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**DIVIDED AND CONQUERED? SHIFTING DYNAMICS AND MECHANISMS OF
CONTROL IN TURKISH CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS**

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METHODOLOGY

Twenty-three qualitative, in-person interviews were conducted in support of this project. Given the thrust of the research question, and its dependency on charting historical variables, this method was determined to be best suited for yielding the most analytically rich and insightful information. A broad set of interview questions were designed around a number of variables: Turkish economic growth; the constitutional committee process; prospects for civil-military normalization; the importance of the European Union; the role of the judiciary; formal and informal institutional mechanism of civilian control of the military, both new and old; legislative reforms centering on the role of the military in Turkey; and political circumstances relevant to shifting dynamics in civil-military relations. Interviewees were asked to comment on these issues, and others they deemed of importance, and judge their relative importance vis-à-vis one another.

In consultations during interview design, advisers suggested avoiding certain issues and key words in the course of conversation (the perceived AK Party- Gülenist split, issues directly related to the Ergenekon investigations, “coup,” and “Kurdistan,” for example). Given the politically sensitive nature of the research question, these issues and terms were identified as “hot-buttons” which had the potential to prompt less robust or forthcoming responses from interviewees. Although many of these issues were subsequently discussed in interviews, they were introduced into the conversation at the interviewees choosing and were not solicited via an interviewer question.

A broad range of individuals were selected for interviews. They included: two members of parliament (one from AK Party, one from MHP), two government chairmen (one AK Party, one neutral), two government advisers (one CHP, one neutral), and sixteen academics working

either in universities or think-tanks. Of these, two were former military officers. The deputy political counselor at the US Embassy in Ankara was also interviewed. Three interviews of academics were conducted in the United States, both prior to and after the main interview period in Turkey. Twenty interviews were conducted in Ankara and Istanbul, Turkey between March 12 and March 19, 2012. All interviews were conducted in English with the exception of two, which were conducted via translators. Conversations lasted between thirty and ninety minutes.

In order to avoid leading interviewees toward a particular conclusion, questions were phrased to allow respondents to describe the civil-military situation in Turkey as they saw it, in their own words. Moreover, questions were sequenced in a way that more sensitive issues were broached toward the conclusion of interviews. This allowed the interviewers to establish a rapport with the interviewee, and afforded the interviewee the greatest amount of time to initiate discussions about more sensitive issues on their own terms.

Finally, because of the current nature of this research, judgments and conclusions rely on current data and information. The ongoing and politically sensitive nature of the issues discussed in this project mean that some of this information is potentially biased, politicized, or partial. Although final conclusions are supported by a theoretical framework, historical trends, and accepted explanations focusing on shifting dynamics in Turkish civil-military relations, analysis is nonetheless limited by the possibility that it relies on information which, in time, could prove inaccurate or misguided. We have done our best to account for potential bias and present conclusions which do not rely solely on recent data or information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Since 1999, gradual reforms in Turkey have slowly removed the once powerful military from Turkish politics. Three major events facilitated the process aimed at curbing the military's political influence: Turkey's European Union (EU) membership candidacy in 1999, which demanded a rebalancing of civil-military relations prior to accession; Turkey's 2003 decision to deny the United States access to its territory in support of the American invasion of Iraq; and the failed 2007 E-Coup, when the military unsuccessfully attempted to prevent an Islamist candidate from assuming the post of the presidency.

Historical precedents and institutional norms of the military partly explain the behavior of Turkey's generals since 1999. More important to the aforementioned events, however, has been the Turkish military's bifurcated nature. At the end of the Cold War, a schism developed in the military's upper echelons. Two, roughly defined ideological groups formed: Atlanticists, those who believed that Turkey must continue close ties with the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and Eurasianists, who favored a realignment of Turkish strategic and foreign policy to emphasize Russia, Iran, and China.

Particularly since the failed 2007 E-Coup, the civilian government has used the bifurcated nature of the military to pursue an aggressive strategy of dividing and conquering the military in order to subjugate it to civilian rule. Although civilian controlled militaries are a hallmark of democratic nations, the process of removing the military from politics is increasingly being defined by a number of worrying illiberal practices. Thus, at present, civil-military relations in Turkey are at an important crossroads: attempts to push the military from politics, ostensibly for democratic reasons, risk denigrating the institution to the point of ineffectiveness. Combined with the military's divided nature, this creates a potential liability for Turkish national security.

A CIVIL-MILITARY THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The analytical frameworks designed to examine the field of civil-military relations remain contentiously debated. Theories within the field have traditionally centered on a host of related issues: levels of professionalism; the balance of control between civilian and military leaders, including the relative strength of that control; and the level of institutionalization of the military into national politics are all common themes. Individual examinations have considered these variables against other exigent factors which, although salient within particular case studies, fail to inform empirically sound conclusions across the theoretical field of civil-military relations. This dependence on particular circumstances fuels scholarly disagreement over accepted definitions of professionalism, measures of control, and markers of institutionalization and has prevented consensus across the field.

This ongoing debate notwithstanding, the field of civil-military relations considers the implications of a common, primordial paradox: “because we fear others we create an institution of violence to protect us, but then we fear the very institution we created for protection.”¹ This irony, termed the “civil-military problematique” by Peter D. Feaver, is the issue at the heart of civil-military relations. Attempts to resolve this implicit tension in civil-military relationships, by in large, seek to better understand the balance of control—the political homeostasis—between civilian governments and the military.

The forthcoming analysis considers the Turkish civil-military problematique in its present form by examining the balance of control issue. It makes use of the existing theoretical frameworks on civil-military relations as presented by Morris Janowitz and Samuel Huntington, with the recognition that, as Feaver states, the field requires additional thought and

¹ Feaver, Peter D. "The Civil-Military Problematique: Huntington, Janowitz, and the Question of Civilian Control." *Armed Forces and Society* 23.2 (1996), 150.

consideration.² Janowitz's concept of professionalism offers a dynamic and circumstantial account and sets definitional boundaries for understanding the institutional evolution of the Turkish military and its role in politics. Samuel P. Huntington's matrix of objective-subjective control performs a dual function: it helps appropriate the historical and modern dynamics of Turkey's civil-military relationship while providing a more nuanced sub-structure to Janowitz's conception of professionalism.

The concept of professionalism is useful because it serves as a tool for identifying "the myriad changes in the military craft as it evolves through premodern, modern, and now postmodern incarnations."³ While disagreements dictate the need for further theoretical work within the field, they do not fundamentally detract from the concept's ability to serve as a tool of progression analysis if it is explicitly defined. Indeed, the recurring prominence of professionalism as a featured concept in civil-military relations literature bears this fact out.

