military can exercise broad

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<sup>104</sup> Ümit Cizre Sakallioğlu, “The Anatomy of the Turkish Military’s Political Autonomy” *Comparative Politics* 29, no. 2. (1997): 151-166. Ayşe Yuruk. *Democratization Reforms in The 1982 Constitution of Turkey* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the The Law and Society Association, 4 July 2006 available at [http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p121115\\_index.html](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p121115_index.html)

<sup>105</sup> Ergun Özbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics: Challenges to Democratic Consolidation*. (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 106.

<sup>106</sup> Cizre, “The Anatomy of the Turkish Military,” 151-152



oversight over the government and its policies.<sup>107</sup> Such empowerment can take place in a number of ways. One way was to incorporate military-cherished values into the constitution. Özbudun argues that through making references to substantive values “such as territorial integrity, national sovereignty, law and order, secularism, nationalism” the military can supervise the elected politicians and exercise political power.<sup>108</sup> Another way is through ambiguous constitutional references to the role of the Armed Forces in both the constitution and the related laws, giving the army a supervisory role over the policies of the elected government with referring to the ambiguously defined national interests. Thirdly, the establishment of constitutional formal institutions, (like NSC) can endow the military with supervisory powers.

In this part, I will analyze the place of Turkish Armed Forces in the constitutional system under three subheadings. Firstly, I will analyze the founding principles of the state as stated in the constitution and their intermingling with the above stated “military-cherished values”. Secondly, I will look at functions and the hierarchical position of the Turkish Armed Forces as set in the constitution and the related laws, with an emphasis on its relationship with primary executive and legislative organs of the state. Lastly, I will look at the official national security conception in Turkey and the National Security Council and assess the overall weight of NSC in defining the civilian-military balance of power.

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<sup>107</sup> J. Samuel Valenzuela, “Democratic consolidation in post-transitional settings: notion, process, and facilitating conditions” *Working paper* 150, (1990) Available at: <http://kellogg.nd.edu/publications/workingpapers/WPS/150.pdf> (last accessed on 5 September 2007)

<sup>108</sup> Ergun Özbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics*, 106.

#### **4.1. Founding Principles and the Military**

The constitutive principles in Turkish Constitution of 1982 are stated in the preamble and the first eleven articles. In the preamble, it states that the constitution has been drawn up according to “the concept of nationalism outlined and the reforms and principles introduced by the founder of the Republic of Turkey, Atatürk.”<sup>109</sup> The preamble also states that the constitution “affirms the external existence of the Turkish nation, motherland and the indivisible unity of the Turkish state”. The main principles that is stressed in the preamble is territorial integrity, secularism, and Atatürkism:

No protection shall be accorded to any activity contrary to the Turkish national interests, the principle of the indivisibility of the existence of Turkey with its state and territory, Turkish historical and moral values or the nationalism, principles, reforms and modernism of Atatürk and that, as required by the principle of secularism, there shall be no interference whatsoever by sacred religious feelings in state affairs and politics.<sup>110</sup>

The values of Atatürkist nationalism, territorial integrity and secularism are also restated in the first three (irrevocable) articles of the constitution. Article 2 of the 1982 constitution stipulates that the Republic of Turkey is a "democratic, secular, and social state governed by the rule of law," respecting human rights and loyal to the nationalism of Kemal Atatürk and it is “based on the fundamental tenets set forth in the Preamble”. Article 3 states that “the Turkish state, with its territory and nation, is an indivisible entity”.

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<sup>109</sup> The Preamble section of The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, available at <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/mevzuat/anayasa/anayasa-ing.htm> (last accessed on 12 July 2007)

<sup>110</sup> The Preamble section of The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey

Because of Atatürk's primary role in the establishment of the Republic, a great importance -along with a wide popularity- is attached to Atatürk by the society. Accordingly, the constitutional references made to him and the principles like secularism, nationalism, and national sovereignty cannot be solely attributed to the military. For that reason, the incorporation of Atatürkism into the constitution cannot be perceived as a separate source, rather it may be perceived as a clearer illustration of the influence of Atatürk's legacy not only on the military but also on the society. Moreover, it should be noted that the Constitution was approved in a referendum by more than the 90 per cent of the voters. This affirms that the incorporation of these values into the constitution has been widely perceived as natural by the mass society.

#### **4.1.2. Functions and Place of Turkish Armed Forces**

Another material source of Turkish Armed Forces' political power, which can be found in the constitution, is the organization of the relationship between Turkish Armed Forces and the organs of the state.

The problem of the Turkish Armed Forces' place in the constitutional system dates back to 1960 military intervention. Due to insistence from the coup-makers, the Office of the General of Chief Of Staff was placed under the Prime Minister with the 1961 constitution, thereby changing the previous practice in which s/he operated under the Ministry of National Defense. However, the related provisions of Code on Ministry of National Defense and Code on The General Staff were still in force, leading to the statements of Constitutional Court, which abolished the previous Codes in accordance with the constitution. The

constitution of 1982 has been prepared in line with the same principles.

The Art 117 of the 1982 Constitution states that Chief of the General Staff is the commander of the armed forces. The main duty of the General Chief of Staff is to control and command the armed forces, and to determine and operationalize the principles and programs regarding the personnel, intelligence, mobilization, organization, education and logistics of the military. Moreover, the Office is responsible from managing the military relations with NATO and other foreign countries. While the office of the commander-in-chief rests with the spiritual existence of the Grand National Assembly and is represented by the President of the Republic, at time of war, General Chief of Staff exercises the duties of the commander-in-chief of the armed forces on behalf of the President. Therefore, the Office of the General Staff is the main constitutional body, which represents the Turkish Armed Forces. Consequently, the hierarchical position of the Chief of General Staff with respect to other constitutional bodies can provide a clue for the place of Turkish Armed Forces in the Turkey's constitutional system.

The position of the President of the Republic has been a special interest for Turkish Armed Forces. The fact that military interventions of 1960, 1971 an 1980 took place at times of presidential crises is an indicator of the importance of the position.<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, more than half of the former presidents of the Republic were of military origin. It is argued that since President of Republic is a politically neutral figure, s/he can establish agreement between the Armed Forces and the

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<sup>111</sup> Ozturk, 208-210

government. Alternatively, it can be stated that the importance attached to the President of the Republic by the military owes to the fact that the President has many legal powers and duties concerning the Turkish Armed Forces.

According to article 104, the powers and duties of the President of the Republic concerning the Turkish Armed Forces are as follows:

“to represent the Supreme Military Command of the Turkish Armed Forces on behalf of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, to decide on the mobilization of the Turkish Armed Forces (in emergency situations where the Assembly is on recess), to appoint the Chief of the General Staff, to call the National Security Council to meet, to preside over the National Security Council and to proclaim martial law or state of emergency”.

Moreover, s/he appoints the members of the Military High Court of Appeals and the Supreme Military Administrative Court. Although, the President is apparently the highest authority with most functions about the Turkish Armed Forces, the main state organ, which is responsible for national security and the preparation of the Armed Forces for the defense of the country (to the Turkish Grand National Assembly) is the Council of Ministers.<sup>112</sup> The same article also states that the Chief of General Staff is responsible to the Prime Minister in exercising his/her powers and duties.

The Office of the General Chief of Staff is supposed to act also in close collaboration with the Ministry of National Defense. The bulk of the costs of Turkish Armed Forces are included under the budget of the Ministry of National

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<sup>112</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey , Art.117

Defense. The Ministry of National Defense supplies conscription, health and veterinary services, infrastructure, housing, property and financial auditing services to the military.<sup>113</sup> As such, the Ministry operates as a supportive rather than supervisory organization of Turkish Armed Forces.

Although, as the legislative organ of the state, The Turkish Grand National Assembly is vested with the authority to decide on the use of Turkish Armed Forces, declare war and send army troops abroad,<sup>114</sup> the constitution sets a very limited parliamentary oversight over the Turkish Armed Forces, mostly restricted to the discussions on defense budget.

In conclusion, the Turkish Constitution of 1982 establishes many links between Turkish Armed Forces and different parts of the constitutional system. As a result, the place of the Turkish Armed Forces in the constitutional system is intricate, if not ambiguous. Through ambiguous constitutional regulations, it is argued that Turkish Armed Forces is given an equal position to any ministry, which strengthens it politically. However, it is hard to state that Turkish Armed Forces has formally been given an independent role since it is clear that Turkish Armed Forces has been put under the control of the executive organs. The overall weight of the President on provisions concerning Turkish Armed Forces can be attributed to the desire to keep Turkish Armed Forces, the most organized power in the country, aloof from political interference in order to prevent its politicization.

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<sup>113</sup> 1325 Sayılı Milli Savunma Bakanlığı Görev ve Teşkilatı Hakkında Kanun

<sup>114</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, Art.92

There is no reference as to the functions and duties of the Turkish Armed Forces in the constitution. Therefore, it is not possible to state that the constitution gives Turkish Armed Forces a “guardianship” or “tutelary” role. However, an important legal document which may provide military with a material base for political power is the Military Internal Service Code. Article 34 of the Code, which defines the duty of the Turkish Armed Forces, states that the main duty of the Turkish Armed Forces is to protect the Turkish motherland and maintain the Republic with its properties stated in the constitution. This article has been put to the forefront by the coup-makers as the legal basis of military interventions of 1971 and 1980. For that reason, it is argued that the above article should be changed in order to make any military intervention less likely. Yet, Article 6 of the constitution states that the ultimate authority belongs with the nation and no organ can use a state power, which is not stated in the constitution. Therefore, provisions in complementary laws like Internal Service Code, can be used as a pretext for military intervention, yet the constitutional system does not give any official political authority to the Armed Forces, despite the common belief in the society that it does so.

#### **4.1.3. The Concept of National Security and National Security Council (NSC)**

Like other armies, the main function of the Turkish Armed Forces is to work for maintaining national security and to defend the country against foreign threats. It often stated that the Turkish constitution of 1982 indirectly empowers military through its definition of national security. Since it has a broad definition, it allows for including many areas under the issue of national security, which

extends the sphere of military issues. Since an ambiguously and broadly defined national security concept allows for blurring of the distinctions between national security and politics, it increases the possibility of military's interference in politics with referring to national security. As such, who defines national security and how it is defined is "crucially relevant for the power distribution between civil and military equation."<sup>115</sup>

In this part, the national security concept will be discussed with respect to its legal and institutional dimension since it is argued that "it is translation of national security into laws, decrees and regulations that in fact gives the Turkish military wide latitude in policy making and law enforcement".<sup>116</sup> Therefore, public discussions concerning the national security are out of the scope of this chapter.

As stated before, the constitution assigns the Council of Ministers for the maintenance of national security. Therefore, the executive branch, not Turkish Armed Forces, is assigned to deal with the issues concerning security. Under conditions of war, martial law and general mobilization, Turkish Armed Forces has been given functions for maintaining the internal security under the control of the Chief of Staff.

Although the executive branch is the main organ vested with the authority to define national security, the constitution foresees the establishment of National Security Council (NSC), an advisory organ to the government for security

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<sup>115</sup> Ümit, Cizre, "Demythologizing the National Security Concept: The Case of Turkey," *Middle East Journal* 57, no.2 (2003): 215

<sup>116</sup> Cizre, "Demythologizing the National Security Concept" 219



matters. It is composed of the Prime Minister, the Chief of the General Staff, Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers of Justice, National Defense, Internal Affairs, and Foreign Affairs, the Commanders of the Army, Navy and Air Forces and the General Commander of the Gendarmerie, and is chaired by the President of the Republic.

The NSC has been established after the military intervention of 1960, and was included in the subsequent constitutions. The role of the NSC was strengthened as the time passed.<sup>117</sup> The phrase that NSC “communicates requisite fundamental recommendations to the Council of Ministers”<sup>118</sup> has been changed with the 1971 intervention to “recommends”. The 1982 constitution stipulated that recommendations of the NSC “would be given priority consideration by the Council of Ministers”. In addition, the number and weight of senior commanders in NSC increased at the expense of its civilian members.<sup>119</sup> Thus, the NSC has become a major element of Turkey’s national security system, which sets the national security policy of the state of the Turkish Republic.<sup>120</sup>

The weight of NSC on Turkish politics has been a major concern in Turkey’s accession process to EU. The national security is legally defined as “the protection and maintenance of the constitutional order, national presence, integrity, all political, social, cultural and economic interests in international field

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<sup>117</sup> Ozturk, 185

<sup>118</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey , Art. 111

<sup>119</sup> Cizre-Sakallioğlu, Ümit “The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Political Autonomy” *Comparative Politics* 29, no. 2 (1997):157-158

<sup>120</sup> Ozturk, 184

as well as against any kind of internal and external threats, of the State”.<sup>121</sup> It is argued that due to this broad definition, the NSC operates as a second executive body which directs a wide range of government polices including agricultural development projects, education,<sup>122</sup> economic plans,<sup>123</sup> development of energy sector,<sup>124</sup> TV and radio broadcasts,<sup>125</sup> foreign trade<sup>126</sup> and development of National Parks.<sup>127</sup>

Following the criticisms stated in the annual Progress Reports of the EU Commission, the government has passed a constitutional reform package in 2001 which aimed at reducing the impact of military on politics through institutional changes. The composition of NSC has been changed; Deputy Prime Ministers and the Minister of Justice have become permanent members, thereby increasing the number of the civilians. By 2003, further reforms were made, which changes the Law of the NSC and the Secretariat General of the NSC. With these reforms, the Secretary General of the NSC has become a civilian person. Moreover, the posts of military members at YOK (High Education Council) and RTUK (Radio Television High Council) were abolished.

The most effective channel that NSC can influence the policy decisions of

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<sup>121</sup> Milli Güvenlik Kurulu ve MGK Genel Sekreterliğine İlişkin Kanun Art.2

<sup>122</sup> National Security Council, <http://www.mgk.gov.tr/Turkce/basinbildiri2001/24nisan2001.htm>, <http://www.mgk.gov.tr/Turkce/basinbildiri2002/22agustos2002.html> (accessed June 26, 2007)

<sup>123</sup> National Security Council, <http://www.mgk.gov.tr/Turkce/basinbildiri2001/28aralik2001.htm> (last accessed on June 26, 2007)

<sup>124</sup> National Security Council <http://www.mgk.gov.tr/Turkce/basinbildiri2002/28haziran2002.html> (last accessed on June 26, 2007)

<sup>125</sup> National Security Council <http://www.mgk.gov.tr/Turkce/basinbildiri2002/29mart2002.html> (last accessed on June 26, 2007)

<sup>126</sup> National Security Council <http://www.mgk.gov.tr/Turkce/basinbildiri2002/29ocak2002.html> (last accessed on June 26, 2007)

<sup>127</sup> National Security Council, <http://www.mgk.gov.tr/Turkce/basinbildiri2003/28mayis2003.html> (last accessed on June 26, 2007)

the government is the National Security Policy Document (NSPD). The NSPD is prepared by the General Secretariat of NSC upon proposals by the ministries and other related government organizations. Following its approval by the NSC, the document is presented to the Council of Ministers for evaluation. It is the route map, which includes the general principles to be followed in maintaining the general welfare of the state and its people.<sup>128</sup>

The most voiced criticism about the NSPD is that the preparation of the document is almost exclusively made by the military bureaucracy<sup>129</sup> with minimal or no inclusion from the government. The divergence of views between the government and the military on the document has been put the forefront by the national media concerning the preparation of the last NSPD in 2005.<sup>130</sup> Due to the difference of opinion between the government and the Turkish Armed Forces, the approval of the new NSPD is delayed. In January 2005, the Prime Minister sent a letter to the Secretary General of the NSC which reminded that the main organ responsible from national security is the Council of Ministers. The letter also stated that the new NSPD should include recommendations on general principles concerning the security policy and should not be prepared as an action plan.<sup>131</sup> Furthermore, the Parliament Speaker, Arıncı criticized the fact that NSPD is

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<sup>128</sup> National Security Council FAQ [www.mgk.gov.tr/sss.html](http://www.mgk.gov.tr/sss.html)

<sup>129</sup> Ali Bayramoğlu, “Milli Güvenlik Siyaset Belgesi Nedir?” (What is National Security Policy Document?) *Yeni Şafak*, April 29, 2005, Lale Sariibrahimoglu, “Milli Güvenlik Kurulu” 24 in *Almanak Türkiye 2005 -Güvenlik Sektoru ve Demokratik Gozetim* (Istanbul: TESEV 2005), EU Commission Progress Report on Turkey 2005, 14

<sup>130</sup> Although it is a secret document, it is sometimes possible to find it on national newspapers. *Cumhuriyet*, November 14, 2005

<sup>131</sup> *Milliyet*, “Milli Güvenlikten Hükümet Sorumlu,” (“The government is responsible for national security”) January 11, 2005

prepared without contribution by the parliament.<sup>132</sup> When their views on these comments asked, Chief of General Staff Özkök and AKP Group Vice President Kapusuz stated that NSPD is prepared by the Council of Ministers. Speaker of the Cabinet Çiçek also stated that the NSPD is discussed within the government as such the government is fully informed about its content. As such, there is ongoing debate among the political and military elite on preparation process of NSPD.

While NSC is publicly perceived as a remnant of 1960 military intervention and as the most effective institutional channel through which the Turkish Armed Forces exercises political power, the recent legal institutional amendments has changed the picture. The military, even if with some reluctance, has submitted to the adjustments and acted in accordance with the reforms despite the fact that “doing so has forced it to let go of power it had felt necessary to build up and carefully guard for decades”.<sup>133</sup> On the other hand, the legal amendments will connote less meaning if they could not find resonance among the wider public. The examples like the request of the president of Ankara Chamber of Industry from the Secretary General of the NSC to include economic matters in the discussions of the NSC<sup>134</sup> imply that its overall weight in Turkish politics will continue.

## 4.2. ECONOMIC SOURCES

The economic sources of Turkish Armed Forces’ political power are

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<sup>132</sup> *Radikal*, “Kırmızı Kitap tartışması,” (“Red Book Dispute”) April 25, 2006

<sup>133</sup> Ersel Aydınli, Nihat Ali Özcan, and Dogan Akyaz, *The Turkish Military's March Toward Europe*, *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 1 (2006): 77–90

<sup>134</sup> *Milliyet*, “Ekonomi de MGK’ya Gelmeli” \* (“Economy should also come to NSC”) January 11, 2005

twofold. The share it receives from the national budget supplies the bulk of Army's economic power. Extra-budgeted governmental payments are the second source. Thirdly, there are non-governmental economic instruments (channels) through which Turkish Armed Forces as an institution may exert political influence.

#### **4.2.1. The Share from the National Budget**

It is often stated that developing countries' large military spending have a negative impact on their level of economic and social development; it reduces the share of other government services like education and health sectors. Moreover, arms and technology export add to the trade deficit and other budget deficits. For these reasons, the amount of the defense budget is a primary concern for the civilian governments. As Wendy Hunter states, the civilian governments may try to make cuts in the defense budget in order to win the electorate. Taking into account military's general inclination to expand its economic sources in terms of arms, logistics, technology and personnel it would not be mistaken to state that the defense budget may be an important factor in the distribution of power between the civilians and the military.

Turkey has quantitatively the largest army in Europe and second largest after USA in NATO. There are approximately 514.000 soldiers.<sup>135</sup> Accordingly, its overall defense spending was 8.9 billion US dollars by the year 2001, which pertains to approximately 5 % of its Gross Domestic Product. Especially after

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<sup>135</sup> *Sabah*, "TSK Avrupa'nın En Büyüğü," ("Turkish Armed Forces is the greatest of Europe") December 22, 2006

1988, there is a considerable increase in Turkey's defense spending. By the year 2000, defense budget amounts to 7 billion dollars 40 % of which is personnel costs, 41 % oil, food, clothes and the like, and 18 % military equipment.

By the year 2001, the distribution of the defense budget to related organizations was as follows. National Defense Ministry get 85 %, Gendarmerie gets 15 % while Coastal Security 0.6 %. National Defense Ministry: Land Forces get 49.3 %, Air Forces get 21.9 % Navy gets 14.4 %, and Office of the General Chief of Staff gets 7.1 %.

The primary place the Defense Budget occupies in the National Budget is determined by the personnel payments and "Extra-personnel Current Expenditures" (EPCE). The fact that EPCE amounts to a major element of defense budget requires attention. EPCE covers arms and other military equipment payments and the army's needs like food, clothes, oil and the like. While one third of the EPCE goes to military equipment, two thirds are other needs of the army. It should be noted that most of these spending go for the maintenance of Turkey's largely conscript army, who are not professional soldiers. Therefore, although the numbers are high enough to assert that military has the control of many economic resources; it is due to the maintenance of a large conscript army.

There are not many studies that focus on Turkey's military spending. Firstly data is hard to reach due to security reasons. Secondly, politicians and academicians avoid discussing the issue, in order to avoid being called as non-

patriotic. Accordingly, the share the Turkish Armed Forces gets from the national budget (defense budget) is the least debated and criticized part of the national budget. Moreover, the few research that was made recently point to the economic effects of the defense spending with no or minimal references to its effect on politics.

Although there is lack of discussion about the defense budget in the parliament which is supported by a lack of interest in the academia, a recent overall analysis of the defense spending and its share in the budget indicates that defense costs of Turkey does not preclude other government services.<sup>136</sup> In times of economic crises, the decrease in the defense budget was less than decrease in other major areas of government spending like education and general services, implying the “unavoidable” nature of defense spending. Ekinci argues that this correlation of up and downs of defense budget with other elements is due to the politicians’ concern for electoral approval which led them to follow the track that defense spending goes in other areas of government spending. Alternatively, it can be argued that the defense spending is subject to the economic situation of the country and is not independently decided. Therefore, in terms of the share of Turkish Armed Forces from the budget, it would be an exaggeration to state that its material sources are set independently from the civilian political rule, despite civilian elite’s disinclination to discuss military budget due to their considerations on other grounds.

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<sup>136</sup> Gülay Günlük-Şenesen, *Türkiye’de Savunma Harcamaları ve Ekonomik Etkileri: 1985-2001*, (Istanbul: TESEV, 2002)

While Turkish Armed Forces' share of the national budget can be at best perceived as an indicator of projection of its political power into material interests, it would be mistaken to assume that its share constitutes a material source for its political power. On the other hand, through other economic channels, Turkish Armed Forces has a potential to affect the economic standing of the Turkey, which supposedly can enhance the Turkish Armed Forces' political power. Government institutions like Undersecretariat of Defence Industries, civil society organizations like Turkish Armed Forces Foundation, private institutions like OYAK are the main instruments of such economic influence other than national budget. They help to advance material sources of Turkish Armed Forces; operationalization of such material sources in the political process may provide the military with a political leverage against the government through its potential to affect Turkey's economy.

#### **4.2.2. Undersecretariat of Defence Industries (USDI) and Defence Industry Support Fund (DISF)**

The defence costs of Turkey are not only supplied by the share from the budget. In early 1980s, the Modernization Program was initiated, which aims to strengthen the national military industry. The expenses of this program are to be supplied by for Defense Industry Support Fund under the control of for Defence Industry Development and Support Administration, established in 1985 by law 3238. The Administration was renamed as Undersecretariat of Defense Industry (SSM) after 1991. The SSM is established under the Ministry of Defense and is the primary organ, which is responsible from strengthening cooperation with and technology transfer from international companies by signing agreements, the



establishment and supporting of Turkish private military industry according to the needs of the Turkish Armed Forces. There are three organs under the Undersecretariat. First one is High Coordination Council, composed of ministers, Chief of General Staff. The decision-making process for arms procurement in Turkey is done through the main Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is composed of the Prime Minister, the Minister of the National Defense and the General Chief of Staff. The needed assets are determined by the Turkish General Staff, according to the Strategic Target Plan prepared by the General Staff.

The main elements of the fund are the transfers from the budget and other government funds, lottery, shares from the special taxes (like alcohol, tobacco, and light arms). It is exempted from various taxes. Moreover, it is exempted from regular fiscal government control through Court of Accounts. A council of three people from Ministry of Finances, Ministry of National Defense and the Premiership is responsible from monitoring and auditing of the Fund.

The Fund has amounted to 11 billion US dollars since its inception, almost 660 million dollars a year. Although significant amount of sources are devoted to the Fund, as apparent in the composition of its executive body, government takes active part in controlling the fund.

#### **4.2.3. Turkish Armed Forces Foundation (TAFF)**

Turkish Armed Forces Foundation is established in 1987, through amalgamation of previously formed foundations, which are established for

empowering the Land, Naval, and Air Forces. Its mission is stated as “to contribute to the empowerment of the Turkish Armed Forces and development of national defense industry with the material and moral support of the Turkish society.”<sup>137</sup> It has subsidiaries, affiliates and indirect subsidiaries.

#### **4.2.4. Armed Forces Pension Fund (OYAK)**

OYAK was established in 3 January 1961 with a special law adopted by the Committee of National Unity shortly after the military intervention of May 1960.

The legal status of OYAK has a dual nature: it is established as a under the Ministry of National Defense in order to provide some social security benefits to the members of Turkish Armed Forces. The Article 37 of the Law states that all assets of OYAK have the rights and priorities of other state assets. These two properties give OYAK the status of a state enterprise. Nevertheless, according to the same law, OYAK has a private financial and administrative status. Due to its dual nature, OYAK benefits both from the immunities and privileges given to any state enterprise and a freer hand to operate like private enterprises.

The administrative structure of OYAK consists of three main bodies. The Council of Representatives, headed by either Minister of National Defense or General Chief of Staff, is composed of 50 to 100 members, who are appointed by their respective seniors. The General Council is composed of 40 people, 9 members of which are civilian. The civilian members include Minister of National

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<sup>137</sup> Turkish Armed Forces Foundation Website <http://www.tskgv.org.tr/>

Defense, Minister of Finance, Head of Court of Accounts, Head of Supreme Auditing Commission, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Banks Association of Turkey, the Chairman of Union of Trade Chambers, Industry Chambers and Trade Stocks and three other people from the private sector who are competent in economy and finances. The military members are General Chief of Staff, Commanders of Air, Naval, Land Forces and Gendarmerie, 6 military personnel from either Ministry of National Defense or Turkish General Staff and 20 members elected by the Council of Representatives.

The main executive organ of OYAK is the Executive Council, composed of 3 military and supposedly 4 civilian members. The military members are proposed by the Ministry of National Defense and Turkish General Staff, and elected by the General Council, while other 4 members are appointed by a special committee, composed of 6 of the above-mentioned civilian members of the General Council. Yet traditionally, at least one of these four members has become a military person either serving or retired, making majority of the votes military. By June 2007, five members of the Executive Committee are soldiers.<sup>138</sup>

OYAK Group is among the first three economic giants of Turkey,<sup>139</sup> consisting of 60 firms operating in many sectors including finances, industry and services. It is the group with most profits. More than 34.000 people are employed in these firms. OYAK has approximately 230.000 members, both civilian and

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<sup>138</sup> İsmet Akça “Ordunun Yüzlerinden Biri: Sanayici, Tüccar, Finansal Yatırımcı”, *Gelecek* 12, (2003) and İsmet Akça “Kolektif Bir Sermayedar Olarak Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri” in Ahmet İnel ve Ali Bayramoğlu (eds), *Bir Zümre Bir Parti Türkiye’de Ordu* (İstanbul: Birikim Yayınları, 2004)

<sup>139</sup> *Sabah*, “OYAK 'Üçüncü Dev oldu,” (“OYAK became the third giant”) October 06, 2005.

military. As such, it has significant economic power.

Although OYAK is publicly perceived as the holding of the military, since most of its executive members are military origin, it operates as a private firm.<sup>140</sup> Recently, due to Group's decision to sell its bank to a foreign company, it received criticisms from the military circles on the grounds that its sale is contrary to both national interests, and thus cannot be approved by the members. The General Manager of the Group, a civilian, stated that OYAK respects the members' views, yet, since it does not belong to military, its decisions, like any other profit-seeking private firm is bound by material considerations independently of the political views held by its members. Moreover, it is sued by Turkish Retired Non-commissioned Officer's Association, which argued OYAK's executive cadre is entirely composed of military officers. Despite the widely held opinion that OYAK is owned by the military, it is not. While its economic strength may contribute to the individual economic interests of its both military and civilian members, it is mistaken to assume that it adds up to the material sources of the military's political power as an institution.

### **4.3. JUDICIAL SOURCES**

Today, in most countries like Turkey, the establishment of military courts is recognized in the constitutional systems. In some European countries like Germany, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, their existence is restricted to only

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<sup>140</sup> For an example of such perception see Ege Cansen, "OYAK kapatilmalidir" ("OYAK should be closed") *Hurriyet*, September 17, 2005

times of war, whereas in Austria they do not exist even in times of war. In other countries like France, Belgium, Spain, Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria civilian judges take part in the composition of the military courts. With the development and expansion of values of human rights and freedoms in the last two centuries, the composition of military courts and the borders of their spheres of authority have begun to be debated immensely in discussions of fuller democratization.<sup>141</sup>

In Turkey, the military and civilian judicial systems are based on different procedures. The judicial independence and immunities of military courts are subject to divergent levels of regulation. The military judicial system is highly independent from the civilian system, which adds to the political autonomy and - thus political power- of the military as an institution. This duality leads to criticisms about the composition of the military judicial bodies and their sphere of jurisdiction. Firstly, in Turkey, the military jurisdiction's sphere of authority usually extends to civilian domains due to ambiguities in related regulations. More often than not, the civilians or military personnel who commit ordinary crimes are tried in military courts. Secondly, the inclusion of non-judge military personnel in military courts leads to questions about the independence and objectivity of the overall military judicial system. Since these courts also try civilians, the problem aggravates.<sup>142</sup>

#### **4.3.1. The Military Judicial System**

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<sup>141</sup> Ümit Kardaş, "Askeri Yargı" in *Almanak Türkiye 2005 -Güvenlik Sektoru ve Demokratik Gozetim*, (Istanbul: TESEV, 2005)

<sup>142</sup> Kemal Gözler, "Askeri Yargı Organlarının Avrupa İnsan Hakları Sözleşmesine Uygunluğu Sorunu", *İnsan Hakları Yıllığı*, Cilt 21-22, (1999-2000): 77-93

In Ottoman times, since every state official belonged to the class of “*askeriye*”, their trials were made in special courts, composed of members of Divan-ı Humayun with Sultan as the head. The Janissaries were tried only in their own regiments by their own commanding officers. With the establishment of the Republic, permanent military courts were established. These courts had one military judge and two officers with another military judge as the public prosecutor. Article 138 of the Turkish constitution of 1961 stated that majority of the members of each military court should be judges. Accordingly, military courts were established for each of the army corps (*kolordu*), armies (*ordu*), command forces (*kuvvet komutanlıkları*), which are composed of two military judges and a military officer.<sup>143</sup> However, Turkish constitution of 1982 does not have any authoritative regulations concerning the composition of the military courts.<sup>144</sup> While noncommissioned officers or privates are to be tried, one member of the court is a noncommissioned officer.

The military courts of Discipline are composed of three officers, with no military judges. The generals and admirals are tried by the Court of the General Chief of Staff. The court is composed of five members; three military judges and two generals/admirals. The Military Court of Cassation operates as the high court of appeals and is composed of five chambers. Their members are appointed by the President of the Republic from amongst the high-ranking military judges nominated by the General Council of Military Court of Cassation.

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<sup>143</sup>Ministry of National Defense, [www.msb.gov.tr/birimler/AsAdlsB/AsAdlsB353Kanun.htm](http://www.msb.gov.tr/birimler/AsAdlsB/AsAdlsB353Kanun.htm) (last accessed on 12 June 2007).

<sup>144</sup>The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey

#### **4.3.2. The Extent and the Limits of the Sphere of Military Jurisdiction**

Article 9 of the Code on Composition, Judgment and Procedure of the Military Courts states that the military courts are responsible from cases where military people commit ‘military crimes’ or any crime against military people, or crimes at ‘military places’ or crimes related to their military services and obligations. Nevertheless, a single and open definition for ‘military crime’ does not exist in related laws. Moreover, although ‘military places’ are enumerated in Military Internal Service Law as the military detachments, military quarters, and military institutions like military hospitals, factories, schools, and stocks, etc. it does not have a definition either. These ambiguities lead to extension of spheres of military jurisdiction. For example, when a military person commits a crime in a military place, the case is tried by a military court regardless of the nature of the crime.

There are also cases where civilians are tried in military courts. When civilian people commit crimes with military accomplices, the military court is held responsible for trying even the civilian suspects. Recently, the Şemdinli case, where two military officers and an ex-terrorist were brought to the court for bombing a bookstore was to be tried in a military court. After judicial and public disputes as to where they should all be tried, the problem was resolved by the statement of the court of appeals which decided to try them in civilian courts.

The Military Criminal Code also allows trial of civilians for certain acts. The articles of the Law refer to Articles of Turkish Penal Law, making the stated acts as military crimes.

Some amendments were made as to the above Codes as a response to the criticisms that military and civilian judicial systems are operating as if there are two separate inconsistent judicial systems. According to the law amending the relevant provisions of the Military Criminal Code, adopted in June 2006, no civilian will be tried in military courts in peacetime unless military personnel and civilians commit an offence together. The new law also allows for retrial in military courts if there is an ECHR decision in favor of the defendant.

In this chapter, I have looked at the legal, institutional, economic and judicial factors that may be regarded as the material sources of the Turkish Armed Forces political power. As has been illustrated, these sources are not directly convertible into political power. The Turkish constitution does not officially grant any distinctive prerogatives to the Turkish Armed Forces. Especially with the recent amendments which reduced the overall influence of NSC on setting the security agenda of the state, as well as the government's attempts to claim more responsibility concerning issues security, and military budget it is rather unconvincing to argue that the Turkish Armed Forces prevalence in Turkish politics is the consequence of these material sources. On the other hand, it is evident that how securely grounded it might be in the constitution and in the related laws, the distinctive place of Turkish Armed Forces in Turkish politics cannot be maintained if it is not cherished in the public mind. In order to dwell into the Turkish society's mind, next chapter will look at the past experiences of the Turkish society with its military, which lay the basis for historical sources of the Turkish Armed Forces political power.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **HISTORICAL SOURCES OF THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES' POLITICAL POWER**

As seen in the previous chapters, political power, which grows out of interaction between the empowered and the empowering, should have a legitimate base. The legitimacy operates as the indispensable source of the societal support. Such legitimacy springs from the past experiences of the empowered and the empowering with respect to each other. In other words, the history of the relations between the empowered and the empowering informs the legitimacy out of which the political power of the empowered originates. Janowitz also points to the importance of the history of the interaction between the society and military, when speaking about the wide societal support of the armies which grew out of national liberation movements.

The past practices and experiences of the Turkish Armed Forces and the Turkish society with respect to each other, established a unique fabric out of which the current pattern of civil-military relations emerges. These historical precedents, has set the boundaries of what is 'normal', probable and legitimate in

the minds of soldiers, politicians and the citizenry. It is true that each historical instance of military's exercise of political power has its own unique causes and consequences. For example, it is argued that one of the reasons for 1960 military intervention was degradation in the economic status of professional soldiers, which is undoubtedly a material/institutional motive. Nevertheless, apart from their unique causes and consequences, all of these precedents serve a more all the most important function which has strong implications for the future events; the function of setting the limits for what is 'normal', probable and even expected, thus legitimate in a given context.

For the sake of parsimony, the arguments related to the historical sources of the Turkish Armed Forces' political power will be grouped under three headings: In the first part, the legacy of the Ottoman period will be analyzed. In the second part, the role of the Turkish Armed Forces, in the founding of the Turkish republic, with emphasis on Atatürkist legacy, will be discussed. Thirdly, I will deal with the military interventions of the Turkish modern political history. However the account on 1980 coup will be kept in parsimonious limits, since its consequences has direct effect on contemporary Turkish civil-military relations, which is the subject of the following two chapters.

## **5.1. THE OTTOMAN LEGACY**

The special place of the military in Turkish society dates back to the very early years of the Ottoman Empire; exemplified in the titles given to first rulers of

the nascent Ottoman State: *gazi*.<sup>145</sup> Ottoman Sultans were both military and political leaders. For most of the period of the empire's grandeur, professional soldiers were among the top-ranking government officials.<sup>146</sup>

As such, "military had long enjoyed high prestige in Ottoman society. Both individual soldiers and armed forces as an organized group played important roles throughout Ottoman times."<sup>147</sup> Although Harris argues that for the account of civil-military relations in modern Turkey, "little is to be gained by looking at Turkish experience before the latter nineteenth century."<sup>148</sup> a quick look to earlier periods may reveal a number of patterns which underlie society's perception of and relationship with the military.

The executive cadre of Ottoman Empire was named as *askeriye* (which literally refers to the military), which denotes no differentiation between civil and military bureaucrats. Such state of mentality was most explicitly at hand in Ottoman administrative and economic system, which was based on a fusion of military and civilian officers.<sup>149</sup> Timar system, which required that an army officer, who also acts as a tax collector, raises and holds a number of military men under service in return for the share of the taxes he collects from the farmers, was

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<sup>145</sup> The term *gazi* refers to veteran, which according to Islam, is a very honorable title. The fact that it is given to the first sultans of the Ottoman state indicates the level of respect that it attached to being a warrior in Turkish society.