Professionalism as an Analytical Conception

Discussions surrounding professionalism as an analytical concept return to the civil-military problematique and the balance of political control between civilian governments and the military. This continues to be the space in which professionalism is defined. Janowitz contends that a blending of these two spheres—essentially any kind of political power-sharing agreement—is antithetical to the concept of professionalism because of the distinct mission the military is responsible for. The military is imagined by the state as an institution of violence which serves the purposes of national protection and, in the Clausewitzian ideal, the exercise of politics through alternative means. Whereas the state exists toward many ends, the military exists

² Feaver, "The Civil-Military Problematic," 170.

³ Ibid, 169.

for the singular purpose of safeguarding the nation from threats or achieving national objectives through violent means.⁴

In order for the military to fulfill this mission, however, it must be given the actual capacity to do violence; the unintended consequences of this decision prompt the basic civil-military problematique. Civilians' fear of the military as an institution of violence is motivated by the specter of force, whether real or threatened, but the paradox has an additional dimension as well:

The underlying rationale is that the organizational format designed to carry out military functions, as well as experience in the "management of violence," is at the root of these armies' ability to intervene politically. The military task is essentially indivisible, as compared to economic and civilian functions, and it contributes thereby to a unified organization with internal cohesion.⁵

This institutional cohesiveness—termed corporateness by Huntington—is a consequence of the military's "original and logically primary mission," as Janowitz writes, but it also provides the organization with the capacity to exceed its defined mandate. Compounding this potential threat is the reality that once given agency, the military "can be a vehicle for advancing any number of other societal goals by virtue of its unique and defining ability" to exercise coercive power.⁶ Thus, in arming and equipping the military for its mission, leaders also "necessarily, if unintentionally, create an instrument that has a number of auxiliary capabilities"—both observable and institutional.⁷

Consequently, civilian leaders work to harness the military's power and capacity for violence. The actualization of these attempts varies across cases, but the efforts relate to

⁴ Violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somantic[sic] and mental realizations are below their potential realizations. Galtung, Johan. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research* 6.3 (1969): 167-91, 1.

⁵ Janowitz, Morris. *Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1977, 108.

⁶ Feaver, "The Civil-Military Problematic," 155-156.

⁷ Ibid.

professionalism equally. Huntington posits that military professionalism is a static ideal-type dependent on the expertise, responsibility, and corporateness of the officer corps. The presence or absence of these principles within a military determines that organization's professional status and informs its ability to execute its mission: "Officership is strongest and most effective when it mostly closely approaches the professional ideal; it is weakest and most defective when it falls short of that ideal."⁸ As a result, Huntington's framework offers an exclusionary understanding of professionalism.

A highly professional military possesses a high degree of expertise, responsibility, and corporateness. These governing characteristics help the military to understand its role in juxtaposition to other national institutions; in doing so, it better understands its role as an organization of national defense and as an instrument of alternative political means. Each of these roles, by virtue of having been derived from a political ideal, is subordinate to an authority which is determined and maintained by civilian leaders. Internalization of this process by the military leads Huntington to conclude that military professionalism is commensurate with subordination to civilian control: "A highly professional officer corps stands ready to carry out the wishes of any civilian group which secures legitimate authority within the state."⁹

Janowitz arrives at a similar conclusion, but adds to Huntington's dependent factors (expertise, responsibility, and corporateness) in order to introduce a more nuanced understanding of professionalism. "He [the officer corps] is subject to civilian control, not only because of the "rule of law" and tradition, but also because of self-imposed professional standards [dependent factors] and meaningful integration with civilian values."¹⁰ From Janowitz's perspective,

⁸ Huntington, Samuel P. *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. Cambridge: Belknap of Harvard UP, 1972, 11.

⁹ *Ibid*, 84.

¹⁰ Janowitz, Morris. *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait*. Glencoe, IL: Free, 1960, 420.

professionalism of the military is contingent on internal regulation exercised via the dependent factors, but also the national political environment which supplies the civilian values. Janowitz's conception of professionalism thus utilizes a sociological understanding and allows for the possibility that the military has a degree of institutional permeability.

Janowitz's understanding of professionalism is useful in the Turkish case for precisely this reason: it sees the institution of the military both as a product of tradition and hierarchy, but also as one which is shaped by its environment. This provides for a more dynamic and interesting understanding of the military because it gives the officer corps agency and presumes that they are aware of their impact on politics and society in addition to being an actual product of it.¹¹ At the same time, a politically astute officer corps complicates the civil-military problematique. It introduces the military as a potential actor with incentive to leverage the paradox to its advantage in order to control its environment and secure its own institutional prerogatives. The proclivity of the officer corps to involve itself in politics is regulated by its dependent factors of professionalism as well as the degree to which the military has internalized the concept itself. Civilian and military leaders have repeatedly found themselves at odds with each other over the impasse of a politically active military.

Differentiating Civilian Control: Objective & Subjective

Huntington and Janowitz's respective understandings of professionalism help identify and describe militaries as institutions unto themselves, but do little to shed light on the quality of the relationship between civilians and the military other than to say a military which submits itself to civilian control meets a standard of professionalism. To better understand the dynamics of the civil-military relationship, and accurately plot changes in that relationship, an additional

¹¹ Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, 420.

framework is needed. Here, Huntington's model of subjective and objective civilian control helps provide insight.

Huntington defines subjective control as the maximization of civilian power relative to the institution of the military. However, due to the diversity of civilian groups within any government (branches of government, political parties, bureaucratic actors), and their conflicting interests, maximizing civilian power always means the empowerment of a particular civilian group relative to the others, as well as the military. In Huntington's model, maximization of power, once achieved, is used to model the military in an image of the civilians and thereafter control it for political purposes. Conversely, objective control places the military at the disposal of the state instead of any particular set of civilian actors; it "elevates civilian control from a political slogan masking group interests to an analytical concept independent of group perspectives."¹² Huntington describes the dichotomy as such:

Subjective civilian control achieves its end by civilianizing the military, making them the mirror of the state. Objective civilian control achieves its end by militarizing the military, making them a tool of the state. Subjective civilian control exists in a variety of forms, objective civilian control in only one. The antithesis of objective civilian control is military participation in politics: civilian control decreases as the military become progressively involved in institutional, class, and constitutional politics. Subjective civilian control, on the other hand, presupposes this involvement.¹³

Thus, according to Huntington's framework, objective control and a high degree of professionalism are synonymous; one is not possible without the other.

Janowitz echoes Huntington's sentiments. In addressing the civil-military problematique, he notes how civilians attempt to bridle the military. In order for the standard of objective control to be met the military must not play a political role:

Civilian-political elites exercise control over the military through a formal set of rules, which specify the functions of the military and the conditions under which the military

¹² Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 84.

¹³ *Ibid*, 83

may exercise its power...Military personnel are professionals in the employ of the state, and their careers are distinct from civilian careers. In fact, being a professional soldier is incompatible with holding any other significant social or political role.¹⁴

Huntington's assertion that "civilian control in the objective sense is the maximizing of military professionalism" confirms the interdependence of objective control and professionalism.¹⁵ Thus, although Janowitz and Huntington differ on their specific conceptions of professionalism, each acknowledges the importance of objective civilian control.

In understanding the quality of the relationship between the civilians and the military, it is necessary to consider a final characteristic identified by Huntington: the monolithic institutional nature of the military versus the non-monolithic institutional nature of the civilians. This distinction is relevant to instances of subjective civilian control because analysis is dependent on the particular civilian group, out of a potential multitude, which actually subjectively controls the military. Huntington details the challenge:

It is impossible to assume a continuum stretching from military values at one end to civilian values at the other. The military ethic is concrete, permanent, and universal. The term "civilian" on the other hand, merely refers to what is nonmilitary. No dichotomy exists between the "military mind" and the "civilian mind" because there is no single "civilian mind."¹⁶

In multiparty systems, such as Turkey's, it is important to differentiate between various civilian attempts to establish subjective control as well as the individual groups which were responsible for those attempts. Understanding how these attempts relate is important for understanding how the military has evolved and been affected as an institution as well.

¹⁴ Janowitz, Morris. *The Military in the Political Development of New Nations: An Essay in Comparative Analysis*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1964, 8.

¹⁵ Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 83.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 89.

UNPROFESSIONALISM AND SUBJECTIVE CONTROL: THE TURKISH CASE

The evolution of Turkish civil-military relations in the 20th century can be understood through the aforementioned theoretical framework. A historical analysis of the last 100 years reveals a military that has demonstrated a peculiar sense of institutional adaptability, a fact which has led it to be characterized by unprofessionalism and subjective civilian control. Over time, the military has developed numerous formal and informal mechanisms to exert its influence over the civilian government and impress its ideals. As Steve Cook remarks when describing similarities between cases such as Algeria, Egypt, and Turkey, “officers sought to conceal themselves behind the veneer of democratic institutions, representative structures, and legitimate institutions that came to characterize their respective political systems.”¹⁷ The result was a radical form of subjective control in which the military was civilianized to the point that it made dictates to the civilians themselves.

The Turkish military, under the guidance of career generals, intervened into the civilian sphere in 1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997 under various auspices: the need to prevent further political violence, restore economic order, or curtail the influence of fundamentalist religion on the secular national character. At the same time, the military also used these interventions as a pretext for renegotiating their position of power vis-à-vis the civilian government. Understanding these interventions and the methods by which they were carried out is important to understanding the more recent shifts in the landscape of subjective control and the civil military relationship that exists today.

¹⁷ Cook, Steven A. *Ruling But Not Governing: The Military and Political Development in Egypt, Algeria, and Turkey*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2007, 15.

Roots of Subjective Control 1900-1940

The military played a prominent role in Turkey throughout its Ottoman history. A key component to understanding civil military relations in the current Republic is that the *army* existed before the current Turkish *state*. In 1908, the Committee of Union Progress (CUP), of which Mustafa Kemal was a member, was formed out of recognition that the Empire needed to reform or risk collapse. The committee led the Empire through a triumvirate both before and during World War I, attempting to reform the stagnating Empire. Ultimately, however, the CUP proved incapable of managing the task. The group grossly mishandled the Empire's strategy during the war and ultimately presided over the Empire's demise, not its reform. In the wake of the empire's collapse, with European powers encroaching on what would become Turkish territory, Mustafa Kemal led the army to create a new state. The 1923 Conference of Lausanne formally abolished the Empire and, under the close supervision of Mustafa Kemal and the military, established the Republic of Turkey along with its borders.

It was military officers—many of whom had been involved with the work of the CUP, including Mustafa Kemal—that set about the business of creating the modern Turkish Republic. Ultimately, these men became the founding members of the Turkish Republic.¹⁸ In this early independence period, Mustafa Kemal, who in time would assume the title 'Atatürk, or 'Father of the Turks,' used the historical legitimacy of the military, as well as its institutional capacity and coercive power, to define the nature of the Republic and thus the nature of civil-military relations in Turkey.

The interests of the military establishment and the principles of Atatürkism (Kemalism)—republicanism, populism, secularism, revolutionism, nationalism, and statism—were defined in the early 1920's. During this decade, however, formal lines distinguishing the

¹⁸ Cook, *Ruling But Not Governing*, 94.

civilian state from the military were unclear; Turkish military officers often found themselves in civilian and administrative posts and as delegates in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA). Mustafa Kemal embodied this contradiction himself: while serving as the civilian head of state, he continued to direct the military on day-to-day matters, thus establishing a precedent for subjective control. It was not until 1924 that a new constitution abrogated an earlier version and established formal, legal mechanisms for controlling the military.

Although the constitution recognized the TGNA as the formal legislative body, it did not provide for multiparty politics or permit any type of true, pluralist system. It required the presidency be appointed by the legislature, thus ensuring the continued predominance of the one-party body, composed almost entirely of allies of the military. The 1924 constitution, although ostensibly democratic, established the parameters of a controlling and centralized state with Ankara as the capital. Shortly after ratification, the military dominated government assumed decision-making power down to the minutiae in the name of upholding and defending the principles of Kemalism.¹⁹ The constitution consequently became the first mechanism of control employed by the military. The document, along with a continued sense of legitimacy and respect for the military as an institution, allowed the officers to ensure their continued political predominance.

Historical legitimacy, capacity, and a constitution all facilitated the military's strong position in the state, but during the early years of the Republic it was the effective leadership and charisma of Mustafa Kemal that entrenched the institutional framework that the military benefited from. Experiences during the interwar period of Atatürk's Turkey—the foundational

¹⁹ Barkey, Henri, and Direnç Kadioglu. "The Turkish Constitution and the Kurdish Question." *The Carnegie Endowment*. 1 Aug. 2011. <http://bit.ly/oP5uMh>.

years of the Republic—also established themes of national character and gave unequivocal meaning to what it meant to be a “Turk.”²⁰

An emphasis on Western norms and values was critical to these themes. In establishing the Turkish state, Atatürk looked to Western institutions of government for inspiration; he Latinized the Turkish language, and even went so far as to ban the wearing of the fez—a traditional head garment of Turkish men. In Atatürk’s view, Islam and rejection of the West’s rational, scientific norms had restrained Turkey’s growth and prevented it from reaching its true potential. If Turkey was to reclaim its former cultural glory, it would need to put Western modernity at the core of the new state. In the wake of Atatürk’s death in 1938, respect and admiration for his achievements and ideals—including those of Western origin—continued to grow. Consequently, the legitimacy of the military as an institution, which was the symbolic national embodiment of Atatürk and his principles, grew as well.