<sup>146</sup> Walter F. Weiker, *The Modernization of Turkey: From Ataturk to the Present Day*. (London: Holmes&Meier Publishers, Inc., 1981) 100

<sup>147</sup> Weiker, 37

<sup>148</sup> George S Harris, "The Role of the Military in Turkey in the 1980s: Guardians or Decisions-Makers?" *In State, Democracy and the Military Turkey in the 1980s*, edited by Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin, 180 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988)

<sup>149</sup> William Hale, "Transition to Civilian Governments in Turkey: the Military Perspective" *In State, Democracy and the Military Turkey in the 1980s*, edited by Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin, 161 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988)

both the backbone of Ottoman economic system on the one hand and supportive of military imperialism on the other.<sup>150</sup> Apart from his military and economic duties, the timar holder also had constabulary duties like maintaining law and order. In other words, in the rural parts of the empire, the most of state's central functions –security, administration, and revenue-collection- were performed by the same people. This fusion underlie the conviction by some scholars that in the Ottoman Empire, the army and the state was deemed as one and the same both in capital and the country.<sup>151</sup>

During the heyday of the Empire, the armed forces, which were under the strict control of their commanders and the sultan, were the main source of power. But when the empire began to fall because of unsuccessful military campaigns and inability to catch on modernity, the Ottoman military, especially Janissaries, became a source of instability and began to frighten their own sovereigns and civil population.<sup>152</sup> Since Janissaries possessed a virtual monopoly of force at the centre of government, they were even able to establish a sort of unstable military dictatorship during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Some details needed here.

First serious attempts to redress political infringement of the military came from Selim III, however unsuccessful. After him, Mahmut II was able to disband the Janissaries, which was praised as *Vaka-i Hayriye* (the Auspicious Incident)

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<sup>150</sup> Halil İnalcik, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi, Cilt I ve II*, (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2000) 16; Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976-1977) 112

<sup>151</sup> Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London: Routledge, 1993) 17

<sup>152</sup> Ahmad, 2

and establish a new in army in 1826.<sup>153</sup> In an attempt to modernize this new army, he opened several military schools, through which children with middle-lower middle class backgrounds can receive a thorough education and open themselves up to the winds of enlightenment and advancement. These schools would later serve as a separate milieu for political discussion and cooperation for the attainment of political ideals.

Since this new army was comprised of soldiers who came from within the less wealthy and most populous stratum of the Turkish society, they were familiar to the lives, habits and troubles of the less advantageous among citizenry, which make it possible for them to identify with their problems. On the other hand, since they received modern education which was inspired by Western ideas and practices, they were eager to bring the benefits of modernization and enlightenment to the society. Their desire to bring about changes in the lives of ordinary citizens inevitably led to their politicization and give way to a new era in the political development of Turkish political system.

### **5.1.1. Establishment of First Constitutional Monarchy and Young Ottomans**

“The army played a crucial role in the introduction of the First Constitution and in 1876 and its reimplementaion in 1908”.<sup>154</sup> The most influential group which led to the establishment of the constitutional monarchy was that of Young Ottomans, whose core was established in 1865.<sup>155</sup> They were

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<sup>153</sup> William Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*. (New York, London: Routledge, 1994) 18

<sup>154</sup> Hale, “Transition to Civilian Governments” 161; Weiker, 37

<sup>155</sup> Osman Metin Öztürk, *Ordu ve Politika*. (Ankara: Fark, 2006) 34

liberal intellectuals, comprised of civilian and military bureaucrats, who thought that the sultan's power should be limited in order to avoid a total collapse of the empire.

The sultan who was unfavorable of such a move, was overthrown with the cooperation of the Ottoman fleet surrounding the palace from the waterfront and the students from War College. The military involvement in the constitutional movement was so vital that Hale even describes the constitutional revolution of 1876 as a *coup d'état*.<sup>156</sup> The cooperation of military with the educated stratum of the Turkish society against the absolutism of the sultan indicates that military was also in close relationship with the higher classes of the Turkish society. They shared the same political ideal, which was political liberalization on the one hand, and to stop the degradation and dissolution of the empire on the other.

Despite the progressive ideals of Young Ottomans, the Majlis, which opened in 1877, lasted for only one year. The major role played by the navy and the War College in the revolution, had a lasting remark on the new sultan Abdulhamid. Abdulhamid, trying to preempt a similar overthrow, promoted *alayli* officers at the expense of the graduates of War, while ordered the fleet to be anchored to perish in the Haliç. The army maneuvers were not allowed while the new military equipment bought from Europe was left unpacked in stocks. Hale also points to other material losses of the military in these years: "their uniforms were usually in tatters and their pay (which was miserably low in any case) was months in arrears. Officers, when they are paid, received government IOUs,

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<sup>156</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 198

which could be cashed by army contractors or money changers, but only at a big discount”.<sup>157</sup> Though these pre-emptive measures, Abdulhamid thought that army’s political power could be contained, which proved wrong.

Despite the diminishing material conditions of the military under Abdulhamid, the military education had gained a new momentum. Colonel von der Goltz from Prussia was appointed as a military advisor, under whom the military education system was expanded to a large extent. While economic hardship had an important impact on the politicization of army, the expansion of military education increased the number of already politicized military students.

Some argue that the purely professional concerns of the military like promotions, pays, technical backwardness “had as much accounted for the army’s open revolt in 1908, as the abstract considerations about the virtues of democracy” which was mainly ignited by their education system.<sup>158</sup> Whether their motivation was driven by the desire to redress their material standing or by the desire to obtain the ideal of a united and liberal government is still a matter of dispute. Nonetheless, it was under these dire straits that they were able to set the stage for another revolution in 1908.

### **5.1.2. Establishment of Second Constitutional Monarchy and 31 March Incident**

“The revolution of 1908 and the prominent part played by officers in the period of the Young Turk rule formed a backdrop for the republican era. The

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<sup>157</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 29

<sup>158</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 30

Young Turk experiences established precedents for military activism in politics that influenced the environment of the Republic to follow.”<sup>159</sup>

While the 1876 revolution was almost a coup, the military’s role in 1908 was even more immense. The centre of the opposition to Abdulhamid’s regime was a group of students and young graduates of the military schools. As early as 1889, the initial core of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP),<sup>160</sup> was established by students at the military medical college. After a failed coup attempt in 1896, Young Turks began to organize in exile. At the same time, the serving army officers were establishing their own secret organizations in different parts of the empire. One of them was Fatherland and Freedom Society founded by Mustafa Kemal and his fellow officers in Damascus. Another one, Ottoman Freedom Society, was founded in Selanik by Mehmet Talat -who was a civilian, working as a post office clerk- and later joined by Ahmed Cemal, and Captain Enver, the so-called Young Turk triumvirate of 1913-1918.

The revolution began in Macedonia when Ahmed Niyazi, adjutant-major in Resne, with his 200 soldiers took hold of Resne garrison’s arms, ammunition and treasury and took off to the hills. Their objective was to restore the constitution of 1876. The revolt could not be suppressed by Istanbul, and Abdulhamid conceded.

Although it was the young officers who directed the revolution, the army was by no means united in their attitude to the revolution. The bulk of the army,

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<sup>159</sup> Harris, “The Role of the Military in Turkey in the 1980s,” 180

<sup>160</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 34



ordinary soldiers and *alayli* officers, were loyal to the sultanate, while a substantial part of it was neutral. Moreover, those who supported the revolution – educated young officers and upper echelons- were divided in themselves, paralleling their two aims which were not necessarily complementary: to defend territorial integrity on the one hand and achieve political liberalization on the other. Those who value territorial integrity more, the unionists, were in favor of a strong central government while liberals were supporting a quasi-federal structure with greater freedom for all social groups. They were also more inclined to cooperate with civilian bureaucrats.

As with the army, the Ottoman society was divided in their attitude towards the revolution. A considerable part of the society in Istanbul was “stern if befuddled Islamic traditionalists who opposed the constitution and the Westernized professional and intellectuals.”<sup>161</sup> Their main concern was to eradicate any possibility of a diversion from Islamic rule, as well as granting of more autonomy to non-Muslim minorities.

Like progressive elements in the society, traditionalists also sought army’s support. The 31 March Incident, the mutiny of ordinary soldiers, backed up by *alayli* officers and religious students, was initially successful in replacing the government. The rebels also demanded that Islamic law is completely implemented, a demand to which Abdulhamid, almost voluntarily, compromised.

The response to the revolt came also from the army. Third Army in

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<sup>161</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 36

Selanik, mobilized to defend the constitutional system with the support of volunteers from religious minorities of the empire. The first reason was of course to defend the constitution. The other one was more important in professional terms: it was revolt by other ranks against the high command, which indicates that the long-cherished value of hierarchy in the Ottoman army was in jeopardy.

The revolution was repressed and the outcome was imposition of martial law in Istanbul. The royal prerogatives of the sultan were reduced, which provided a freer hand to the parliament, was then dominated by members of the CUP.

The 31 March Incident is significant in terms of understanding the limits of convergence between the society and the military, as it is illustrative of the possible areas of collision between them. The clash of two trends, traditionalism and progressivism, is still a fundamental concern in modern Turkey, which is exemplified by the Turkish Armed Forces keen interest in protecting the secular nature of the regime on the one hand, and Turkish society's strong religious feelings and attachment to religious customs like headscarf and religious public figures on the other. The projection of this schism into contemporary Turkish political life will be analyzed in detail in the Chapter 5.

### **5.1.3. Committee of Union and Progress and the First World War**

Indeed some scholars deem the period after 31 March incident (1909-1913) as an outright military dictatorship. On the other hand, due to CUP's inner struggles and the divergence of views in the military ranks, the Cabinets formed

one after the other were not as authoritative as such. Military officers who were liberalists formed many groups oppositional to CUP. The most important was Halaskar-i Zabitan which managed to force resignation of the Cabinet and formation of a new one, which was more independent of the CUP.

While the army officers were totally intermingled by politics, there were also attempts to drive politics out of the army, like prohibition of political activities by the army officers. Nevertheless, by 1913, thanks to their success in re-conquering Edirne in the Second Balkan War, the leading three members of the CUP, Enver Talat and Cemal, has gained Cabinet posts, which would drive the Empire into WWI.

At the time when Ottoman Empire had entered the First World War, the state apparatus was apparently controlled by a military dictatorship in the hands of Enver, Talat and Cemal. Nonetheless, under the surface, it is debatable whether it was one-man rule of Enver, a single party dictatorship or a straightforward military regime.<sup>162</sup> But since leading figures of CUP were military officers like Enver, it is true that the military elite had an effective control of the government.

Their political power emanated from basically two sources. Firstly, the wars fought before WWI, has put the army in the forefront of debates. Especially the relative success in the Second Balkan War provided with them a source of prestige both in the eyes of the elite and the public.<sup>163</sup> Secondly, the fact that the army was the “bedrock of state...harbingers of enlightenment and vanguard of

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<sup>162</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 49

<sup>163</sup> Ozturk, 41

reform” which was a result of their modernized military education, brushed up their corporate identity and political mission.<sup>164</sup> Probably, while the prestige they had in the eyes of the public provided them with the necessary societal support which translated itself into a freer hand in the actual takeover of the government as a power exercise, their ability to remain in the government owes more to the second source: their political mission to modernize and implement reforms in the society. This mission was especially supported by the more educated circles in the cities, who believed that such reforms will enhance the standard of living in the empire. With the support of them, the government attempted to undertake many reforms even under the harsh conditions of war.

First reform was, in 1914, the abolishment of the capitulations, a set of legal and fiscal privileges which foreign merchants resident in the Empire benefited at the expense of state revenues.<sup>165</sup> In 1915, a law which encouraged domestic industry was enacted and in 1917, the first Turkish owned private bank, Ottoman National Bank was established. Through these reforms, the government tried to strengthen empire’s economy as well as economic condition of Ottoman citizenry.

The government’s attempts to make reforms on the cultural sphere were also drastic. With an inclination to curb the power of the ulema, the religious courts were brought under the Ministry of Justice in 1915. While all religious schools were transferred to the Ministry of Education in the same year, in 1917, a

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<sup>164</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 54)

<sup>165</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 52

new family law was enacted which made a marriage a secular contract. What is more, Enver was planning to reform the Arabic script.<sup>166</sup>

Most of these attempts became unsuccessful because of the fall of the empire in 1918. Nevertheless, they are important in two ways. Firstly, they are indicative of the military's conviction that it is the army who will lead the society in the modernization path. Secondly, these attempts mark the political direction that would be taken by the successors of Young Turks in the aftermath of the War.

## **5.2. FOUNDATION OF THE REPUBLIC, TURKISH ARMED FORCES AND THE ATATURKIST LEGACY**

The historical factor that has the most impact on the relationship between Turkish society and the modern Turkish military is the memory of the major role military played in the establishment of the republic. Although for the military, this role cannot be separated from the legacy of Atatürk, the Turkish society honors Turkish military independently of the Kemalist ideology. This is in part due to the nature of that period. War of Independence was a struggle both against foreign domination on the one hand, and for the establishment of a democratic republic on the other. The Turkish military receive credits from the society for its contribution to both struggles. Therefore, it is not unusual that those who does not have great sympathy for Atatürk and his understanding of democratic republic, still respects Turkish military.

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<sup>166</sup> G.L. Lewis and Landau, 1984: 196 cited in Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 53

### 5.2.1. War of Independence

“The importance of military in Turkish politics greatly accentuated in following the Empire’s defeat in 1918”<sup>167</sup> After the defeat of the empire and the signing of the Mudros Armistice, the allied powers required the demobilization of the Army. Yet, some commanders like Kazim Karabekir and Ali Fuat Cebesoy, did not concede to disband their forces. The army preserved its discipline and its clear chain of command.<sup>168</sup> The military as well as the society considered that the great defeat was the fault of the Sultan and the government. The army by resisting the order of the Sultan to disband, showed resistance against the failed politicians and their policies.

According to Rustow, like Turkish military, the Turkish society was also determined to resist after the first intrusions by allied powers. Several groups and guerilla movements, known as *Kuvay-i Milliye*, emerged to resist the invasion, yet these groups lacked organization. Therefore the army’s and the former military officers’ involvement as the organizing element of resistance was a direct outcome of an appeal by the Anatolian masses. Other political forces which might have answered to this appeal were debarred from offering any effectual initiative. Consequently, the army and its officer corps were “propelled into action” by the society.

The CUP was downgraded by first their decision to enter into, then their defeat in the war. It was widely criticized and disdained by the society. On the

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<sup>167</sup> Dankward A. Rustow, “The Army and the Founding of the Turkish Republic”, *World Politics* 11, (1959): 519

<sup>168</sup>Rustow, 519

other hand, the political aura that they created after the Revolution of 1908 had major impact on political life of ordinary citizens. “The Young Turk decade had created a broadening of the circle of civilian political participation”. There were a number of newspapers published in Istanbul as well as throughout Anatolia. Moreover, CUP had centers in major cities.

When Mustafa Kemal and his colleagues decided to organize the already existing movement of resistance, the remnants of this Young Turk rule was helpful. Because of the bad reputation CUP leaders had in the eyes of the public, they refrained from identifying with the CUP. Nevertheless, there was a “continuation of personnel between the Young Turk and Kemalist periods.”<sup>169</sup> Later in 1923, Mustafa Kemal accepted being a CUP member:

We were all members of the Society for Union and Progress. That transformed itself into the Renovation Party. A large majority of the members of the aforesaid Society and of the subsequently established Party joined and participated in the society for Defense of Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia which arose from the noble resolve of our nation, and they accepted the programme of the latter Society.<sup>170</sup>

The military officers who took part in the nationalist government were mostly former middle and lower rank members of the CUP. Most of them were young and they were brought up by an education system “when Young Turk agitation for liberal and constitutional principles was rife in military schools.”<sup>171</sup> A comparison of military personnel who took part in Istanbul and Ankara

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<sup>169</sup> Rustow, 543

<sup>170</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 58

<sup>171</sup> Rustow, 534

governments between 1914 and 1923 reveals that successful commanders of the World War mostly joined to the Anatolian movement since “Atatürk himself was careful not to waste talent from the Ottoman regime.”<sup>172</sup> These commanders were mostly Turkish in origin, having born in Istanbul and Macedonia as opposed to diverse origins of those who took part in the Istanbul Cabinets. As such, their ethnic background was same with the Anatolian masses, which was an asset in gaining their support and trust. One may even argue that the society regarded these officers as the true embodiment of the Turkish society.

At the early phases of the military upsurge the nationalists received much support from the Unionist officers in the War Office and the General Staff in Istanbul.<sup>173</sup> Especially the officers in the CUP’s underground organization, which was known as *Karakol*<sup>174</sup> were responsible for arms trafficking from stocks of the Empire in Istanbul to Ankara.

Although “the initial impetus and grass-roots organization of the nationalist movement owed much to the former CUP” Atatürk and his comrades rejected its exiled leaders and their imperialist dreams.<sup>175</sup> They set their goals and methods in a manner that was substantially different from the former CUP practice. Recognizing that an effective military resistance should be backed up by organized civilian support, and that “an army with a hostile or indifferent population at its rear” would not be able to fight the external enemies, the Ankara movement worked hard to supply itself with a solid civilian base. While CUP,

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<sup>172</sup> Harris, *The Role of Military in Turkey in the 1980s*, 179

<sup>173</sup> Rustow, 540

<sup>174</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military* 66; Rustow, 540

<sup>175</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 66



having long cherished the ideas of constitutionalism and support, gradually concentrated the political power in the military hands, the nationalist government looked for a wide representation and open discussion. This attitude of the nationalists is again an indication of the fact that, during the years of war of national liberation, there was strong interaction between the Turkish military and the Turkish society that was based on trust, mutual empowerment and open discussion. .

In order to provide a solid platform for the interaction of the society with the military, the representative civilian institutions of government were established even before full scale military operations were undertaken. In the Amasya Declaration, it was stated that the decisions taken would be performed by the army. Nevertheless, most signatures under the document were also of military commanders. Therefore, the organized movement was initiated by the military. The congresses held in Sivas and Erzurum were important steps in unifying the civilian support for the movement. The movement was so effective that their attempts found resonance in the last Ottoman Majlis, which was mostly comprised of military officers. The convergence between the Ankara and Last Ottoman Majlis was evident in their adoption of Misak-ı Milli, “the National Pact”. After its closure and expulsion of nationalists, most members of it joined the Grand National Assembly, which opened in 1920 in Ankara.

Ataturk himself resigned from the Ottoman army in July 1919. Some claim that his resignation is a powerful indicator of his conviction that “a time might come when political and military functions could not legitimately or

effectively be combined in the same person.”<sup>176</sup> On the other hand, it was practically impossible at that time for Ataturk to retain his post and act as the leader of the movement, since from this time on the movement has taken an irreversible pace. While nationalist army officers were detaching themselves from the empire and running to the heart of the society in Ankara, the society was gradually turning into a Turkish army in order to protect its motherland. At this time, when the borders between the society and its army were becoming increasingly blur, there appeared a clear distinction between the Ottoman government and the imperial army on the one hand, and the Turkish national army on the other. As such, Ataturk could not maintain its post in the former, while he began to emerge as the head of the latter.