Challenges to the Order 1940-1960

Atatürk’s memory and ideological impact continued to be revered long after his departure from the political scene; indeed, they are deeply respected to this day. Nonetheless, over time the Turkish political scene grew more complex, and in 1946, four members of the Republican People’s Party (CHP)—Atatürk’s founding party—declared the foundation of the opposition Democrat Party (DP). While initially hesitant to permit a multi-party system, President Ismet İnönü soon realized that presenting a democratic front was an excellent means of demonstrating Turkey’s commitment to Western norms while also modeling itself as a counterbalance to Soviet influence in the region at the outset of the Cold War. İnönü also recognized the potential benefits of becoming a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and acted under the

²⁰ Richards, Alan, and John Waterbury. *A Political Economy of the Middle East*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 2008, 291.

assumption that this would not be possible with the Turkish government's current illiberal practices.

Turkey was admitted to NATO by the member allies in 1952, a decision which resulted in millions of dollars of American-built military equipment—artillery, tanks, trucks, fighter jets, and other weapon systems—being poured into the country, along with American trainers. Foreign military exchange programs helped build lasting relationships between the American and Turkish militaries. These programs helped ensure that the military had a key role to play in strategic and foreign policy decisions, particularly in ones concerning the United States.

The shift from a monolithic political structure to a more competitive order began to have unintended effects, however. Multiparty politics began to challenge the previously uncontested central power that the military had enjoyed vis-à-vis the civilian state from multiple angles. Turkey's new status as a member of NATO made it difficult for the military to restrict pluralism and return to a single-party state; such a move would be seen as wildly illiberal and unbecoming of an alliance member. Thus, if the military was to continue protecting its corporate and political interests, it required a new structural mechanism for asserting its control.

The 1950 election saw the DP wrest power from the previously dominant, and militarily aligned, CHP. Although initially comprised of former CHP members, the DP quickly set about broadening the Turkish political space as it sought out new demographics for political support. This slowly led to members with commercial and business backgrounds to begin taking seats in the TGNA. The government initially performed very well. National income grew by 40 percent between 1950 and 1953 and a more pluralistic political system, much to the public's liking, began to take root.²¹ After 1954, however, economic growth slowed, inflation rose, and political

²¹ Önis, Ziya, and Fikret Şenses. *Turkey and the Global Economy: Neo-Liberal Restructuring and Integration in the Post-Crisis Era*. London: Routledge, 2009. 4.

infighting—namely between the CHP and DP—sowed the seeds of unrest across the country. Somewhat ironically, the increasingly sharp squabbles between the CHP and DP were a direct consequence of Menderes’s opening of the Turkish political space, a fact that was not lost on the generals.

The military increasingly came to regard DP Prime Minister Adnan Menderes’ government as “retreating from Kemalist reforms” and “promoting officers who were loyal to the [Democrat Party].”²² These concerns were exacerbated by Menderes’s attempt to reduce the influence of the military, which had produced a decline in the wages of the officer corps.²³ These factors—a strengthened civilian government and a more pluralistic political climate in which the military was no longer supremely powerful—succeeded in alienating the military from its few allies within the DP.

Menderes reacted to mounting pressure from the CHP and military poorly. “Disavowing the very political principles on which his own rise to power had been based,” he retaliated against criticisms of his government by confiscating opposition parties’ property, censoring opposition newspapers, and redrafting electoral laws.²⁴ Not surprisingly, the crackdown prompted a series of public demonstrations and riots in Ankara, Istanbul, and other cities around the country. The military, which saw no friend in Menderes, allowed the demonstrations to escalate and after several massive protests, with chaos at its crescendo, the Turkish military overthrew the civilian government on May 27, 1960 in a largely bloodless coup to restore order. In September of the following year, Menderes—the first democratically elected prime minister of Turkey—and two other members of his cabinet were summarily executed.

²² Cook, *Ruling But Not Governing*, 101.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Hale, William. *Turkish Politics and the Military*. London: Routledge, 2006. 95.

The experience of the 1960 coup was significant for several reasons. First, it highlighted the military's monopoly on the use of force as a mechanism for isolating, and ultimately compelling, the civilian government. It also confirmed the military's status as a trusted institution; there was little protest to the intervention, which did succeed in restoring order. Second, the coup provided the military with an opportunity to institutionalize its political role in national politics: the new military-dominated National Security Council or *Milli Güvenlik Kurulu* (MGK). From this perch, the military would be able to assert its agenda and make its opinion known through formal means.

Third, the coup created a reason to draft a new constitution. The document called for the expansion of judicial powers and legally recognized the multiparty political system (to that point, it had been permitted but not formally codified in law). Each of these developments, although supposedly democratic, were closely mediated by the military and facilitated through the newly established MGK. The council was eager to return to civilian rule in order to allay NATO and American's rising concerns about the Ba'athist coups which were sweeping the Middle East at the time. There was concern, however misinformed, that Turkey could fall victim to a similar fate.

Fourth, and most significantly, the coup established a real-life precedent for what the political role of the military was in Turkey, both for future generations of officers as well as for civilian politicians. It ratified the ideological mentality within the ranks that it was the duty of the military to uphold Kemalist ideals and that drastic action, including the suspension of citizens' rights and the removal of threatening individuals, was justifiable behavior if the situation warranted it. For some outside observers, this proved worrying. An American official expressed concern that if the generals were willing to launch a coup to seize control of the government, that

they might take similar action to secure American strategic weapons, for example, which had recently been positioned in Turkey:

A final source of concern was the possibility that host nationals might seize the weapons from US custodians and use them. During a cocktail party in Istanbul, a Turkish general told Messrs. Holfield and Aspinall that NATO should not be a defensive alliance but an offensive alliance, and that preemptive war should be started right now. Germany should be reunified by force if necessary and used against the Soviets. The Allies should beat the Soviets to the punch.²⁵

While the reality of the nuclear protocols, which were entirely in American control, made this far from possible, the threat of such a *Dr. Strangelove* scenario was taken seriously, as was the warning the military had issued to future politicians: failure to adhere to the desires of the military order would not be tolerated.

Seeking the Balance 1960-1971

Following the coup, the military continued to play an active role in politics until 1965 when, after a series of closely monitored coalition governments, Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel and the Justice Party (JP) took office. At that time, the military publically ceded control to the civilian government while privately continuing to establish additional mechanisms of control. In 1970, two separate laws codifying the position of the Chief of the General Staff relative to the civilian Minister of Defense were passed at the insistence of the military. Each helped to establish the post as authoritative over the Ministry. As a result, the Chief of the General Staff secured wide ranging powers in determining defense policy, the military budget, future weapons system, production and procurement of arms, intelligence gathering, internal security, and all promotions of military officers.²⁶

²⁵ USA. Department of State. *Meeting with Three Members and Staff of Joint Committee on Atomic Energy: Nuclear Test Negotiations, MRBM Project and Report of JCAE Trip to Europe*. December 29, 1960. March 8, 1995 <http://bit.ly/JEbSQ2>, 10.

²⁶ Cizre Sakallıoğlu, Ümit. "The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Political Autonomy." *Comparative Politics* 29.2 (1997), 159.