Soon after the opening of the Grand National Assembly, the General Staff was organized as separate ministry which was held responsible to the parliament like other ministries. The General Staff was to be elected by the parliament. In 5.9.1920, a law was enacted which ban the interference of military officers under the rank of Kolordu Commander. One year later, in the delicate moments of war, Mustafa Kemal was appointed as Supreme Commander for a period of three months. The Assembly was very sensitive with this post, and did not easily agree to prolong it later three more times by three months each time. Therefore, even under dire war conditions the nationalists in Ankara were very careful to assure that the army was under the control of the Assembly. Although the organized movement of resistance was initiated by the military, the society gradually

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<sup>176</sup> Rustow, 546

emerged as the actual power holder, which has been able to control its army effectively.

Although every effort was made to assure the civilian control of the military, there were Generals, who had important posts both in the government and the Assembly, a fact which would change soon after the foundation of the Republic. The most serious opposition to Mustafa Kemal came also from the Generals. Very much like the way the military successes of Mustafa Kemal had brought him fame and support, the same military background were an invaluable political asset for his rival generals, like Rauf Orbay, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, Refet Bele and Kazim Karabekir. Among them, Rauf Orbay was a liberal nationalist, who served as a minister of navy in the Ottoman government during WWI. However, he did not serve as a commander in the War of Independence. The other three had active military posts in both wars. Especially, Kazim Karabekir was an able commander and famous for his refusal to disband his army after Mudros Armistice. As such, he had strong popular support and was a powerful rival against Mustafa Kemal. While Rauf Orbay was more robust in politics, Kazim Karabekir enjoyed more popularity both in the Assembly and in the public due to his military background.

The main concern of this oppositional group was to avert the establishment of a personal dictatorship of Mustafa Kemal. The dispute between them was not a military bid for power, yet it is evident that these generals used their military background as an ideational source of their political power, an asset which brought them support both in the parliament and in the eyes of the

society.<sup>177</sup>

### **5.2.2. First Republic**

The decisive factor that enabled Mustafa Kemal to take an upper hand against his rivals was his success in assuring the support of the army as an institution. There were two reasons behind his attempt to assure such support., First of all, before the announcement of the Republic, the military was in miserable economic condition, even so that “the danger of a revolt by unruly soldiers” was narrowly averted. In order to prevent that from happening, Mustafa Kemal demobilized the army and reorganized it as nine territorially based corps.

Secondly, as stated before, his most powerful political rivals were among the generals, who as successful commanders enjoyed a similar level of popular support as he enjoys in the eyes of the society as well as among the corps. He appointed K. Karabekir and Ali F. Cebesoy as inspectors as a precaution against their opposition and remove them from Ankara shortly before the establishment of the Republic on 23 October 1923. After Refet Bele’s post was abolished, he resigned from the army. Through these maneuvers, Mustafa Kemal guaranteed his election as the President. On the other hand, in order to avert a coup, he was cautious enough to assure their support on other occasions. Before the abolition of the Caliphate, he took part in army maneuvers and spent two months with Fevzi Cakmak and other commanders in order gain their affirmation.

He went on to exclude the generals from taking part in the parliament. On

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<sup>177</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 75

19 December 1923, a law passed which stated that serving army officers, including generals, cannot be elected as deputies. Since Karabekir and Cebesoy were already deputies at the time, the law did not affect their standing. Later, the same law was included in the Article 23 of the 1924 Constitution. Moreover, with the abolition of the Caliphate, Chief of General Staff was made directly responsible to the president. Moreover, 1924 Constitution, in Article 40, vested status of the Supreme Commander of Armed Forces to Grand National Assembly “as represented by the President of the Republic”. Later, with new Military Penal Code, any member of armed forces was banned from joining a political party, holding or participating in political meetings, giving a political speech in public or preparing, signing or sending to the press any declaration of a political nature.<sup>178</sup>

After these legislations which were supposed to deprive serving military officers from any political power, the opposing generals were forced to resign from their posts, while those who were loyal to Mustafa Kemal preferred military careers. As such, the army’s loyalty to Mustafa Kemal was guaranteed.<sup>179</sup> Only after this assurance, he went on to undertake other reforms.<sup>180</sup>

### **5.2.3. Atatürkist Legacy**

It is generally argued that the main difference between the Latin-American armies and the Turkish army is that the Turkish army had never intervened for personal or institutional gains and has been quick to return to barracks after the political situation is rectified. The reason for this is given as the Ataturkist legacy,

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<sup>178</sup> Rustow, 547

<sup>179</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, 76

<sup>180</sup> Rustow, 549

which encourages the Turkish army to accept the principle of civilian supremacy.

Nevertheless, the military interventions of the Turkish army in 1960, 1971, 1980 and its later political practices indicate that, the Turkish army has never been aloof from politics. Moreover, it is not unusual that at each instance of political interference by the armed forces, the military generals justify their action by referring to Atatürk's sayings and practices. As George Harris blatantly puts:

...the Atatürkist legacy is an ambiguous one. On the one hand, it forbids serving army officers to play any part in the legislature; on the other, it encourages them to think of themselves as the ultimate guardian of the Atatürk's revolution.<sup>181</sup>

Supposedly from the initial phase of the liberation struggle, Atatürk had a vision of a modern and unified nation-state which would take its equal place in the modern world. Rather than relying on his personal charisma and power, his purpose was to establish a firm structure, which would continue to exist long after his death.

Within this picture, the role he foresaw for the army was more than guarding the frontiers of the country. It was to be a forerunner of reforms, "a fountainhead of progressive practices" a vital organ for both the spread and maintenance of the reforms he made.<sup>182</sup> The army, very much like in the Ottoman days, was the backbone of the regime and its ultimate base of power. In 1931, at a meeting in Konya, Atatürk said:

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<sup>181</sup> George S Harris, "The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part I", *The Middel East Journal*, 19, No. 1. (1965): 55

<sup>182</sup> Harris The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part I" 59

Whenever the Turkish nation has wanted to take a step up it has always looked to the army...as the leader of movements to achieve lofty national ideals...when speaking of the army, I am speaking of the intelligentsia of the Turkish nation who are true owners of this country. The Turkish nation considers its army the guardian of its ideals.<sup>183</sup>

As the forerunner of reforms and the guardian of the regime, the army could not simply be out of politics. The military in the Kemalist era remained a key actor in the balance of political power. The Chief of General Staff, although not a minister, enjoyed a relatively independent status. He was directly attached to the Presidency on the one hand, and taking part in the Cabinet meetings, which led to projection of military interests in development programs like for example road and railroad building. “Most of the Republic’s early development program in the 1930s was shaped by military considerations.”<sup>184</sup>

Thus, the Atatürkist legacy of the military has three main components:

1. respect for hierarchy
2. devotion to the broadly secular modernizing reforms set in train by Atatürk
3. acceptance of the principle of ultimate legitimacy of civilian rule.<sup>185</sup>

Although each component had strong impact had strong impact on the later political deliberations of the military, these components were not always complementary. The Atatürkist legacy encouraged the military elite to intervene

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<sup>183</sup> quoted in Harris, “The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part I” 60

<sup>184</sup> Harris “The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part I” 61

<sup>185</sup> Harris, The Role of Military in Turkey in the 1980s, 179

in politics at times of regime threat on the one hand, and constrain the longevity of military rule and pushed for a quick civilianization of the regime on the other.

### **5.3. MILITARY INTERVENTIONS OF THE REPUBLICAN ERA**

After the death of Atatürk, İnönü, a former general, became the President. During his time a number of important steps have been made to ensure civilian control of the military. The Second World War had caught Turkish army unprepared, organizationally and technically backward. The army's and the Chief of General Staff's independent status were seen as the reason for this defect.<sup>186</sup> The Ministry of National Defense was responsible for simply presenting and defending the military budget and had no role in making policies and determining the priorities.<sup>187</sup> In 1944, İnönü tried to change this picture by making the Chief of General Staff subordinated and responsible to the Prime Minister, yet allowing him to deal directly with ministers on matters of mutual concern.<sup>188</sup>

In 1949, a new enactment was made, which placed the Chief of General Staff under the Ministry of National Defense, and reorganized the former territorially-based armed forces, under three separate forces as air, navy and army.<sup>189</sup>

#### **5.3.1. 1960 Coup**

In 1946, Turkey entered an era of multiparty system with the establishment of the Democrat Party, which raised questions about the future of

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<sup>186</sup> Harris, *The Role of Military in Turkey in the 1980s*, 182-183

<sup>187</sup> Harris, "The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part I", 62-63

<sup>188</sup> Harris, "The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part I", 63

<sup>189</sup> Ozdemir, 9-10



relations between the army and the civilian elite. As the first and the single party of the Republic, the Republican People's Party shared a similar world-view with the military. This similarity was based on the legacy of Ataturk which informed basic principles on which the military and the party as well as the state were established. Before, since there was no practical distinction between the state and the Republican People's Party, the army's relations with the government was substantially smooth.<sup>190</sup> Although some new ideologies began to receive support by a few younger military officers, like pan-Turkism and communism, they had almost no affect on the civil-military relations of the single party period. With the establishment of the Democrat Party however, it became clear that such smooth civil-military relations may not endure.

“The military takeover of the 1960 was deemed as a point of departure from the previously established patterns of civil-military relations. Although the takeover was justified as an action to protect democracy, it was actually designed to face a threat to RPP, which represented the role model for civil military relations in Turkey since 1923.”<sup>191</sup>

The first political groups established in the army were supportive of Democrat Party, with an intention to prevent dishonest elections.<sup>192</sup> A group organized in Staff College in Istanbul begin to talk about of a military intervention in as early as 1947. Realizing the need for support form higher ranks,

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<sup>190</sup> This smooth pattern of relations between the military and the government can be attributed to the effective use of “subjective control” as Huntington predicted. On the other hand, it may as well be the consequence of extensive societal support that the military and the RPP enjoyed at the same time.

<sup>191</sup> H. Kemal Karpat, *“Military Interventions: Army Civilian relations in turkey Before and After 1980”* In *State, Democracy and the Military Turkey in the 1980s*, edited by Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin, 137 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988)

<sup>192</sup> Harris, “The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part I”, 64

they contacted General Fahri Belen but he argued against any action before the upcoming elections. Although the idea of making a coup was dismissed, upheaval in military continued.

At the same time, both DP and RPP tried to attract military personalities to bolster their political appeal, since they often enjoyed a considerable prestige within the society.<sup>193</sup> These political dealings led to increasing politicization of the army. On the other hand, both parties were eager to ensure that the military was kept in control of the civilians. The 1949 enactments were indicative of this attitude.

Soon after the elections in 1950, which brought DP to the power, the retired generals who were supportive of DP came to important posts, like Chief of General Staff and Minister of National Defence.<sup>194</sup> The overall military conviction was that their position was strengthened. Within one year, however, partly because of the disillusionment of former generals from politics and partly because of DP's political attitude, no military personality remained in the DP government.

By the same time, Turkey had entered the NATO and Turkish Armed Forces began to receive technologically advanced equipment as well as military education both in the US and the Western Europe. These circumstances bolstered the professional complaints of younger officers, who began to lose respect for their traditionally minded superiors. Moreover, military officers were

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<sup>193</sup> George S. Harris, "The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part II", *The Middel East Journal*, 19, No.2. (1965): 169

<sup>194</sup> Harris, "The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part II" 169

inadequately paid, a problem so acute which led to resignation of one third of commissioned officers by 1956.<sup>195</sup>

Probably, more disturbing than all to the Turkish Armed Forces were the concessions made by DP to the detriment of the Kemalist reform program. DP leaders offered special treatment to minority groups; even tribal leaders in the Kurdish areas were allowed great autonomy in their tribal affairs.<sup>196</sup> Secondly, Democrats relaxed restrictions on religious practices which were blamed for “giving rise to an upsurge of superstition and even open attacks on Ataturk by religious fanatics.”<sup>197</sup> This was deemed as a serious threat to secularism, one of the most important reforms of Ataturk that military was envisaged to protect. And lastly, the DP government’s economic policies, especially lack of planning as well as the government’s support for newly emerging middle classes of rural origin, monopolizing wealth and status in the society.

By 1954, new groups in the army were established, this time mostly critical of the DP government. They had professional concerns, “the primary aim was...to seek reform in the military.”<sup>198</sup> They were also greatly dissatisfied with many of their senior commanders. But as the political agitation between the parties reached its peak, the DP government tried to use military for political purposes (which was a fatal mistake according to Karpaz),<sup>199</sup> the military officers became extremely politicized, and a consensus was reached between the

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<sup>195</sup> Harris “The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part II” 170, Karpaz 139

<sup>196</sup> Harris, “The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part II” 171

<sup>197</sup> Harris, “The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part II” 171

<sup>198</sup> Harris, “The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics Part II” 171

<sup>199</sup> Karpaz 140

conspirators to make a coup. While the younger officers sought a period of military rule in order to implement some social reforms, others were in favour of returning the government to the civilian rule in a few months. This disagreement could not be solved until after the coup took place in 27 May 1960.

In the aftermath of coup, the younger officers who preferred a longer military rule were purged. As such, more radical elements in the military were prevented to meddle in politics which provided a freer hand to civilian politicians. Karpat claims that after this moment, there remained

...no military junta installed in power, although there were military personnel in some important positions... The military rule was wide open from the beginning to cooperation and intercourse with civilians and these civilians belonged overwhelmingly to the RPP.<sup>200</sup>

Nevertheless, the Committee of National Unity, the group of 38 coup-makers, was eager to ensure more room for military say in Turkish politics. Its members were accorded permanent seats in the Senate, provided that they did not establish political affinity with any political party. The leader of the coup, Cemal Gürsel, was elected as the President of the Republic. The Committee has also guaranteed that military officers obtained the right to vote. The Chief of General Staff was once more subordinated to the President of the Republic, who at the same time represented the Turkish Armed Forces as the Supreme Commander in war and peace time. Moreover, the new constitution established the National Security Council (NSC), an advisory organ to the cabinet, comprised of Force

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<sup>200</sup> Karpat 198

Commanders and the Chief of General Staff with a few civilian ministers.

Having realized the perils of centralization and a strong and relatively independent government, the constitution of 1961 has pursued a weak government, constrained by the checks and balances. On the other hand, it gave more freedom to the public; especially freedom of association was enhanced. Nevertheless, the formula of a weak government, a stronger military and a freer public proved detrimental to the political stability and civilian control of the military.

### **5.3.2. 1971 Memorandum**

The military intervention of 1971 was not a full scale military takeover. It was a memorandum signed by top commanders of the army and sent to President Sunay, former Chief of General staff who had been elected as president after Gürsel's health deteriorated. The memorandum stated that the government and the parliament had driven the country into anarchy, a new government should be set up to implement some reforms and if these measures were not undertaken the military would directly intervene.

With the 1961 constitution, Turkey had entered a period of pluralism. The international ideological currents had also affected especially younger generations in Turkey. Right wing and left wing extremist groups emerged, who favor armed struggle. Bank robbing and kidnappings became common. As a result violence spread throughout streets and university campuses. The reluctance of the government (which was headed by Justice Party) to impose martial law and take

steps was the main reason behind the memorandum.

With the 1971 military intervention, the government was forced to resign and a new government was established under Nihat Erim, a neutral figure. The parliament was not closed so the state began to be run by two centers of power: military commanders and the parliament. Because of the parliamentary opposition, the land and tax reforms demanded by the military could not be made. On the other hand, military pressure had managed the parliament to implement martial law, which “unleashed forces beyond government’s control.”<sup>201</sup> Under the martial law, strikes were outlawed, freedom of press was restricted and some newspapers were suspended. Moreover, instances of torture were reported. On 20 Sep 1971 and 8 Feb 1972, two packages of constitutional amendments passed which “restricted some personal rights, the freedom of association and the press and autonomy of the universities and the state broadcasting organization” established State Security Courts and extended the period of detention.<sup>202</sup>

To the already existing problems of double-headedness of government, Presidential election crisis added when by 1973 the duration of service of Sunay ended. Until that time, election of the former Chief of General Staff as the president almost became a tradition in the Republic, only exception being Celal Bayar. While the military openly sought for Faruk Gürler’s (the chief of General Staff at the time) presidency, the parliament did not comply with this preference, yet a straightforward military takeover did not take place as threatened. Later,

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<sup>201</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military* 198

<sup>202</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military* 198, 201

Fahri Korutürk, a civilian candidate with a military background was elected, which was seen as a compromise by the military and the parliament alike.

### **5.3.3. 1980 Coup**

The circumstances that led to the 1980 coup were similar to those of 1971 memorandum, yet much more grave. The country was rife with political, sectarian and ethnic violence and political murders. Although martial law was declared, the strife could not be stopped. While Demirel has blamed the generals for not fully implementing the martial law with the purpose of legitimizing the future military intervention, the military commanders stated that their subordination to civilian authorities in their decisions<sup>203</sup> had left them incapable of dealing with the problems.<sup>204</sup> What is more, another Presidential election crisis took place after Korutürk's term has ended in March 1980. The parties were not able to agree on a candidate.

What differentiated the 1980 coup from 1960 and 1971 interventions was that this time; there was previous intensive planning and organization by the military. The goals were set, the methods for a smooth process of civilianization were already discussed and the coup took place under a clear chain of command. Unlike previous instances, there were no conspiracies for a coup among the younger officers. Basic decisions were made within National Security Council,<sup>205</sup> (NSC) which included Chief of General Staff Evren, Commanders of Navy, Air

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<sup>203</sup> Subordination of martial law commanders to civilian authorities was a precaution by the government, with an inclination to avert the misconduct occurred in 1971-1973 period.

<sup>204</sup> Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military* 233 and Karpat, 150

<sup>205</sup> The NSC here is different from the constitutional organ stated in the Art. 118 of the constitution, whose main function is to act as an advisory council to the government in matters related to security.

and Ground Forces and the Secretary General.

According to Karpat, the military did not have support from any one specific civilian group; rather they succeed in attaining widespread support from the society, which had been exhausted because of the violence that had broke out. The level of violence had been such that the society saw the military nearly as a savior from disaster.