Despite attempts to “ensure order and stability,” violence and an economic recession continued to wrack the Turkish state. By January 1971 public universities had closed, factories had gone on strike, inflation had skyrocketed, and violent acts by leftist and rightist groups had become commonplace. Ironically, political economists commonly attribute Turkey’s economic problems and macroeconomic instability during this period—which was motivating the unrest—to an overly centralized, statist government in Ankara which was working at the behest of the military.²⁷ The military, failing to see its own hand in the problem it helped create, reacted similarly as it had in 1960. Unlike the previous coup, however, there was disagreement within the military about how to step in and to what objective. 1960 had been a “classic coup” in which the military deployed troops and tanks on the streets and moved to secure the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT); there had been relatively little discussion—or protest—about “how” to force the government from power.

According to Ergun Özbudun, the military memorandum that ultimately forced Demirel’s government from power was in fact an eleventh hour decision by top military commanders who feared a more radical coup led by the Commander of the Air Force.²⁸ These differences of opinion raise questions as to the cohesiveness amongst the highest echelon of military leadership at the time, and are some of the first indications that the institution of the military was not homogeneous in its thinking. Nonetheless, it seems clear that the true rationale for the intervention lay in the military’s desire to preserve its image of cohesiveness, which it viewed as tied to its political power.

²⁷ Öniş, Ziya. "Crises and Transformations in Turkish Political Economy." *Turkish Political Quarterly* 9.3 (2009), 46.

²⁸ Özbudun, Ergun. "Turkey: Crises, Interruptions, and Reequilibrations." *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy*. By Larry Jay. Diamond, Juan J. Linz, and Seymour Martin. Lipset. Boulder, CO: L. Rienner, 1990, 234.

On March 12, 1971, Demirel's government was forced to resign in the wake of an ultimatum by memorandum from the Turkish General Staff. In a change of tactics, however, after issuing the memorandum the military leadership did not directly assume power. Instead, by installing a closely monitored civilian government, the military sufficiently "restored order" and strengthened the office of the executive—a position which they controlled by virtue of informal controls, such as norms governing who, based on their background, was actually qualified for the post. Thus, although some concerns regarding immediate security were alleviated, the 1971 intervention did more to evidence a contradiction which would become a recurring theme in Turkish politics: there was a divide between the actions and interests of the centralized, bureaucratic elite—the military—and the forces on the periphery which bear the responsibility for electing civilian governments—Turkey's citizens.²⁹

Maximizing Control 1971-1980

1971 began almost a decade of coalition civilian governments. The fractious nature of these governments however—a consequence of some of the military's political engineering—produced an increasingly polarized parliament and political atmosphere in the country. The civilians proved unable to elect a president, which came to be the symbolic embodiment of the public's frustration. As a result, by the late 1970s, fighting between leftist and rightist groups had returned to the streets.

On December 27, 1979 the military high command once again sent a message to the prime minister's office. Although ousted from government in 1971, Demirel had managed to win reelection to the prime minister's post with the support of right wing parties. Now, the military's message once again threatened his position. It bluntly stated that the government should "seek solutions" to the country's rising problems and "take measures jointly" to resolve

²⁹ Özbudun, "Turkey: Crises, Interruptions, and Reequilibrations," 234.

them, which aligned with an Atatürkist national perspective and fell within the bounds of the current parliamentary democratic regime. Nine months subsequently passed in which the political atmosphere grew increasingly polarized.

On September 12, 1980, the Turkish military, headed by Chief of the General Staff Kenan Evren, made good on its word and took administrative control of the state. The military made it clear that it would return control to elected civilian authorities in an attempt to reassure the West. Similar to concerns voiced in the wake of the 1960 coup, NATO and the Americans were worried about recent unrest across the region, which had cumulated in the recent Iranian Revolution. Evren made it equally clear, however, that the military intended to restructure Turkish democracy in order to prevent the reoccurrence of problems which had crippled previous civilian governments.³⁰ In the wake of the coup, Evren ruled the country as president for three years.

After banning the problematic politicians and parties, including Demirel, that had brought Turkey to “the edge of ruin,” a new constitution was written and in 1982 passed by referendum. The document placed tighter controls on political activity and freedom of speech (Article 14) by stating that individual rights could not be exercised with the aim of “violating the indivisible integrity of the State,” e.g. Kemalism. Additionally, legislative reforms required parties to win at least 10% of the vote before they could be seated in parliament.³¹ The measure, done under the auspices preventing the return of a fractious government, precluded the type of fringe parties that had historically been at odds with the military’s prerogatives and thus allowed the military to preempt potential rivals more effectively. After three years of reforms the military, unable to justify a continued presence in politics and unsuccessful in its attempts to forestall a new

³⁰ Özbudun, “Turkey: Crises, Interruptions, and Reequilibrations,” 234.

³¹ Hale, William. *Turkish Politics and the Military*. London: Routledge, 2006, 258-259

election, stepped aside and allow civilians to return to government. The election of Turgut Özal on November 6th 1983 ushered a new period of civilian rule in Turkey.

The 1980 intervention brought about sweeping and lasting changes to the Turkish political system; indeed, the constitution passed in 1982 remains in effect today. While the coup was a response to a number of social and economic issues, it also reflected a mentality within the military that the existing constitution was insufficient in serving the military's needs. In an increasingly complex and diverse Turkey, both politically and economically, the constitution had reached its limits as an effective mechanism of control. Thus, the 1982 constitution worked to combat these challenges by placing stricter controls on political activity and freedom of speech. In doing so, it further entrenched the secular ideological framework and fostered deeper connections between the military and its civilian allies.

The Zenith of Power 1980-1990

The post-1980 coup environment allowed the military to become more politically powerful not simply by virtue of its institutional engineering, but also as a result of the fact that it had once again proven itself as a powerful actor capable of restructuring the status quo in its own image. It was during this period, when the military was at its most powerful, that many of the modern mechanisms of control were developed. Ümit Cizre details these mechanisms, noting that although the MGK was established in 1960, its power was dramatically enhanced by the 1982 constitution, which placed the highest level priority on the council's recommendation. The number and weight of senior commanders participating in the NSC also increased. Presidential powers, expanded under the assumption that the post would be held by a former general or an individual subservient to the interests of the military establishment, were further strengthened.³² The president now also had the power to appoint members to the constitutional court as well as

³² Cizre, "The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Political Autonomy," 158.

return draft legislation to the parliament thus allowing the military to insulate itself from civilian attempts to roll back its influence.

Another mechanism of control, which continues through today, was the military's enhanced power to maintain oversight over its own budget. In contrast to the debates that occur in western democracies over defense budgets, the Turkish military has never been forced to account for its spending or budget.³³ Indeed, when the budget did come before the parliament—ostensibly as part of the democratic process—the TGNA passed the bill in fifteen minutes with no debate on the issue.³⁴ Moreover, due to the fact that the defense industry in Turkey was built and maintained by the armed forces, the military itself controlled the capacity to modernize and empower itself, subsequently using that power to strengthen its own political autonomy. Lastly the military solidified its control over the promotion of senior armed service members, particularly the chiefs of general staff. While the president continued to have the final say on whether or not to approve these promotions, the military historically was able to circumvent this check by using the Supreme Military Council.³⁵

Sowing the Seeds of Irony 1990-1999

Changes as result of the 1980 intervention and the 1982 constitution brought order to Turkey at the cost of a more politically entrenched military. Cizre points out that after 1983, the military used legal, constitutional, historical, cultural, and structural mechanisms much more assertively in order to retain its privileged position in politics. This manifested itself in the

³³ Cizre, “The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Political Autonomy,” 160.

³⁴ Interview with Atilla Sandikli, President, BiLGESAM (Ret. COL.), Former Head of International Relations Dept., Turkish War College. Personal interview. 15 Mar. 2012.

³⁵ In 1976 and 1977 the Prime Minister, Süleyman Demirel, attempted to supersede the military's monopoly in deciding on the promotions for the force commanders positions. The first effort was overruled by the supreme military administrative court, while the second was rejected by the president, a former admiral. Cizre, “The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Political Autonomy,” 161-162.

issuing of demands, policy suggestions, and warnings on political matters, all of which typically came at the expense of non-military groups.³⁶

New threats to the military's position emerged in 1990 when the Cold War came to an end. The bipolar competition between the US and USSR had cultivated a climate of competing ideologies in which battle lines had been drawn. Aligning with one of the great powers, in Turkey's case, was not optional. Other regional concerns, or worrying illiberal behavior on Turkey's part, were subsumed into the greater and more threatening conflict by the US and its allies. The absence of that conflict, however, created a multitude of new opportunities for independent state action. Consequently, the alliance structures of the Cold War, in the eyes of some, were outmoded concepts that needed to justify their continued relevance. The military's vaulted position in Turkey, in many ways, was justified by the ever-looming specter of a confrontation with the USSR³⁷ As a result, the West, the US, and, to a lesser extent, the Turkish citizenry, tolerated the undemocratic, interventionist behavior of the military.

The conclusion of the Cold War was a watershed moment for the Turkish military. In the absence of an overarching Soviet threat, disagreement emerged over what Turkey's new strategic priorities ought to be. Within the military, some generals argued that the military needed to reassess its goals and alliance assumptions; others pushed for a continuation of current policies. A schism developed within the military. The bifurcated Turkish military was characterized by two loosely defined ideological camps: Atlanticists, who believed in the importance of close cooperation with the West—namely the US—as well as the continued relevance of NATO, and Eurasianists, who advocated for a reorientation of Turkish security and foreign policy toward

³⁶ Cizre, "The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Political Autonomy," 153.

³⁷ "An Address by Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey." The George Washington University, Washington, DC. 9 Feb. 2012.

Russia, Iran, and China.³⁸ For the 1990s, however, the debate over Turkey's strategic posture went on behind closed doors while the military continued to behave monolithically and present a united front to its civilian partners.

It is unlikely that without the end of the Cold War a divide within the military would have ever fully materialized. Once it did, however, events shortly after the collapse of the USSR helped cement the schism and ensure that it would become a lasting feature of the Turkish military. Following the Gulf War, the US's decision to afford the Kurds in northern Iraq a no-fly zone troubled many in the highest military circles. The protection provided by the US allowed the Kurds to establish a semi-autonomous power center; some within the military worried that Turkey's Kurds would draw inspiration from the Kurds in northern Iraq and advocate for similar autonomy. Eurasianists in particular believed that a continuation of US support for the Kurds would lead to major problems inside Turkey's borders.

Disagreement over the orientation of Turkey's grand strategy did not affect the military's view of its perceived rightful position in politics, however. It continued to regard itself as the steward of the Turkish state, responsible for ensuring its strong and secular nature. Not surprisingly then, the period of the 1990s troubled the military deeply. Deregulation and privatization had led to impressive infrastructure growth, but living standards for a majority of the Turkish people had fallen and the gap between the rich and poor continued to grow wider.³⁹ Growth across all sectors of the economy was vastly uneven and volatile at times. Öniş points out that periods of high growth were followed by periodic economic crises which pulled the average rate of growth down by a significant margin.⁴⁰ Public trust in the civilian government

³⁸ A more thorough discussion of the Atlanticist-Eurasianist divide accompanies the analysis focusing on developments in Turkish civil-military relations since 1999.

³⁹ Salt, Jeremy. "Turkey's Military 'Democracy,'" 73.

⁴⁰ Öniş. "Crises and Transformations in Turkish Political Economy" 46.

declined just as it had prior to the 1980 coup. As a result, the center-right and the center-left each began to cede votes to the newly popular Refah Party. The party, although Islamist, ran on a democratic platform of serving the electorate; indeed, they publicly noted that “that democracy and pluralism preclude the forcing of Islamic precepts on people.”⁴¹ Their success at the polls had a great deal more to do with their ability to capitalize on the mismanagement of previous governments than it did with their Islamic identity.

Jeremy Salt argues that it was the military’s fear of what actions Refah might take in the future that prompted it to act against the party.⁴² Statements made by Necmettin Erbakan, at the time prime minister, made the military extremely uncomfortable: “It should never be forgotten that democracy is a means, not an end. The real end is the creation of a felicitous order (*saadet nizami*).”⁴³ Given Refah’s Islamist identity, and the military’s staunchly secular one, the prospect of an unknown “felicitous order” was extremely disconcerting. It was common for the claim to be made that Islamist parties in Turkey would use the democratic process to come to power and subsequently “Islamicize” the state, thereby dismantling the democratic system to which they owed their power in the first place. This allegation remains popular today in certain circles.

Refah’s popularity did little to insulate it from the military, however. In some ways, however, Refah could not have been expected to repel the military’s influence. On February 28, 1997, the military issued a memorandum forcing Erbakan and the coalition government led by Refah from power. The ease with which the generals were able to execute the “postmodern coup,” and the number of angles from which they pressured the civilian government, evidences the

⁴¹ Zubaida, Sami. "Turkish Islam and National Identity." *Middle East Report* (June 1996), 12.

⁴² Salt, Jeremy. "Turkey's Military 'Democracy,'" 72.

⁴³ Güllalp, Haldun. "Islamist Party Poised for National Power in Turkey." *Middle East Report* (May-June/July-August 1995).

degree to which the military had entrenched itself within the Turkish political system. Even before Erbakan succumbed to the pressure to resign, his party was fighting the militarily controlled constitutional court for its survival: Refah was alleged to be in violation of articles 68 and 69 of the constitution, which affirm the secular nature of the republic.⁴⁴ Moreover, when Refah did finally abdicate power, the military's influence was substantial enough that they were able to facilitate party members' exit from politics without suspending either the constitution or the parliament. The Refah party was subsequently disbanded and, true to the form of previous interventions, a series of politicians were banned from politics. Amongst the victims of the post-coup fallout was the Mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who was arrested for reciting an Islamic poem and subsequently banned from politics for life.