In the aftermath of the coup, Gen. Evren's attitude was also effective in attaining and maintaining societal support. He usually spoke on behalf of the nation; he condemned politicians' excessive partisan considerations and argued that such attitude had been to the detriment of the nation's interest, without attacking by name the party leaders. In his public speeches, he was able to show his concern for the society, by informing them about the key developments that took place.<sup>206</sup>

The NSC's closure of itself to any influence from the politicians has increased the popular respect and trust for the army, which added to their supra-party image. Meanwhile, the public order was restored and the economy, which has experienced a crash before the coup, began to revitalize. These were the circumstances under which NSC established a Consultative Assembly in June 1981 to draft a new constitution. This assembly consisted of 160 members, forty of whom were appointed directly by the NSC and the remaining 120 selected from a list of about 10,000 names brought together with the aid of provincial

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<sup>206</sup> Karpat 150



governors. In July 1982, a fifteen-member constitutional committee of the Consultative Assembly produced a draft that subsequently was amended by the Consultative Assembly and the NSC. The constitution was submitted to a public referendum on November 7 and approved by 91.4 percent of the voters; 91.3 percent of the registered electorate cast ballots.

a Consultative Assembly was established through selection of applicants by the NSC. It prepared the new constitution and after the last checks was made by the NSC, it was put for public referendum. The constitution of 1982 was approved by 90 per cent of the votes and Kenan Evren has been elected as the new President.<sup>207</sup>

Despite the society's relief after the coup and subsequent approval of the constitution by the public, the results of election that took place in 1983 were a surprise to military leaders, and especially Evren, since the majority of the votes went to Turgut Ozal's Motherland Party, the party least favored by and relatively free of compliance to the military.

The 1980 coup and 1982 constitution have important consequences for contemporary civil-military relations in Turkey, which will be dealt with in subsequent chapters.

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<sup>207</sup> Karpas, 155

## CHAPTER 6

### SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SOURCES OF THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES' POLITICAL POWER

The last group of sources of the Turkish Armed Forces's political power consists mainly of its relationship with society, both culturally and in daily life. It includes identity formation and cultural myths on the one hand and the role that is ascribed to the military concerning the future expectations of the society on the other hand. In this chapter it will be argued that the social bonds between the military and the society may help to understand why military is ascribed such political power and duties.

In this chapter, in line with consensual power theories particularly that of Arendt, it will be argued that the Turkish Armed Forces is attributed political power by the society in order to reflect their anxieties.<sup>208</sup> Turkish Armed Forces *is given* power by the society. There are basically three dimensions as to this attribution. Firstly, the society defines itself as a military-nation and establishes

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<sup>208</sup> Neşe Düzel, "Ordu gücünü korumak için yeni strateji buldu" ("Army found new strategy to maintain its power"), *Radikal*, December 18, 2006

cultural bonds with the Turkish Armed Forces which evolve around the rituals concerning military conscription. The convergence of military and civilian identities leads to the establishment of a strong bond of trust between the two. Secondly, the military and the society have various points of touch in daily life, like civil society organizations and social developmental support activities of the military. These reflect and extend the positive identification of the Turkish Armed Forces by the wider society. While it helps the Turkish Armed Forces to measure the tension of and anxieties within the society, they also act as an instrument of influence by the society. Moreover, they help to protect and strengthen the positive image of Turkish Armed Forces. And finally, discursive practices by the military and its convergence with the public opinion constitute another dimension of the multifaceted relationship between the public and the military. Upon analyzing military's public speeches and tracing public opinion on recent political matters, it will be argued that Turkish Armed Forces acts almost as a political party, whose policies and activities reflect the hopes and anxieties of the society. Turkish Armed Forces effectively takes the society's pulse in political matters with a consideration to maintain and augment the support that it receives from the society

In this chapter, these three dimensions of the relationship between the Turkish Armed Forces and the wider society will be analyzed through allocating a separate part to each of them. They underlie the social and cultural basis upon which the Turkish military establishes its self-definition as the "permanent institution of the state" as opposed to the elected governments and offer an

explanation as to why Turkish Armed Forces is described as “the institution which can best interpret and uphold the general interests of the nation” above partisan politics.<sup>209</sup>

## 6.1. CULTURAL SOURCES

### 6.1.1. A Military Nation

In 1992, then chief of general staff Gen. Doğan Güreş proclaimed self-confidently that Turkey is a military state.<sup>210</sup> This assertion is acknowledged not only by the military people, but also finds resonance on the wider public. Accordingly, it is often stated that “Turkish people are a military-nation.”<sup>211</sup> A statement by İstemihan Talay, then Minister of Culture in 1999 reflects this convergence:

Turks have been known as a military nation throughout the history. The Turkish military is synonymous with Turkish national identity.<sup>212</sup>

Thus, there is a wide convergence between the self-understandings of the military and the society. The clues to this convergence can also be found in the following statements by İlhan, a former general and ex-president of the Atatürk High Council for Culture, Language and History:

Characteristics related to the military are bound to make a great contribution to the shaping of the culture of a society so unified

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<sup>209</sup> Ergun Özbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics: Challenges to Democratic Consolidation*, (London: Lynne Rienner, 2000) 110

<sup>210</sup> Gencer Özcan, “The Military and the Making of Foreign Policy in Turkey,” in *Turkey in World Politics. An Emerging Multiregional Power*, ed. Kemal Kirişçi and Barry Rubin, (Lynne Rienner Publishers, London, 2001), 16-20

<sup>211</sup> Ayşe Gül Altınay, *The Myth of the Military-Nation: Militarism, Gender, and Education in Turkey* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Varoğlu and Bıçaksız, “Volunteering for Risk: the Culture of the Turkish Armed Forces,” *Armed Forces and Society* 31, 4 (2005): 584

<sup>212</sup> *Hürriyet* August 11, 1999

with its military as ours. The fact that military has all the cultural characteristics of the society that it manifests these characteristics and that it serves as a center of education for most of those cultural values is inevitable, in fact, necessary consequence.<sup>213</sup>

The place of military and its values are regarded as so central to the Turkish culture that without them, the national unity is bound to collapse:

If we think of military culture with its historical achievements as well as its contemporary impact as separate from the cultural whole, then our national culture will lose its unity and identity.<sup>214</sup>

The argument that military values and practices constitute a vital element in the overall Turkish national identity:

It is not wrong to say that the militarist values constitute an important component of the collective identity of the Turkish society. The values that constitute the distinctive color and define the Turkish society are mostly in relation with the military and conscription.<sup>215</sup>

The strong identification of the Turkish society with its military finds resonance in Turkish politics. For example, in 2002, upon questions about the anti-EU expressions of a general, Foreign Minister Sukru Sina Gurel defended the role of the military in Turkish political life, saying the armed forces had always played a positive role. "The position of the military in Turkish political and social life stems from historical experience, and the importance of the armed forces in Turkish political and social life cannot be compared with any other armed forces in Europe." Gurel said.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> Suat Ilhan, *Jeopolitik Duyarluluk* (Ankara: T.T.K. Yay.1989), 361

<sup>214</sup> Ilhan, 361

<sup>215</sup> Tanel Demirel cited in *Securitization, Militarization and Gender in Turkey* Yaganoglu, 80, MA Thesis (Ankara: Bilkent University, 2006)

<sup>216</sup> "Turkish General Brushes Off EU Criticism," *The Turkish Times*, October 11, 2002,

The positive identification of the society with the military leads to the establishment of a popular trust for the military. “The Turkish military has a good reputation in the country”<sup>217</sup> According to a poll made in 1998 by TESEV, the most trusted government institution was the army (% 94)<sup>218</sup>. According to a later research by the same institution, the percentage fell to 77 % in 2002 <sup>219</sup>, and rose to 8.2 out of 10 in 2004<sup>220</sup>. The results are supported with the research by international institutions like GfK, which depicted the percentage as 91 %<sup>221</sup>. According to the Eurobarometer National Report for Turkey, prepared in 2005, the most trusted institution in Turkey is Turkish Armed Forces, with a percentage of 86 %. The latest poll, made by Uluslararası Stratejik Araştırma Eğitim ve Danışma Merkezi Platformu based in İzmir, indicates that the professional credibility of Turkish Armed Forces is approximately 82 %.

The popular trust for Turkish Armed Forces in Turkey is widely shared in different segments of the society. The Istanbul city-dwellers<sup>222</sup>, the members of Ankara Trade Chamber,<sup>223</sup> the university professors<sup>224</sup> and even supporters of the Justice and Development Party living in rural areas <sup>225</sup> think that the Turkish

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[http://www.theturkishtimes.com/archive/02/10\\_15/f\\_eu.html](http://www.theturkishtimes.com/archive/02/10_15/f_eu.html)

<sup>217</sup> Heper and Guneş, 2000, 635-646

<sup>218</sup> *Hurriyet*, “TESEV’e göre halk en çok orduya güveniyor”(“According to Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation, public trusts in army most”) November 28, 1998

<sup>219</sup> Mehmet Ali Birand, ““Subay olsam, ne düşünürdüm?”(What would I think if I were an army officer?)”, *Hurriyet*, October 1, 2002

<sup>220</sup> *Hurriyet*, “En önemli sorun işsizlik” (The most important problem is unemployment”), March 31, 2004

<sup>221</sup> Taha Akyol, “Orduya güvenmek” (Trusting in the Army”), *Milliyet*, October 4, 2006

<sup>222</sup> Economicals Charity Board, “Yolsuzluğa bakış: İstanbul Örneği Araştırması”(Looking at Corruption:Research on İstanbul sample”), available at

<http://www.iktisatlilar.org/raporsunulari2.htm> (last accessed on 21 august 2007)

<sup>223</sup> *Hurriyet*, “TÜSİAD’dan Yılmaz’a destek”(“Support to Mr. Yılmaz from Turkish Industrialist and Businessman Association”), August 9, 2001

<sup>224</sup> Taha Akyol “İste Üniversite” (“This is the university”), *Milliyet*, January 3, 2005

<sup>225</sup> *Milliyet*, “En güvenilir kurum, ordu” (“The Most Accredited Institution is theArmy”), January

Armed Forces is the most dependable institution in Turkey. While it may be argued that the popular trust for government has also risen significantly over the last five years<sup>226</sup>, and that the armed forces tend to be the most trusted institution in most countries<sup>227</sup> the level of trust among the Turkish society for the army is high above the levels expected in a country where military took direct control of government twice before and remained active in the political discussions over a quarter century of democratic rule.

The level of convergence between the self-understandings of the military and society on the one side, and popular trust for the Turkish Armed Forces on the other, are often regarded as a strong indicator of the level of militarization of society<sup>228</sup> According to this argument, the Turkish society has gone through a militarization process from the establishment of the Republic. During the efforts for nation-building, the state indoctrinated the public with a special concept of citizenship, which was generally interwoven with myths of martyrdom and self-sacrifice, love and responsibility for the motherland, protecting home country against the enemies, which led to the sanctification of the military in general.

The institution of a “citizen army” usually based on universal male conscription has defined the nation at birth as a military nation. Military service provides one of the most important sites where the nation idea is married to the state idea naturalizing the connection between the two. A state protected by a national army or citizen soldiers can be the tip of the iceberg concealing state idea being

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19, 2005

<sup>226</sup> *Hurriyet*, “İçinde ordu olmayan soru: En güvenilir hükümettir” (“The question that does not include the army: The most trusted is the cabinet”), September 9,2005

<sup>227</sup> Murat Belge, “Kime güvensen?” (Who shall I trust in?”), *Radikal*, August 24, 2001

<sup>228</sup> Altınay

protected by the nation-idea<sup>229</sup>

Nevertheless, it would be mistaken to state that the militarization process –if there is any, began with the establishment of the Republic or it was totally controlled by the state and/or the military elite. Militarization is defined as

...a step by step process by which a person or a thing gradually comes to be controlled by the military *or* comes to depend for its well being on militaristic ideas.<sup>230</sup>

Therefore, the process of militarization is not just a power exercise by the military, at the end of which the military is able to control the whole society. During the process, militaristic ideas and the importance of the military may be voluntarily internalized by the society, which may lead to the attribution of a special role to the armed forces by the society. Therefore, militarization may exist as the outcome of the society's own necessities and its perception of its own well-being. Moreover, even if the process had been successfully supervised by the state and military elite as a one-way indoctrination, the military-related myths, rituals within Turkish culture, the underlying basis which is proven to be eligible for "militarization" should be analyzed in order to understand why militarization has been so successful in the first place. The following part in this chapter elaborates on these elements.

### **6.1.2. Mass Conscription and Military Culture in Turkey**

It is often stated that the mass conscription is the main reason as to why the Turkish culture is interwoven with military culture. Kinzer depicts the picture

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<sup>229</sup> Altınay, 6

<sup>230</sup> Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives*. (London: University of California Press, 2000), 3



as follows:

All young Turkish men must serve in the army, which means that virtually every adult male is a veteran and that most families have had the experience of seeing sons in uniform. Turks do not fear their army or consider it oppressive the way terrified Africans and Latin Americans did when cruel military dictatorships dominated their societies. Most see it as a benevolent force that has successfully defended Turkey against foreign and domestic enemies and that truly has the national interest at heart. In much of Turkish society there is a desire to believe the best about the armed forces and their commanders.<sup>231</sup>

Every male Turk over 20 with appropriate health condition is bound to serve in the military through a period ranging from 5 to 15 months. According to the Turkish constitution, military service is regarded both as a duty and a right of the citizen. Although it is hard to deny the enormous influence of mass conscription on overall Turkish society, it should be noted that the military service is not regarded as an unpleasant, involuntary service.<sup>232</sup> It is called as *vatani görev* (duty for the motherland), *vatan hizmeti* (service for the motherland), or *vatan borcu* (debt to the motherland) both in the media and the public.

Military service is regarded as a step for being grown up, a test of masculinity and indicator of eligibility for marriage. Therefore, before the conscript departs for his regiment some ceremonies are held with great celebrations. Mostly, the young males around the same age in the neighborhood

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<sup>231</sup> Stephen Kinzer "Dreaming in Turkish" *World Policy Journal* 18, 3 (Fall 2001): 69-80 cited in Varoğlu and Bicaksiz "Volunteering for Risk: the Culture of the Turkish Armed Forces" *Armed Forces and Society* 31, 4 (Summer 2005): 583-598

<sup>232</sup> Varoğlu and Bicaksiz, "Volunteering for Risk: the Culture of the Turkish Armed Forces," *Armed Forces and Society* 31, 4 (Summer 2005):585

gather at the homes of relatives or neighbors for the dinner and they chat, sing, and dance. On the day of departure, friends and relatives accompany the conscript to the train station or bus station<sup>233</sup>. They hug, kiss, and make some jokes like throwing him up in the air and say ‘*En büyük asker, bizim asker!*’ (the greatest soldier is ours).

Having completed the military service is regarded so important among the society that those whose health is not eligible for the military service, may try to conceal their health condition: “...since in Turkish society, military service is perceived as a national duty and part of masculine identity, so this perception may induce many citizens not to disclose their health problems and try to get themselves conscripted as healthy individuals.”<sup>234</sup> For those with disabilities or serious illnesses, separate symbolic ceremonies are held in the regiments, where they wear uniforms and make oath. This is called *temsili askerlik* (figurative military service).<sup>235</sup>

Apart from the military service, the concepts of *gazi* (veteran) and *şehit* (martyr) has special connotations in Turkish culture. *Gazi* originates from the Arabic word, *gaza* (war), and refers to those who took part in war, while *şehit* originates from *şehadet* (witness), referring to the one who sees. According to the Islamic faith, the martyr will directly go to the heaven. It is believed that the

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<sup>233</sup>Varoğlu and Bicaksiz, 585

<sup>234</sup>S. Ceylan S. Kılıç M Hasde, T. Kır “Determination of the Reasons for Unfitness for Military Service in Turkey” cited in Varoğlu and Bicaksiz, 586

<sup>235</sup> These ceremonies are widely covered in the media. For an example see “They became a soldier for one day” available at [http://www.kenthaber.com/Arsiv/Haberler/2006/Mayis/11/Haber\\_137334.aspx](http://www.kenthaber.com/Arsiv/Haberler/2006/Mayis/11/Haber_137334.aspx) (last accessed on 21 August 2007)

matrydom is the highest spiritual status, following the prophet, hence the low level of risk aversion, reflected in the saying: “Ölürsem şehit, kalırsam gazi olurum.” ( If I die [in the war] I will be a matry, if not I will be a veteran). Beside, the military is known as *peygamber ocağı*, (the Prophet’s house)<sup>236</sup>. As such, the societal support for the military is grounded also in the religious motifs of the Turkish culture. Moreover, the memories of İstiklal Savaşı, Korean War and Cyprus Peace Operation are still alive in the society and the veterans head the official corteges in the national days. Each year, 19th of September is officially celebrated as Veterans’ Day.

## **6.2. SOCIAL INTERACTION**

### **6.2.1. Military and the Civil Society**

It is often argued that there is direct relationship between the civil society and the “civic consciousness” of the society as opposed to militaristic and/or state-centric worldview. Thus, it is expected that there is an inverse relationship between the number and effectiveness of the civil society organizations and the political power of the military.

In Turkey, military interventions of 1960, 1971 and 1980 had a disturbing effect for civil society organizations.<sup>237</sup> Nevertheless, by 1990s civil society gained a new momentum, especially after some amendments were made as to the provisions of Turkish Penal Code and the Constitution which restricted the

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<sup>236</sup> Tahsin Gülhan, “Dinamik Bir Çevre Faktörü olarak Manevi Kültürün Ordu-Asker Üzerindeki Etkisi”(Effects of non-material culture as a dynamic environment factor on Army-Soldier”), *Köprü* Güz 1996, no. 56

<sup>237</sup> Ferhat Unlu “Non-Governmental Organizations” in Cizre Umit(ed) ALMANAK: TÜRKİYE Güvenlik Sektörü ve Demokratik Gözetim (Almanac: Turkey’s Security Sector and Democratic Oversight”) (Istanbul: TESEV 2005)

establishment and activities of civil society organizations. During this period, although the relationship between security forces, especially military and civil society organizations (especially those which focus on human rights) retained its thorny nature, some civil society organizations began to emerge which had a constructive relationship with the Turkish military. Turkish Armed Forces has been able to establish institutional connections with non-governmental organizations, universities and think-tanks.

Currently, there are six foundations which are officially supported by the Turkish General Staff. The links to these foundations can be found on the opening page of Turkish General Staff's website. These are Foundation for Empowerment of Turkish Armed Forces, Turkish Armed Forces Education Foundation, Turkish Armed Forces Mehmetçik Foundation, Turkish Armed Forces Hand-in-Hand Foundation, Turkish Armed Forces Solidarity Foundation, Turkish Armed Forces Health Foundation. Boards of Trustees and general directors of these foundations are composed of almost exclusively serving or retired military officers.

Turkish Armed Forces Foundation is established in 1987. Its mission is stated as to contribute to the empowerment of the Turkish Armed Forces and development of national defense industry with the material and moral support of the Turkish society.<sup>238</sup> It has a great number of contributors, who donates money and real estate. It has Honorary Support Councils in 65 cities and 609 districts, generally headed by governors.