While many challenges to the military's predominance emerged during the 20th century, it was ultimately able to effectively mitigate these threats and exert its influence by adapting preexisting mechanisms and engineering new ones. The most successful of these was perhaps development and expansion of MGK powers, which gave the military a versatile vantage point from which to monitor and cow the civilian government. Legal and constitutional changes compounded this power and over time with each successive intervention the military began to build a historical legacy for involvement in politics. By the close of the 20th Century, there were few questions by Turks or outside observers about the military's political power and their willingness to defend it.

DIVIDING AND CONQUERING THE PASHAS

The preceding analysis has sought to outline the theoretical framework which will be used to structure and analyze changes to the civil-military balance of control. Similarly, it has worked to provide the context necessary for situating recent changes within the greater historical

⁴⁴ Salt, Jeremy. "Turkey's Military 'Democracy,'" 76.

spectrum of Turkish civil-military relations. The following analysis shows that there were three major turning points in the balance of control since the military's last successful intervention in 1997: the first occurred in 1999 when Turkey became a candidate for European Union (EU) membership; the second in 2003, when Turkey denied the US staging grounds for the Iraq War; and the third in 2007, when the military launched its ill-fated "E-coup." These three events represent progressive shifts along a greater continuum of subjective control in which the military has seen its political power steadily recede in comparison to the civilians. At present, the military is the unquestioned junior partner in the Turkish civil-military relationship.

This continuum model, combined with recent events, suggests one of two outcomes: a continued resistance to objective control by the military, and thus the continuation of a politically involved officer corps; or, an intensification of subjective civilian control in which the military becomes increasingly politicized and cowed by the civilian government. This outcome would also correspond to a shrinking of the military's own political power. Each scenario has potential negative implications on Turkey's national security. Based on the following analysis, we conclude that the latter outcome—an intensification of subjective civilian control and thus a politicization of the military—is more likely. This analysis concludes with a discussion of the potential ramifications of this outcome.

Turkey's Subjective Evolution

Huntington's framework presents the pattern of civilian control as one of the primary independent variables which explains the dependent variable of military professionalism. As previously noted, subjective control of the military manifests itself in many forms; objective control exists in only one form. Because subjective control presupposes the military's involvement (and therefore strength) in politics, changes in the form of control, symbolized as

($A \rightarrow B$), or quality of control ($B_1 \rightarrow B_2$), always correspond to shifts in the relative political strength of one or both partners in the civil-military relationship vis-à-vis one another. Changes between forms ($A \rightarrow B$) denote a change in the type of control mechanisms that characterize a subjective form (e.g. a shift from legislative reforms to arrests and investigations). Changes in quality denote changes in the relative intensity of those control mechanisms (e.g. increasingly serious reforms of major constitutional articles).

Finally, it must be noted that if one of the partners in the civil-military relationship becomes internally divided in some way, particularly the military, it commands less power than it did when it was united by virtue of the fact that it now must share its power with its divided element. Making judgments about the relative strength of one element versus the other can be difficult in the early stages of division. Militaries, by their organizational nature, are naturally opaque. If the military succeeds in publicly presenting itself as united and monolithic, then it may be able to forestall an accurate judgment being made. Over time, however, the division typically begins to bear itself out in observable ways, which allow relative strength assessments to be made.

The historical evolution of this relationship in Turkey illustrates these assertions well; the relationship between the civilians and the military has fluctuated considerably since 1990, and in particular since the European Council's 1999 Helsinki meeting when Turkey won candidacy for accession to the EU. Figure A – Progression of Relative Political Strength (page 33) provides a table representation of the respective shifts in aggregate political power between the Turkish military and civilians between 1923 and the present. Figure B – Continuum of Turkish Subjective (page 44) provides a linear timeline model of these fluctuations. From the period of the Republic's founding through the end of the Cold War in 1990, a particular form of subjective

control, Subjective A (SUB A) accounted for the civil-military relationship. This was characterized by a strong and politically involved military which was the dominant partner in the civil-military relationship. As mentioned, the leadership of Atatürk, and the institutional framework designed by him and his allies, helped assure this balance of power.

As the military grew stronger from 1923 through the successive coups of 1960, 1971, and 1980, it solidified its control and built a legacy of being politically invested. True to Huntington’s observation, civilian control weakened as the military became more intimately involved in institutional, class, and constitutional politics beyond the purview of its military mission.⁴⁵ Thus, despite changes of civilian governments, the emergence of a multiparty system in 1946, and the growth of an increasingly complex Turkish polity—all factors which have historically contributed to a state’s democratization—the military retained its dominant position in the civil-military relationship and a singular form of subjective control was maintained.

Figure A – Progression of Relative Political Strength			
<u>1923-1990</u>	<u>1990-2003</u>	<u>2003-2007</u>	<u>2007-Present</u>
M c	M ₁ M ₂ c	M ₁ m ₂ C	m ₁ m ₂ C
SUB A	SUB A (1990-1999) SUB B (1999-2003)	SUB B ₁ SUB C	SUB B ₂ SUB C ₁
M – Strong Military m – Weak Military	1 /  – Atlanticists 2 /  – Eurasianists	C – Strong Civilian Government c – Weak Civilian Government	
NB: This model makes relational strength assessments. E.g. the strength of the military relative to the civilian government and the strength of the civilian government relative to the military.			

⁴⁵ Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, 84.

Through the Cold War, and in particular during the 1980s when the military arguably enjoyed its most privileged position in politics, the national security debate had focused on how to best contain the threat of Communism. The military viewed the left and leftist influences as a serious threat to the Republic. With the demise of the USSR, however, disaffected leftists sought a new direction and began to embrace anti-imperialism.⁴⁶ Many eventually found cause in an anti-imperialist, nationalist conception of national identity which emphasized a focus on national security. Thus, whereas “prior to 1990 the military had considered communism, and thus the left, one of the gravest threats to the Republic, the shift towards securitization drew the interests of the military closer to those on the left.”⁴⁷ This, coupled with a disagreement on fundamental strategy, split the military’s monolithic identity.

Those in the military who aligned most closely with this new brand of Turkish nationalism would ultimately rise to become Turkey’s Eurasianists. This group emphasized the importance of Russia, Iran, and China and had long held an animus towards the US for what they believed to be an American exploitation of Turkey. US interests, substantiated and tolerated due to the Cold War, were coming at the expense of Turkey’s interests; in the absence of the overarching conflict, it was now time to reevaluate Turkey’s strategic priorities. To that end, Eurasianists believed that a large military, autonomous from the US, would serve as a tool for engaging these new priorities. Turkey would be free to pursue its own interests without a reliance on the US, which had so long curtailed Turkey’s ability to realize its own ambition. Such a military would simultaneously be a symbolic embodiment of Turkish nationalism as well. In many ways, this was an ideologically traditional view of the armed forces; it fit well with the founding principles of the military and its corporate view of itself.