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<sup>238</sup> Turkish Armed Forces Foundation's Website available at <http://www.tskgv.org.tr/tr/misyon/index.html> (last accessed on 12 June 2007)

Established in 1982, the Mehmetçik Foundation is another civil society organization which enjoys a wide range of support from the society. Mehmetçik is the general name traditionally given by Turkish society to soldiers. The mission of the Foundation is stated as “to provide “Death and Disabled Pension” for Mehmetçiks and their families, to provide “Continuous Education Aid” for their children, to provide “Continuous Care Aid” for disabled war veterans, to organize social programs to bring together Mehmetçiks in the Aid Plans, their families and the donators.”<sup>239</sup> The foundation’s main financial sources are donations and revenues from its subsidiaries. Since 1982, it paid nearly 80 Million USD assistance to approximately 28.000 people according to the Aid Plans and still pays 1 Million USD each month to 5.500 people according to the Aid Plan.

Turkish Armed Forces Education foundation is established in 1957 with the aim of supporting education of the children of officers, veterans and martyrs. It has 17 dormitories in 8 cities and provides scholarships. Besides, it is argued that it will establish a private university, which will reserve quotas for children of veterans and martyrs.<sup>240</sup>

Apart from these foundations, there are four military-originated associations, which have direct links with the Turkish Armed Forces. These are Turkey Combatant Veterans Association, Turkey War Veterans, Martyrs, and Their Widows and Orphans Association, Turkey Retired Officers Association, and Turkey Retired Non Commissioned Officers Association.

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<sup>239</sup> Turkish Armed Forces Mehmetçik Foundation, <http://www.mehmetcik.org.tr/index.php?Page=Sayfa&No=13>

<sup>240</sup> *Sabah*, “TSK Eğitim Vakfı özel üniversite açacak” (Turkish Armed Forces Education Foundation is going to establish a new private university”), August 24, 2006

These foundations and associations help to establish and strengthen the social links between the Turkish Armed Forces and the society. The amount of donations they receive and their wide range of activities can be perceived as both strong indicators of the societal support they receive from the Turkish society and effective instruments of maintaining such support.

There are other civil society organizations which are allegedly identified with Turkish Armed Forces.<sup>241</sup> Among them, Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği (Atatürkist Thought Association), headed by an ex-general Şener Eruygur, has been on the forefront of recent public discussions on regime and secularism. The association organized a series of meetings in order to protest the expected presidential candidacy of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (the prime minister and President of Justice and Development Party). Hundreds of thousands gathered in the separate meetings organized in Ankara, İstanbul, İzmir. These meetings were widely covered in the national and international media. At the same time with the meetings, the General Chief of Staff issued a declaration which stated that "It should not be forgotten that the Turkish armed forces is one of the sides in this debate and the absolute defender of secularism." The fact that the head of ADD is a former general, the parallelism between the ideologies of ADD and Turkish Armed Forces and the slogans chanted in the meetings in favor of the military like "Orduya uzanan eller kırılın." "Mustafa Kemal'in askerleriyiz" and "En büyük asker bizim asker"<sup>242</sup> lead to the allegations that these meetings were

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<sup>241</sup> İsmail Saymaz, " 'Vatanseverlik' yarışındaki örgütler emekli asker dolu" (The organizations racing on 'Patriotism' are full of retired soldiers"), *Radikal*, February 17, 2007

<sup>242</sup> "Cumhuriyet Mitingine yüzbinler akın etti" ("Hundered of thousands flock to Republican Meetings") available at <http://www.haberx.com/n/1011229/cumhuriyet-mitingine-yuzbinler-akin>

organized with the support of or to support the military. Although there is no direct relationship with these organizations and the Turkish Armed Forces, these meetings indicate that while the society presents their anxieties about the future of the country it refers to the military as “the guardian of the regime”<sup>243</sup>.

Along with the informal bonds as stated above, Turkish Armed Forces has also established formal institutional links with civilian bureaucracy and wider public through think-tanks and educational institutions. Among them National Security Academy plays an important role in developing relations between the Turkish Armed Forces and different segments of the civilian population.

National Security Academy was established in 1952 as “National Defense Academy”. Since 1964, it functions, except for a short interval in 1981-82, as National Security Academy, a governmental institution which provides graduate-level education to serving or potential high ranking bureaucrats working in different institutions of state, including Turkish Armed Forces, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Internal Affairs. Its mission is stated as to endow high level bureaucrats in public institutions and military officers with planning and information skills in issues concerning national security and to enhance the spirit of cooperation and coordination between the civilian and military frequenters (*müdavim*) of the academy.<sup>244</sup> Recently, civilian employees from the private sector (mostly from media and civil society organizations) began to be

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etti.htm (last accessed on 24 September 2007)

<sup>243</sup> The parallelism between the discourses of the military and the public will be analyzed in detail in the next part “Discursive Practices”

<sup>244</sup> For Academy’s website see <http://www.harapak.tsk.mil.tr/Icerik/mga.htm> and for Alumni website <http://www.ugsad.org.tr/?s=icerikler&b=milliguv>

accepted to the academy. While the military frequenters are determined by the General Staff, the civilian frequenters are elected by the State Personnel Office upon approval by the Prime Ministry.<sup>245</sup> Although the academy operates under the umbrella of the General Secretariat of NSC, the academy is formally linked to the Command of the Turkish Staff Officers' School.

Each frequenter takes a five-month long education from distinguished scholars and military and civilian experts. The curricula consists of issues concerning global and national security, protection of the national interests, determination and evaluation of national power, crises management, preparing criteria for war directives and ministerial plans and total defense of the country. The academy aims to “bring up disciplined personnel who understand and embrace main principles of Atatürkist thought and have a forward-looking view based on Turkish national culture, custom and tradition”<sup>246</sup> Especially with the recent changes in procedures for the accession of civilian people from non-governmental organizations and the media, the Turkish Armed Forces has been able to enhance and strengthen the bond it established with the wider society. It serves a unique platform where civilians and military officers discuss, evaluate and cooperate on issues concerning national security.

The Turkish Armed Forces has also intense relationship with think-tanks. It is argued ASAM, the first and one of the most prolific institutions that work on

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<sup>245</sup> *Zaman*, “Milli Güvenlik Akademisi'ne katılacak sivilleri Başbakanlık seçecek”(Office of Prime Ministry will choose civils who will attend to the Academy of National Security ”), January 21, 2006

<sup>246</sup> Turkish Armed Forces Military Academies Command National Security Academy available at <http://www.harpak.tsk.mil.tr/Icerik/mga.htm>



security has close collaboration with Turkish Armed Forces, as illustrated in its executive cadre.<sup>247</sup> The chief executive of ASAM is Edip Başer, a former three-star general, who worked as vice General Chief of Staff. In 2002, Turkish Armed Forces has inaugurated its own think-tank, Stratejik Araştırmalar ve Etüd Merkezi (Study Center for Strategic Research) (SAREM)<sup>248</sup> under the auspices of General Chief of Staff. The institution organizes conferences and works with several civilian scholars in issues concerning Turkey's national security needs<sup>249</sup>. As such, it establishes channels of communication and understanding as well as a platform for collaboration between the Turkish Armed Forces and the public.

### **6.2.2. Turkish Armed Forces' Supportive Activities for Social Development**

One of the most effective links that establishes a strong bond of trust between the society and the Turkish Armed Forces is their social development support activities. The ground for these activities is set as “to provide for the integration of the society and the Turkish Armed Forces, which comes from the bosom of the Turkish Republic and is the apple of its eyes; to set clearly that Turkish Armed Forces is always on the public's side, to endear the Turkish Armed Forces and the state and enhance the public trust for them.”<sup>250</sup> This mission is in line with one of the primary duties of the Land Forces, as indicated

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<sup>247</sup> Ferhat Unlu “Non-Governmental Organizations” in Cizre Umit(ed) Almanak: Türkiye’de Güvenlik Sektörü ve Demokratik Gözetim (Almanac: Turkey’s Security Sector and Democratic Oversight), (Istanbul: TESEV, 2005)

<sup>248</sup> Güneri Cıvaoğlu “3. Milenyumda Ordu”( The army in the third millenium”) *Milliyet*, January 10, 2002

<sup>249</sup>“Genelkurmay bünyesinde ‘Stratejik Araştırma ve Etüd Merkezi’” (Within Turkish General Staff ‘Strategic Research and Survey Center’), <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/news/128877.asp>

<sup>250</sup> Turkish Armed Forces Navy “Support Activities for Societal Development” available at <http://www.dzkk.tsk.mil.tr/guncelduyurular/tgdf/index.asp> (last accessed on 29 August 2007)

in the website: “to familiarize Land Forces and enhance the bond between the Land Forces and the public.”<sup>251</sup>

The support activities of Turkish Armed Forces are carried out by each segment of the armed forces, including the Gendarmerie and Coastal Guard. These activities are widely publicized in the local and national media.<sup>252</sup> They include a wide range of areas including education, health, environment, sports and arts, disaster relief, visits, and infrastructure.

Most of these activities are directed mostly to rural areas in order to enhance the public services, like health and education. The military officers detect the problems through speaking to the local people and then plan these activities<sup>253</sup>. Usually, the military repairs school buildings and their landscape, donates books and stationary goods. In 2006, free preparation classes for university entrance examination are offered for about 2000 students in *Mehmetcik Dershaneleri*.<sup>254</sup> Foreign language and computing courses are opened. Moreover, campaigns are organized in order to encourage military officers to undertake the education expenses of poor children.<sup>255</sup> The Turkish Armed Forces regularly opens literacy courses and professional courses for conscript soldiers. In these courses, between 2000 and 2007, 142.972 soldiers gained literacy and around 500.000 soldiers acquired professional skills for earning their lives after military

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<sup>251</sup> Turkish Armed Forces Land Forces Command available at <http://www.kkk.tsk.mil.tr/>

<sup>252</sup> Yalcin Bayer, “Trakya’da ‘Ordu millet el ele’ pankartı” ( The banner as ‘Army and folk are hand in hand’ at Thrace”), *Hurriyet*, July 27, 2005

<sup>253</sup> “Trakya’da ‘Ordu millet el ele’ pankartı”

<sup>254</sup> General Command of Gendarmerie, “Support Activities for Societal Development” available at <http://www.jandarma.tsk.mil.tr/redirect.htm?url=//www.jandarma.gov.tr/halklailiskiler/destek.htm> (last accessed on 29 August 2007)

<sup>255</sup> Turkish Armed Forces Navy “Support Activities for Societal Development” available at <http://www.dzkk.tsk.mil.tr/guncelduyurular/tgdf/index.asp> (last accessed on 29 August 2007)

service.<sup>256</sup>

Turkish Armed Forces also make sanitary inspections in rural areas where health services are inadequate. They repair village clinics and lodgments. The military offers free treatment, medicine and counseling. Moreover, sanitary measurements are carried out in military laboratories to fight against epidemics along with food control and water analysis. They organize conferences on birth control, parenting and other health issues. At times, military equipments are used for transportation of patients and of organs for transplantation<sup>257</sup>.

Turkish Armed Forces support activities for social development also include sports and art competitions, music concerts, conferences on environmental protection, women's and human rights, forestation campaigns, visits to asylums for the aged and orphanages, and reparation of infrastructure like electricity, roads and water utilities.

Turkish Armed Forces has also duties in disaster relief. They take part in fire fighting and have relief and recover functions after flood and earthquakes. Due to its well-organized manpower and efficiency, Turkish Armed Forces is able to reach to the disaster area with utmost competence. Especially, the services dealt out by the military after the major Marmara earthquake of 1999, has been quite appreciated by the society. The Turkish Armed Forces was the first to reach the seriously affected zones. A poll made by scholars in the Adapazari district in the

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<sup>256</sup> Turkish Armed Forces General Staff, "Support Activities for Societal Development" available at [http://www.tsk.mil.tr/HABERLER\\_ve\\_OLAYLAR/8\\_Toplumsal\\_Gelisime\\_Destek\\_Faaliyetleri/konular/er\\_eras\\_kurs.htm](http://www.tsk.mil.tr/HABERLER_ve_OLAYLAR/8_Toplumsal_Gelisime_Destek_Faaliyetleri/konular/er_eras_kurs.htm) (last accessed on 1 September 2007)

<sup>257</sup> Turkish Air Forces Command, "Support Activities for Societal Development" available at <http://www.hvkk.tsk.mil.tr/turkce/faaliyetler/tgdffaaliyet.htm>(last accessed on 1 September 2007)

aftermath of the earthquake indicates that most of the respondents think that the Turkish Armed Forces has been the second major provider of support after the relatives and neighbors.<sup>258</sup>

The planning and efficiency of the Turkish Armed Forces on disasters is so appreciated that well-known seismologists Ahmet Mete Işıkara<sup>259</sup> and Celal Şengör<sup>260</sup> stated that the Turkish military is fully prepared to any major earthquake that would take place in İstanbul. Following these statements, the discussions took place in the media where it is argued that full management of crises, especially earthquakes, should be undertaken by the military rather than governorship.<sup>261</sup>

The head of Association in Support of Contemporary Living, Turkan Saylan: “In Turkey, we do not fight only against PKK. Our army, like a civil society organization, helps in our activities. When an earthquake or flood takes place, we look to the army for help. Accordingly, we cannot say [to them] ‘Stand aside.’”<sup>262</sup> The contribution of supportive activities by the military to the establishment and maintenance of the close relationship between the society and

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<sup>258</sup> M. Cüneyt Birkök, Cemal Eroğlu “17 Ağustos Marmara Depremi Sonrasında Sosyal Yapı Problemleri: Bilişim Ölçekleriyle Sosyolojik Değerlendirmeler” (“Social Structure Problems after The August 17 Marmara Earthquake: Sociological Evaluations with Information System Scales”) *Uluslararası İnsan Bilimleri Dergisi* 1, no.1, (2002):13

<sup>259</sup> “Askerler Marmara Depremine Hazırlanıyor” (Soldier is preparing to Marmara Earthquake”), Voice of Anatolia, available at <http://www.voanews.com/turkish/archive/2004-06/a-2004-06-18-15-1.cfm>; “TSK'dan deprem taburları” (“Earthquake troops from the Turkish Armed Forces”), CNNTURK, available at [http://www.cnnturk.com/OZEL\\_DOSYALAR/haber\\_detay.asp?pid=1100&haberid=118282](http://www.cnnturk.com/OZEL_DOSYALAR/haber_detay.asp?pid=1100&haberid=118282) 16 (last accessed on 2 September 2007)

<sup>260</sup> *Hürriyet*, “Asker hazır, siviller değil” (Soldier is ready but civilians are not”), August 3, 2004

<sup>261</sup> “Deprem Dede bu kez mimberden seslendi” NTVMSNBC (“This time, Deprem Dede addressed from the pulpit”) August 18, 2007 available at <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/news/417576.asp> (last accessed on 1 September 2007)

<sup>262</sup> Tempo, April 26, 2007 available at [http://www.tempodergisi.com.tr/toplum\\_politika/13847/](http://www.tempodergisi.com.tr/toplum_politika/13847/) (last accessed on 1 September 2007)

the army and the projection of this bond into Turkish civil-military relations, is well-stated by columnist Can Dündar:

“In the aftermath of the flood disaster where 40 lives are lost, if the military hums and rescues the water bound people, while the Prime Minister states that “They exaggerate. That is natural disaster... when it comes, these things happen.”, if the general who dispenses food in military tents is applauded, while the local governor who goes bush for three days is booed, and if non-uniformed soldiers collect rubbish while the municipalities have their hand tied by the government, then we cannot establish trust for the civilian government, neither shall we be shocked by the fact that the military is the most trusted institution, nor can we persuade the masses who live with the hope of a military takeover of the indispensability of the democracy.”<sup>263</sup>

### 6.3. DISCURSIVE PRACTICES

The last argument of this chapter is that the public speeches of the military in Turkey are formulated as a response to anxieties of the society about the political and social transformations that take place in the country. Society’s strong identification with Turkish Armed Forces on the one side and the bond of trust (whose dynamics are explained above) on the other side makes it possible for Turkish Armed Forces to respond the anxieties and expectations of the society in a manner similar to political parties. Turkish Armed Forces acts almost as a political party, whose policies and activities reflect the hopes and anxieties of the society with a consideration to maintain and augment the support that it receives from the society. This cycle is at the core of the Turkish Armed Forces political

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<sup>263</sup>Can Dündar “Bu Komutana Dikkat” (“Attention to this commander”) *Milliyet*, November 6, 2006

power.

In this part, in order to understand the dynamics how and under what conditions, the Turkish Armed Forces acts as such, three major areas of dispute in the society will be analyzed with particular emphasis on the changes of the public opinion and military discourse. It will be argued that the changes show a parallelism between public opinion and the military discourse, illustrating that the military discourse is ultimately responsive to the changes in the public opinion. As such, the military acts as a political party, which shows a particular concern for society's anxieties and expectations.

Three areas of dispute are chosen from among the subjects where military voices are mostly heard. These are Turkey's EU membership; terrorism and Cross-border operations to Northern Iraq and debates on threats to secular regime and Ataturk's reforms. I will argue that the military has always been sensitive to the public opinion and there is a strong parallelism between the two.

### **6.3.1. EU Accession Process and the Changing Discourses of the Military**

The biggest political challenge that Turkey faces is accession process to the EU. The accession process brings about redefinitions of certain values like democracy and Turkish identity, along with some institutional and legal changes. Whether or not the society supports accession process, discussions are inevitable. Not infrequently, Turkish Armed Forces, which is supposed to be politically neutral in such discussions, become parties to them.

Turkey was recognized as a candidate state for EU membership during the European Council Helsinki Summit in 1999. Like every candidate state, Turkey was supposed to satisfy some several conditions, known as Copenhagen criteria. One specific EU requirement for Turkey was the removal of the supremacy of the military over civilian politics and placing civilian control of the military in line with other EU member states.<sup>264</sup> Constitutional amendments have been made regarding the place of NSC in Turkish political system.<sup>265</sup> The Turkish Armed Forces has accepted loss of power vis-à-vis other political actors without too much dissent.<sup>266</sup> Following the 2004 Regular Report's confirmation that Turkey has been able to strengthen civilian control and has reduced the powers of the military, EU started accession process with Turkey in October 2005.

Sarıgil argues that military finally accepted the reforms which eventually would curb its political power, because it “has found itself rhetorically entrapped and could not reject reforms”<sup>267</sup>. The reason for the military's entrapment is Turkish military's “concern about the negative impact of such an action on the military's legitimacy and credibility in the society”.<sup>268</sup> As the harbinger of modernization in the early days of the Republic and the institution which demonstrates an extensive concern for the Westernization ideal of Atatürk, the Turkish Armed Forces has always displayed a supportive stance towards Turkey's

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<sup>264</sup> Zeki Sarıgil, “Europeanization as Institutional Change: The Case of the Turkish Military” *Mediterranean Politics* 12 no. 1 (2007) 40

<sup>265</sup> See Chapter 3 for further detail on institutional and legal changes concerning civil-military relations in Turkey.

<sup>266</sup> Ersel Aydınli, Nihat Ali Özcan, and Dogan Akyaz “The Turkish Military's March Toward Europe” *Foreign Affairs*, 85, no. 1 (2006):77–90

<sup>267</sup> Sarıgil, 40

<sup>268</sup> Sarıgil, 41

EU bid.<sup>269</sup> In a speech in 2003, General Büyükanıt, then vice general chief of staff, clearly set the Turkish Armed Forces' support for EU accession process as follows:

“I openly express: the Turkish Armed Forces is not and cannot be anti-EU because EU accession is a geo-strategic and geopolitical necessity of the modernization goal set by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. This necessity fully overlaps with Turkey's social, political, economic and security goals. EU cause cannot click with anachronistic and separatist objectives of those who have different views on Turkey's unitary structure and secular regime.”<sup>270</sup>

He further added that Turkey is part of Europe and will accede to European Union.

“Even though what I have said may contradict with the expectations of some circles, it is a clear expression of Turkey's and Turkish Armed Forces' decisive determination. It is a clear response to those circles which present Turkish Armed Forces as the reason of all negative developments on all occasions.”<sup>271</sup>

Apart from the ideological reasons (Westernization), the military's supportive stance has also been backed up by Turkish public whose attitude is demonstrated in several polls made on Turkey's EU membership since 1999 Helsinki summit. In a poll made by Piar-Gallup in August 2000, 68.7 % of the respondents thought that Turkey should accede to EU, while only 9.9 % thought it should not, with remaining 21.4 % defining themselves as unknowledgeable about

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<sup>269</sup> Gülnur Aybet, Turkey and EU After the First Year of Negotiations: Reconciling Internal and External Policy Challenges Security Dialogue 37 2006 529-549 p.543

<sup>270</sup> *Radikal*, “Org. Büyükanıt: TSK, AB'ye karşı olamaz” (“Gen. Büyükanıt: Amry cannot be against EU”) May 29, 2003

<sup>271</sup> “Org. Büyükanıt: TSK, AB'ye karşı olamaz”



the issue<sup>272</sup>. Among the reasons as to why Turkey should not accede to EU, the respondents have thought that it will negatively affect the Islamic and national identity of Turkey, Turkey's economy will be too dependent on European economy, and that the conditions set for Turkey will harm the territorial integrity of Turkey. Another poll made by TESEV in 2002, confirms these results.<sup>273</sup> While 64 % of the respondents approve of Turkey's accession, 42 % thought that EU membership will bring positive changes to their lives. Those who did not favor EU membership stated that religious and national identity of Turkey would be weakened. The research concluded that public opinion, although highly sensitive in matters concerning national defense and religious/national values, is ready for integration with EU in most areas.

These anxieties and expectations, notwithstanding overall positive tendency for membership, were also shared by some in the military circles. At a conference at Istanbul's War Academies Command, NSC Secretary-General Gen. Tuncer Kılınç stated that the European Union had never supported Turkey on issues concerning Turkey's national interest, adding that Turkey should seek out new alliances other than the EU, such as Iran and Russia. After the remarks, the Turkish General Staff refrained from making comments on Kılınç's statements, which was interpreted as the view expressed had supporters in the military circles. On the other hand, according to the statements by an anonymous source from the Turkish General Staff, Kılınç was interpreted as expressing his own personal

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<sup>272</sup> Şükrü Elekdağ, "Aklımız Avrupa'da" ("Our mind is busy with Europe") *Milliyet*, September 21, 2000

<sup>273</sup> *Radikal*, "TESEV'in anketi: Halkın % 64'ü AB'den yana" ("TESEV's poll: 64 % of the public is pro-EU") June 28, 2002

opinion in an academic atmosphere, and his views did not represent official view of Turkish Armed Forces on EU.<sup>274</sup> Later, Kılınç himself stated that he was speculating on a scenario and certainly not anti-EU.<sup>275</sup> Columnist Murat Yetkin, summarized official view of Turkish Armed Forces on EU as follows:

a. EU should demonstrate adequate understanding to Turkey national sensitivities and interests.

b. Turkey's EU membership should be perceived as a self-respecting togetherness on equal grounds rather than unconditional submission.

c. Nevertheless, Turkey's interests are membership to NATO, OSCE and EU, that is a geopolitical necessity.<sup>276</sup>

Despite the divergence of views, the Turkish Armed Forces has stood firmly in its support for Turkey's EU bid while public support for EU has reached its peak in 2004. According to transatlantic trends report, there was strong support in Turkey in for joining the EU in 2004. 73 % of the respondents believed that it would be a good thing for Turkey to join the EU.<sup>277</sup> Another poll, Eurobarometer, also demonstrated similar results. 71 % of the respondents stated that EU membership will be good, with only 9 % stating that it will be bad.<sup>278</sup> During an interview to a newspaper, General Chief of Staff, Ozkok, declared that "I am the

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<sup>274</sup> Murat Yetkin "Askerlerden yanıt var" ("There is response from the military")*Radikal*, March 12, 2002

<sup>275</sup> Sedat Ergin, "Herkesin merak ettiği sorular" ("The questions everybody wonders about")*Hurriyet*, March 13, 2002

<sup>276</sup> Murat Yetkin "Askerlerden yanıt var" ("There is response from the military")*Radikal*, March 12, 2002

<sup>277</sup> Transatlantic Trends 2004 available at [http://www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/2004\\_english\\_key.pdf](http://www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/2004_english_key.pdf) (last accessed on 23 August 2007)

<sup>278</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 61 (Spring 2004) available at [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb61/eb61\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb61/eb61_en.htm) (last accessed on 23 August 2007)

head of Turkish Armed Forces and as the one who represents it, I emphasize that we always support the EU membership and the reforms that were made.” Even, he argued that the problems over Aegean Sea and the other problems could be resolved in a week if Turkey takes steps toward membership. He added that they (Turkish Armed Forces) do not have any pre-conditions concerning the EU membership, which, Turkish Armed Forces believes, would strengthen social state, hasten economic development, and improve life standard and quality.<sup>279</sup> Ozkok also acknowledged that “EU membership is a public demand.”<sup>280</sup>

The parallelism between the public opinion and the military discourses has continued as the public support for EU membership has begun to decrease. Due to the problem over Cyprus, the adoption of laws on “Armenian genocide” in several European states, along with the alleged support of some EU countries to PKK and DHKP-C, the support of Turkish public for EU membership has begun to deteriorate.<sup>281</sup> It shrunk to 63 % in 2005<sup>282</sup> and to 54 % in 2006<sup>283</sup> and to 40 % with a dramatic decline in 2007.<sup>284</sup> This alienation trend has also been confirmed by Eurobarometer Reports; the percentage of Turkish people who think “EU membership will be a good thing for Turkey” decreased from 71 % in 2004 to

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<sup>279</sup> *Zaman*, “Özkök: AB üyeliği için ön şartımız yok” (“Özkök: We do not have preconditions for EU membership”) October 19, 2003

<sup>280</sup> *Radikal*, “Özkök: AB yolu hata kaldırmaz” (“Özkök: EU path does not tolerate mistakes”) October 30, 2004

<sup>281</sup> Mehmet Ali Birand “AB büyükelçileri, bu mesajları iyi anladılar mı?” *Posta*, March 20, 2002

<sup>282</sup> Transatlantic Trends 2005 available at <http://www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/TTKeyFindings2005.pdf> (last accessed on 23 August 2007)

<sup>283</sup> Transatlantic Trends 2006 available at [http://www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/2006\\_TT\\_Key%20Findings%20TURKISH.pdf](http://www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/2006_TT_Key%20Findings%20TURKISH.pdf) (last accessed on 23 August 2007)

<sup>284</sup> Transatlantic Trends 2007 (Turkish version) available at [http://www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/TT07TKKFR\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.transatlantictrends.org/trends/doc/TT07TKKFR_FINAL.pdf) (last accessed on 23 August 2007)

44% in spring 2006. It reached to 52 % with only a slight increase in spring 2007, while the percentage of those who think “EU membership is a bad thing” almost tripled from 2004 (9 %) to 2006 (25 %). Besides, the public trust for EU institutions has also decreased from to 51 % in autumn 2004<sup>285</sup> to 38 % in spring 2007.

Despite the legal and institutional changes and the efforts undertaken by the government, the society’s attraction towards EU membership has showed a continuous decrease. According to the polls, the Turkish public’s top anxieties about EU membership were “less use of Turkish language” (62 %)“ increase in the use and illegal trafficking of drugs” (62 %) and “Loss of national identity and culture” (58 %).<sup>286</sup>

At the same time, Turkish Armed Forces has began to display a cautious stance towards the developments, usually pronouncing the doubts and anxieties of the groups in the wider society about the concessions demanded from Turkey by the EU. These issues included but not confined to rights of minorities and the Cyprus question. While the top-cadres of the Armed Forces denied any reference to the Army as being anti-EU, they did not refrain from criticizing the EU countries and the representatives.<sup>287</sup> In 2005, in an interview, former chief of general staff (retired) General Kıvrıkoğlu, states that

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<sup>285</sup>Standard Eurobarometer 62 (Autumn 2004) available at [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb62/eb62\\_tr\\_exec.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb62/eb62_tr_exec.pdf) (last accessed on 13 August 2007)

<sup>286</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 63.4 (spring 2005) available at [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb63/eb63\\_nat\\_tr.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb63/eb63_nat_tr.pdf) (last accessed on 13 August 2007)

<sup>287</sup> “EU, Büyükanıt clash on ethnic identity” Turkish Daily News, November 4, 2006 available at <http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/article.php?enewsid=58249> (last accessed on 18 August 2007)

“Turkey’s territorial and national integrity should not be put in jeopardy...Europe should be sincere about this subject and it should not have double standards. It appears that EU gives orders and Turkey obeys. EU’s double standards lead to the impression that EU would like to direct Turkey towards a position between Lausanne and Sevres Treaty.”

Furthermore, he points to the gravest concern as “EU’s support for Kurdish nationalism” referring to the EU demands on giving cultural rights to Kurdish people. “EU always says ‘Kurd, Kurdish...education in Kurdish’. If Kurdish becomes the media of education, what shall be the unitary structure, the national integrity? Turkey’s structure would decompose”.

He further adds that the accession process should be carefully managed since “there is no end to these demands. When one step is made, another demand comes... Today they say that Kurds should also be counted as constituent nation in the Constitution. Then will come autonomy, federative system, etc... What all these mean is Turkey will fall apart.”<sup>288</sup>

In November 2006, following the criticisms of Hansjörg Kretschmer, the EU Commission’s representative to Ankara, about the weight of military on Turkish politics and in response to his remarks on giving cultural rights to Kurds, Chief of General Staff, Gen. Büyükanıt criticized the EU and stated that “We have to be sensitive; they are trying to create minorities.” He also added that “The army is their [the EU's] target. Why are they picking on the army? Why are they bothered by the public statements of the military?... Do the statements perturb the

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<sup>288</sup> Fikret Bila, “Sorun TSK değil AB’nin çifte tutumu” (“The problem is not Turkish Armed Forces but double-sided attitude”) *Milliyet*, December 31, 2005

goals of their secret agendas?”<sup>289</sup> Büyükamıt also urged the EU officials to speak more carefully: “Every country has its realities. The security situation must be very well evaluated. Turkey is located in a very sensitive region, in terms of geopolitics. ... We all have to be careful [in our criticism].”<sup>290</sup>

During the same speech, delivered in War Academies Command, Buyukanıt did not refrain from criticizing some European Union countries on their attitude towards PKK and harshly criticized them for not supporting Turkey’s fight against terrorism despite the agreements.<sup>291</sup>

All these public statements by the military lead to the assessments by public opinion holders that Turkish military has developed serious doubts and very deep anxieties about the EU accession process.<sup>292</sup> The parallelism between Turkish public opinion and the military discourse indicates that Turkish military is responsive to the anxieties of the Turkish public, and formulate their speeches as a response the general tendencies that impinge on the Turkish society.

### **6.3.2. Terrorism and Military Discourses on Cross-border Operations**

Since 1980s, terrorism has been the major subject of debate and concern among the Turkish society. The separatist ethnic nationalism of PKK and the problems regarding the southeast has triggered the traditional anxieties of the

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<sup>289</sup> “Genel Kurmay Başkanı Orgeneral Yaşar Büyükamıt’ın Harp Akademileri 2006-2007 Eğitim ve Öğretim Yılı Açılış Konuşması” (“Chief Turkish General Staff Gen. Yaşar Büyükamıt’s Opening Speech on Military Academy’s 2006-2007 Term”) available at [http://www.tsk.mil.tr/10\\_ARSIV/10\\_1\\_Basin\\_Yayin\\_Faaliyetleri/10\\_1\\_7\\_Konusmalar/2006/harp\\_akademilerikonusmasi\\_02102006.html](http://www.tsk.mil.tr/10_ARSIV/10_1_Basin_Yayin_Faaliyetleri/10_1_7_Konusmalar/2006/harp_akademilerikonusmasi_02102006.html) (last accessed on 13 September 2007)

<sup>290</sup> “EU, Büyükamıt clash on ethnic identity” Turkish Daily News, November 4, 2006

<sup>291</sup> “Büyükamıt’s Opening Speech on Military Academy’s 2006-2007 Term”

<sup>292</sup> İhsan D. Dağı, “Yararlı ve zor bir tartışma” (“Beneficial and Difficult Discussion”) *Radikal*, January 14, 2006

Turkish society about the territorial and national integrity of the state.

With the arrest and detention of the PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in 1999, these anxieties has diminished due to reduced number of terrorist attacks and casualties. In the meantime, while armed conflict has declined, it became possible to grant some cultural rights to Kurds without too much dissent. In 2002, as part of legal and institutional reforms which aimed at integration with EU, some enactments were made allowing radio and television broadcasts in Kurdish as well as the option of private Kurdish education.

In these circumstances, the US demanded permission from Turkish government for the deployment and transfer of US forces through Turkish soil shortly before the Iraq War. During the negotiations between the Turkish and the US government, the option of sending Turkish troops to Iraq has also begun to be debated. The main reason behind the proposal to deploy Turkish troops to Iraq was to avoid being surprised by the establishment of an independent Kurdish state next to Turkey's borders. The government was also planning to prevent the PKK from exploiting the likely atmosphere of turmoil in the northern Iraq

.According to Turkish constitution; the Turkish government is required to get permission from the Turkish parliament for both sending Turkish troops to abroad and allowing foreign troops presence on Turkish territory. Both requests were formulated in the same bill, and presented to the parliament on 1 March 2003, hence "1 March Resolution". The resolution bill has received 264 approvals as opposed to 250 rejecting and 19 abstaining votes. Nevertheless, it could not

reach the constitutional majority of 276 and eventually was turned down.

The rejection of the bill was a surprise to ruling AKP, who had 361 chairs. 97 AKP MPs said “no” to the bill along with opposition MPs despite the government’s attitude. It is argued that these MPs have said “no” due to public opposition. According to polls, 92 % of the population was against an operation to Iraq.<sup>293</sup> The 91.2 % of the 1819 respondents have answered the question of “To what degree would you support the US operation to Iraq” as “I would never”, while those who said “ I would” remained 4.1 %. When respondents are asked “If a military operation takes place, to what degree would you support Turkey’s cooperation with the US?” 82.8 % answered “I would not”. The population’s opposition was also apparent in public protests. Meetings were organized at the day of balloting with over 50.000 participants in order to protest the US operation and prevent the approval of the bill.<sup>294</sup>

The public debates have evolved around three cores. First of all, Turkish public opinion about the legitimacy of such a war and Turkey’s cooperation with the US was negative. Secondly, the public was doubtful about the consequences of the deployment of foreign troops on Turkish soil. And finally, there was strong opposition to the transfer of Turkish troops.

While most of the public opinion was negative, the military is not involved in these discussions and remained silent. It is argued that the Prime Minister

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<sup>293</sup> *Yeni Şafak*, “Hükümete 'güven' savaşa 'hayır’” (“Trust’ for the government, ‘No’ to war” February 16, 2003

<sup>294</sup> *Radikal*, “Meclis'te tezkere, meydanlarda eylem” (“Resolution at the Assembly, Protests at Squares,”) March 1, 2003



deliberately postponed the day of balloting to 1st of March in order to obtain a loud approval of the bill by the NSC, which would convene at the end of February.<sup>295</sup> Although NSC made a press release after the meeting, it was not as supportive as the government demanded.<sup>296</sup> Four years later in a TV program, the Prime Minister Erdoğan stated that it was a mistake of the assembly to reject the bill. Ironically, he criticized the General Chief of Staff and the Force Commanders for not publicly pronouncing their support for the bill even though they were fully supportive of it.<sup>297</sup> Later, the military circles have also declared that they were really supporting the bill.<sup>298</sup>

With the increase in terrorist attacks and casualties in the Turkey's southeast, the debates on the necessity of a Cross-border operation in Northern Iraq has been renewed. In 2003, while only 5% of the population thought that "PKK and Southeastern issue" as the most serious problem,<sup>299</sup> in fall 2004, those who thought terrorism is one of the top problems of the country was 18 % of the population.<sup>300</sup> In spring 2005 it has risen to 29%.<sup>301</sup> By fall 2006, more than half

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<sup>295</sup> Sedat Ergin, "1 Mart tezkeresinde ibretlik sonuç hangisiydi?" ("Which was the exemplary result in 1 March Resolution?") *Milliyet*, March 03, 2007

<sup>296</sup> National Security Council's Press Release on 28 February 2003 available at <http://www.mgk.gov.tr/Turkce/basinbildiri2003/28subat2003.html> (last accessed on 13 September)

<sup>297</sup> Nevval Sevindi "Keşke 1 Mart tezkeresi geçseymiş" ("If only 1 March Resolution had passed") *Zaman* 6 March 2007

<sup>298</sup> Fikret Bila "Kıvrıkoğlu'nun açıklaması" ("Kıvrıkoğlu's Explanation") *Milliyet*, November 20, 2003; Murat Yetkin, "Değişen üslup değişmeyen TSK" ("Changed style, unchained Turkish Armed Forces" *Radikal*, May 28, 2003; *Radikal*, "Özkök: TSK tek vücuttur" ("Özkök: Turkish Armed Forces is one body") May 27, 2003; *Sabah*, "1 Mart tezkeresinin geçmesi lazımdı" ("1 March Resolution should have passed") February 22, 2007

<sup>299</sup> *Yeni Şafak*, "Hükümete 'güven' savaşa 'hayır'" ("Trust' for the government, 'No' to war" February 16, 2003

<sup>300</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 62 (Fall 2004) available at [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb62/eb62\\_tr\\_nat.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb62/eb62_tr_nat.pdf) (last accessed on 13 August 2007)

<sup>301</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 63 (Spring 2005) available at

of the respondents thought that (52%) terrorism is one of the gravest problems.<sup>302</sup> Similarly, a recent poll named “Research on Turkish people’s attitude towards PKK and Terrorism -Crossborder operation and Northern Iraq- made in June 2007, illustrates that 84 % said that they would “support a military intervention in Iraq by Turkish Armed Forces to prevent PKK terrorism”.<sup>303</sup>

While the public opinion on a possible cross-border operation have changed, the top echelons of the military, who refrained from making statements about the 1 March Resolution, have decided to make open statements about the emergency of the problem and pointed to the need to make a cross-border operation to Northern Iraq. In a press conference on 12 April 2007, General Chief of Staff Gen. Büyükanıt, stated that

“You may ask me this question: Should an operation me made in Northern Iraq? Yes, it should be. There are two dimensions to the issue. First of all, when I look from a military perspective, yes it should be made. Would it be effective? Yes it would. Second dimension is political. Political decision is required for a cross border operation. Turkish Armed Forces has exceeding power to do that when lawfully assigned such a task.”

<sup>304</sup>

The parallelism between Turkish public opinion and the military discourse

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[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb63/eb63\\_nat\\_tr.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb63/eb63_nat_tr.pdf) (last accessed on 13 August 2007)

<sup>302</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 66 (Fall 2006) available at

[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb66/eb66\\_tr\\_nat.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb66/eb66_tr_nat.pdf) (last accessed on 13 August 2007)

<sup>303</sup> Başkent Strategic and Social Research Center “Research on Turkish people’s attitude towards PKK and Terrorism -Crossborder operation and Northern Iraq” available at <http://www.baskentarastirma.com/yeni/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=66> (last accessed on 9 September 2007)

<sup>304</sup>“ Org. Büyükanıt’ın konuşmasının tam metni” (“The whole text of Gen. Büyükanıt’s Speech”) NTVMSNBC, available at <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/news/405466.asp> (last accessed on 12 September 2007)

has also been reflected in public protests against terrorism. On 8 June 2007, The General Chief of Staff released a 7-article press declaration, which pointed to the recent increase in the terrorist activities and appealed to the public “to show a massive opposition reflex” against these terrorist activities.<sup>305</sup> Shortly after the declaration, the Turkey’s most active civil society organizations like Çağdaş Yaşamı Destekleme Derneği, Çağdaş Eğitim Vakfı, Ulusal Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları Birliği, Türk Kadınlar Birliği and Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği responded to the military’s appeal by organizing simultaneous anti-terrorism meetings in İstanbul, İzmir, Ankara and Bursa on 23 June 2007. Several meetings are also held in other cities with the support of local non-governmental organizations.<sup>306</sup> It is argued that the declaration by the General Chief of Staff is the outcome of the pressure by the society about the increase in deaths and it simply vocalizes public anxieties, rather than an incitement by the military.<sup>307</sup>

### **6.3.3. Republican Meetings and e-Coup of 27 April**

Another issue which Turkish Armed Forces attaches utmost importance is the protection and maintenance of secular regime, set according to Atatürkist principles.<sup>308</sup> Especially since 28 February 1998, when pro-Islamist Erbakan government has been replaced by Çiller government due to pressures from the

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<sup>305</sup> Turkish Armed Forces Turkish General Staff, Press Release, available at [http://www.tsk.mil.tr/10\\_ARSIV/10\\_1\\_Basin\\_Yayin\\_Faaliyetleri/10\\_1\\_Basin\\_Aciklamalari/2007/BA\\_13.htm](http://www.tsk.mil.tr/10_ARSIV/10_1_Basin_Yayin_Faaliyetleri/10_1_Basin_Aciklamalari/2007/BA_13.htm) (last accessed on 3 September 2007)

<sup>306</sup> Teröre Karşı Mitingler Düzenleniyor (“Protest meetings are held against Terrorism”) available at <http://www.ataturktoday.com/RefBib/TeroreKarshiMitingler.htm> (last accessed on 1 September 2007)

<sup>307</sup> Tülay Sağlam, “Kitlesele Refleks Yanlış Anlaşılır” NTVMSNBC, June 10, 2007 (“Massive reflex can be misunderstood”) available at <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/news/410439.asp> (last accessed on 10 September 2007)

<sup>308</sup> see Chapter 3 subheading “Atatürkist legacy” for historical sources of such military conviction.

military, the regime problem continues. While, between 2000 and 2003, where ANAP DSP MHP government ruled, the regime discussions was not very much. The silence has remained with the election of 2003, where AKP has been the single party government. Despite AKP deputies and constituents past record of anti- regime activities, the relationship between the government and the military was rather smooth. Once, Hilmi Özkök was reported to describe their relationship with the government as “like poetry”. Nevertheless, Özkök himself did not refrain from pointing to the reactionary Islamist threat several times. When Büyükanıt has been elected as the new General Chief of Staff, he also made remarks on the issue of threats to the secular character of the regime. On 3 October 2006, he stated that there is a grave problem of regressive Islamism.<sup>309</sup>

In May 2007, when the term of former President of Republic, Necdet Sezer has ended, the regime discussion has acquired a new focus. Since AKP-dominated parliament would elect a new president, it was more than likely that a person with an Islamist past will become president. Due to presidency’s critical position concerning duties about national security and his relationship with Turkish Armed Forces as the Supreme Command, the Turkish Armed forces has always placed utmost importance as to who will be elected as the new president.

Prime Minister Erdoğan had been eyeing the post himself. But due to sustained secular opposition, composed of military, opposition party CHP, President Necdet Sezer and masses organized around Kemalist civil society

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<sup>309</sup> *Hurriyet*, “İrtica tehdidi var önlem alın” (“There is a threat of regressive Islamism, take precautions”) October 3, 2006

organizations like Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği (Atatürkist Thought Association) and Çağdaş Yaşamı Destekleme Derneği (Association in Support of Contemporary Life), he did not openly pronounce AKP's presidential candidate to the last moment. On 12 April 2007, President Sezer pointed to the public tension arousing from perception of reactionary threat:

“The reactionary threat which pursued our Republic since its establishment like a sinister ghost, leads to anxieties with its recent breadth. The activities which target Turkey's secular regime and modern acquisitions of the Republic and the endeavors to project religion on political scene aggravate the public tensions.”<sup>310</sup>

He also added that Turkish political regime is jeopardy in a level as never happened before. According to a poll made by newspaper *Hurriyet*<sup>311</sup> 57,1 % of the Turkish people think that president Sezer is right in his statement that Turkey's regime is in jeopardy.

After President's speech, the Turkish General Chief of Staff, Büyükanıt, although initially reluctant, became parties to the discussion by saying that

“Until this time, I have not spoken to anyone about the presidential election. The president that will be elected will also be Supreme Command of the Turkish Armed Forces. As such, the election is of vital interest for Turkish Armed Forces. Both as a citizen and as a staff of Turkish Armed Forces, I

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<sup>310</sup> *Hurriyet*, “Sezer'in konuşmasının tam metni” (“The whole text of Mr. Sezer's Speech”) April 13, 2007 available at <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/6329346.asp?gid=0&srid=0&oid=0&l=1> (last accessed on 23 August 2007)

<sup>311</sup> *Hurriyet*, “Cumhurbaşkanı bu çıkışı yapmakta haklı mı?” (“Is President right in making such a statement?”) April 20, 2007 available at <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/6361160.asp?gid=180> (last accessed on 12 September 2007)

hope that a person who embraces Republic's main principles not in word but in essence, will be elected as president.”<sup>312</sup>

Following these speeches, the masses organized around civil society organizations prepared a huge meeting with thousands of participants in Ankara Tandoğan Square on 14 April 2007.<sup>313</sup> in order to protect Republican values, secularism and protest Erdoğan's candidacy. The protesters also chanted some slogans in favor of the military: “*Orduya uzanan eller kırılın.*” (damn with the hands that encroach on army) “*Mustafa Kemal'in askerleriyiz*” (We are soldiers of Mustafa Kemal) and “*En büyük asker bizim asker*” (Greatest soldier is ours).<sup>314</sup>

The statements and protests forced Prime Minister Erdogan to nominate his foreign minister Abdullah Gül on April 24, as the official candidate of Justice and Development Party for the premiership. Gul's candidacy was as controversial as Erdoğan's because of his past involvement with two banned Islamic political parties.

On 27 April, with only 353 parliamentarians present, the AKP failed to achieve a quorum of 367 due to protest of the opposition party deputies. Gül's candidacy failed at the first round despite a majority of those present voting in favor. Due to the lack of necessary participation and several alleged violations of the constitution, the vote was taken to the constitutional court to be discussed over

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<sup>312</sup> *Radikal* “Büyükanıt cumhurbaşkanı adayını tarif etti” (“Mr. Büyükanıt described his [preferred] presidential candidate”), April 13, 2007

<sup>313</sup> *Milliyet Online News* “Ankara'da miting olaysız sona erdi...”, April 14, 2007 available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2007/04/14/son/sontur07.asp> (last accessed on 15 September)

<sup>314</sup> “Cumhuriyet Mitingine yüzbinler akın etti” (“Hundered of thousands flock to Republican Meetings”) available at <http://www.haberx.com/n/1011229/cumhuriyet-mitingine-yuzbinler-akin-etti.htm> (last accessed on 24 September 2007)

the weekend.<sup>315</sup> Later the same day the Turkish Armed Forces released an official statement in the official website of the General Staff, which would letter be named as *e-coup*.

Recently, the problem with the Presidential election process has been focused on the subject of discussions about secularism. This situation is monitored by Turkish Armed Forces with anxiety. It should not be forgotten that the Turkish Armed Forces is one of the parties to this [secular versus Islamists] debate and is the absolute defender of secularism.<sup>316</sup>

The declaration also stressed that when necessary Turkish Armed Forces would not refrain from displaying their attitudes and actions very clearly.<sup>317</sup>

The reactions to the General Staff's statement has been twofold. On the one side, there were those who stated that General Staff's declaration has been on time and reflect the public anxieties. For example, on 28 April, in another meeting, organized by "Turkey Youth Union" in Ankara, university youth has chanted slogans like "Army and nation, hand in hand." Retired General Hurşit Tolon, who took part in the meeting, stated that "Turkish Armed Forces' declaration has brought up sensitivities of the Turkish society"<sup>318</sup>

On the other side, there was reluctance concerning military's warning-like statement. On 29 April, the second of "Republican Meetings" took place, this time in Çağlayan Square in İstanbul.<sup>319</sup> <sup>320</sup> The organizers of the Çağlayan

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<sup>315</sup> *Hurriyet*, "Meclis'te 368 kişi var iddiası" ("Allegations that there were 368 people in the Assembly") April 27, 2007

<sup>316</sup> "Excerpts of Turkish army statement" BBC News, available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6602775.stm> (last accessed on 10 September 2007)

<sup>317</sup> "Excerpts of Turkish army statement" BBC News

<sup>318</sup> *Hurriyet*, "Cumhuriyet sahipsiz değil" ("The Republic is not forlorn") April 29, 2007

<sup>319</sup> *Sabah*, 'Ne şeriat, ne darbe demokratik Türkiye' ("Neither sharia nor coup but democratic

meeting stated that in order to avoid being qualified as pro-coup, this time they would chant slogans like “No to the Coups” and “neither sharia nor coup”<sup>321</sup>. Yet, the protesters have been divided on the issue. Some civil society leaders presented their support for military’s declaration, like Nur Serter, vice president of the Atatürkist Thought Association, who stated that “As a Turkish citizen, as a nationalist, I present my gratitude to Turkish Armed Forces”<sup>322</sup> while others are opposed to references to a possible military intervention.<sup>323</sup> The meeting has also been regarded as an anti-EU and anti-US protest hence one of the most popular slogans “neither EU nor US, but fully independent Turkey”.

After the election surprise of AKP with gaining 47 % of the votes, some comments have been made that the Turkish society has demonstrated its negative attitude toward military’s involvement in politics. It may be argued that while 12 April declaration was in line with the public considerations, the e-coup on 27 April has been regarded by the society as an excessive move of the military, which threatens a more direct intervention. Journalist Metehan Demir points to this perception when stating that “In this country, the most trusted institution is the military but when it directly intervenes in politics, society reacts to this.”<sup>324</sup> It appears that the military has understood the message. The first statements by the military on the election results were: “The views of Turkish Armed Forces do not

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Turkey”) April 29, 2007

<sup>320</sup> *Milliyet*, “Dünya İstanbul'daki tarihi mitingi konuşuyor... İşte başlıklar” (“The world speaks about the historical meeting in İstanbul... here is the headlines”), April 30, 2007

<sup>321</sup> *Radikal*, ‘Ne şariat ne darbe’ mitingi (“Neither sharia nor coup’ meeting,”) April 28, 2007

<sup>322</sup> Yıldırım Türker “Çağlayan’dan Taksim’e” (“From Çağlayan to Taksim”) *Radikal*, April 30, 2007

<sup>323</sup> *Vatan*, “Tarihi miting dünya medyasında” (“The Historical Meeting is on the World Media,”) April 30, 2007

<sup>324</sup> *Radikal*, “Askerler CHP’ye çok kızgın” (“Soldiers are very angry with Republican People’s Party,”) August 20, 2007.



change on a daily basis. We are still behind what we said on 12 April.” But Gen. Buyukanit did not refer to the e-coup and tried to normalize the situation: “Indeed, what we said does not include anything abnormal. They were the subjects that everybody knew about.” When asked about whether the 27 April declaration has affected the election results, he said, “We do not have a research company. Thus, without concrete data we cannot say anything. So I cannot answer to this question. What I think is that it did not. But it is just based on guess”.<sup>325</sup> His and force commanders’ later attitude and statements on Abdullah Gul’s second nomination and election for presidential post have been relatively cooperative.<sup>326</sup> While Turkish Armed Forces retained their position with respect to the ban on headscarf in public space, in line with the will of the people, they agreed to work with a lawfully elected president whose legitimacy is unquestionable.<sup>327</sup>

Despite the high level of synchronization between the Turkish Armed Forces’ statements and the Turkish public opinion, the power that is ascribed to military has its limits. The social bond that exists between the Turkish Armed Forces and the society is multifaceted and has deep rooted historical and cultural sources. Yet, this bond is also dynamic and is based on up-to-date social interaction among civilians, military and the society. Turkish society could both enhance and curb military’s political power as Buyukanit acknowledges “Turkey is a fully independent, sovereign country. Who did Ataturk get authorization from

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<sup>325</sup> *Milliyet On-line News* “Büyükankit: Bildirinin seçim sonuçlarını etkilediğini sanmıyorum” (“Mr. Büyükankit: I do not think that the declaration effected the election results.”), available at <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2007/07/30/son/sonsiy25.asp> (last accessed on 10 September 2007)

<sup>326</sup> Murat Yetkin, “Büyükankit konuşunca” (“When Mr. Büyükankit speaks”) *Radikal*, August 1, 2007.

<sup>327</sup> Fikret Bila, “Büyükankit’in tebrik ziyaretindeki mesajlar” (“Mr. Büyükankit's messages at the congratulatory visit”) *Milliyet*, September 11, 2007.

and established the Turkish Republic? Turkish people. We also get authorization from there.”<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> Turkish Armed Forces Turkish General Staff, “Chief of General Staff’s Washington Speech,” available at [http://www.tsk.mil.tr/10\\_ARSIV/10\\_1\\_Basin\\_Yayin\\_Faaliyetleri/10\\_1\\_7\\_Konusmalar/2007/gnkurbskwashi\\_nytonkonusmasi\\_14022007.htm](http://www.tsk.mil.tr/10_ARSIV/10_1_Basin_Yayin_Faaliyetleri/10_1_7_Konusmalar/2007/gnkurbskwashi_nytonkonusmasi_14022007.htm) (last accessed on 10 September 2007)

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **CONCLUSION**

In this thesis, an answer is tried to be provided to the question: Where does the political power of the Turkish Armed Forces emanate from? Based on the theories of power, I hypothesized that the Turkish Armed Forces' political power emanates from its relationship with the Turkish society. Due to the current lack of interest in ideational sources of political power in current civil-military relations theory, a new approach named "military in society" is established. Then, I tried to show that the bulk of the political power of the Turkish Armed Forces emanates from its relationship with the society, by looking on the historical, cultural, social and discursive practices which may lead to a convergence of military and society.

#### **7.1. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS**

In terms of power theories, I found out that there is wide range of theories which speculate on political power. What surprised me was that although power is a central concept which is extensively used in studies of sociology, political science, civil-military relations, there is not a common definition of what power

is, let alone consensus on how it is exercised and its sources of power.

When I look into power conceptualizations of theories of civil-military relations, I realized that the sources of political power of the militaries are understudied. Rather, most of these theories focus on struggles of power between the civilian elite and the military elite in order to dominate each other in formal decision-making processes. Little reference has been made as to the initial sources of military's political power, and when it is made, it was usually about its coercive nature, that is their monopoly on the use of violent means, their guns and ballots and the fear-provoking affect of this monopoly on wider society.

It is rather astounding to see that although consent of the citizenry, and their active support underlies the basis upon which all democratic institutions are set, society is disregarded in the theories of civil military relations, or at best portrayed as an inactive, secondary player, which has minimal influence in both enhancing and curbing the political power, especially of the military. Conversely, it was mostly portrayed as the victim of military's power exercises, as the ultimate power yielder.

Looking from the "military in society" approach leads to a reversal of this portrayal of the society upside down. The society is theorized as the ultimate source of power rather than the victim. The society, like it empowers the civilian politicians through its consent apparent in democratic elections, and ascribes them a role in realizing its expectations, may also empower the military through informal bonds.

### **7.1.2. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS**

For the Turkish case, the thesis had important implications. It is possible that Turkish society sidesteps the civilian politicians in their relations with the military. Rather than fully delegating the authority to direct military sector to civilian politicians, Turkish society prefers to retain its bonds with the military probably as a guarantee against any possible betrayal by the politicians or against any other threat which may ruin the country. Recently however, on its path to becoming a member to EU, society's jealousy in retaining this bond seems to lessen. The thesis also reveals that despite the high level of synchronization between the Turkish Armed Forces' deeds and statements and the Turkish public opinion, the power that the Turkish society ascribed to the military has its limits. The social bond that exists between the Turkish Armed Forces and the society is multifaceted and has deep rooted historical and cultural sources. Yet, this bond is also dynamic and is based on up-to-date social interaction among civilians, military and the society. If more competent politicians succeed in establishing a bond of trust and identification with the society, and carefully manage the transformation process the society faces in its quest for EU, society's fears and anxieties may be trimmed down. Nevertheless, it is evident that the long-term pattern of relations between the society and military is hard to change from today to tomorrow.

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