⁴⁶ Grigoriadis, Ioannis N., and Irmak Özer. "Mutations of Turkish Nationalism: From Neo-nationalism to the Ergenekon Affair." Middle East Policy Council. Web. 5 Mar. 2012. <<http://bit.ly/HWCx7x>>.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

In contrast, Atlanticists, believed that close, continued cooperation with the US—and a transformation of the Turkish armed forces—would best serve Turkey’s interests. They pointed to the experience of the Gulf War, which had demonstrated the capabilities of a smaller, technologically advanced force which relied on the promise of air power. They argued that maintaining the Turkish armed forces at 1991 levels (600,000 regular members and almost 500,000 conscripts performing mandatory service) would be “unexplainable, if not entirely illogical” following the experience of the Gulf War.⁴⁸ Securing the weapons and technology needed to wage that type of war, however, necessitated maintaining close ties with the West ties that had been fostered for most of Turkey’s modern history.

Several important distinctions must be made regarding these two groups. First, both groups held—and continue to hold—a shared mentality of insularity from the system. Despite their strategic differences, both Atlanticists and Eurasianists considered themselves above the reprove of the civilian government. Second, evidence suggests that some individuals flirted with both groups; thus, there is not a clear or hard and fast line dividing the two camps.

With this in mind, Atlanticists should not be viewed as a cohesive group that held meetings, planned actions, or coordinated strategy. They are better understood as an amalgamation of like-minded officers whose common interests were expressed through the statements and actions of individual generals. As the forthcoming analysis will demonstrate, this quality often inhibited their ability to advance their agenda against the Eurasianist elements of the military to the fullest extent possible. The behavior of the Eurasianists, by contrast, suggests that they were more astutely aware of each others’ intentions, interests, and opinions, and as a result behaved as bloc within the military, albeit not an entirely cohesive one. Evidence also suggests that Eurasianist elements coordinated on issues of strategy as well.

⁴⁸ Hale, William M. *Turkish Politics and the Military*. London U.A.: Routledge, 2006, 291-292

Setting the Stage for Conquest

Calls for rights and reforms, primarily economic ones, began to emerge in the wake of the perceived “liberal capitalist triumph over authoritarianism.” As a result, the European Union became an increasingly attractive option for Turks. Although Turkey had first concluded an association agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1963, years of economic instability had prevented Turkey from securing full membership; as late as 1987 Turkey saw its application for full EEC status rejected. However, following Turkey’s Customs Union Agreement with the EU in 1996, and after several years of cautious economic growth, the country was awarded candidacy for membership to the EU in 1999.

Turkey’s candidacy was a seminal moment and a great achievement for the country. It also marked a new phase in subjective control of the military. Until 1999, although bifurcated between Atlanticists and Eurasianists, the military continued to behave publically as a cohesive political actor within Turkish politics.⁴⁹ The 1997 postmodern coup supports this claim. Additionally, both elements of the military received the same treatment by its civilian partners in government. Subjective control thus remained unchanged at SUB A. The introduction of the Copenhagen reforms however began to produce a shift. The criteria listed the political, economic, and social standards Turkey would need to meet if it hoped to become an eventual EU member. The criteria became the new benchmark for policy since accession talks would not begin until Turkey was in full compliance.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ "Interview with Atilla Sandikli, President, BiLGESAM (Ret. COL.), Head of International Relations Dept., Turkish War College." Personal interview. 15 Mar. 2012.

⁵⁰ The criterion is drawn from the Conclusions of the Presidency following the European Commission’s 1993 meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark. A full copy can be found in *Conclusions of the Presidency - Copenhagen European Council - 21-22 June 1993*. Publication. Copenhagen, 1993. European Commission. <http://bit.ly/HGusJH>. The document outlines prerequisite standards for membership eligibility including “institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.

The EU also formally demanded Turkey make reforms to its civil-military balance of control. A politically involved military was anathema to the liberal democratic norms of the EU, and if Turkey was serious about membership, it would need to curb the influence of its military in politics. As a result, the civilian government slowly began to dismantle the military's mechanisms of control in the name of satisfying the EU's Copenhagen criteria. Some changes began almost immediately. As early as June 1999, Article 143 of the Constitution replaced the military judge in the State Security Courts with a civilian.⁵¹

Despite early successes, poor economic performance limited further progress. Years of statist economic policies that pushed for rapid growth through the expansion of the public sector—a strategy favored by the military because it served as the principle mechanism for constructing and consolidating a broad right-of-center coalition, which supported the military—had wrought chronic inflation, fiscal deficits, high levels of macroeconomic instability, and a banking sector which, ravaged by government debt, was heavily dependent on short-term borrowed funds.⁵²

Turgut Özal's government had made admirable gains in privatization, liberalizing Turkey's markets, and encouraging export-led growth during the 1980s, but the lasting effects proved incapable of staving off Turkey's other economic woes—particularly its macroeconomic instability. In November, 2000, Turkey's IMF-sponsored structural adjustment program fell apart in the face of mounting economic pressures. In a matter of days, interest rates soared, billions of dollars fled the country, and Ankara was faced with exceptionally high costs to

Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.”

⁵¹ Sarigil, Zeki. "The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent?" *Armed Forces and Society* (Forthcoming).

⁵² Heper, Metin. *Strong State and Economic Interest Groups: The Post-1980 Turkish Experience*. Berlin: Gruyter, 1991, 35.

borrow from abroad. Such an economic climate was precisely the type of situation Turkey needed to avoid if it was to be taken seriously as a candidate for EU membership.

As history has demonstrated, new parties in Turkish politics have often grounded their platforms atop the mismanagement of previous governments. In the wake of Turkey's economic crisis, the Islamist leaning Justice and Development Party (AK Party) swept the November, 2002 elections after presenting itself to wide segments of Turkish society as a "progressive force that could come to terms with the positive aspect of economic globalization based on active participation and competition in the global market."⁵³ In an impressive show of political power, the AK Party won an outright majority in parliament—34.3% of the vote (363 seats out of a possible 550 seats)—thus eliminating the need to form a coalition.

The AK Party put forward a platform which emphasized the importance of the Copenhagen reform process as well as market reform, social justice, and the extension of individual rights and freedoms. History also, it would seem, is not without a sense of irony. It has been suggested that the military's 1997 intervention into politics inadvertently fomented the rise of the AK Party. Many of the party's leaders had been Refah members in the 1990s. They had watched the experience of the 1997 post-modern coup closely and planned their strategy carefully as a result. The group of pragmatic men who returned to politics with the AK Party engineered a more effective political strategy which deemphasized its Islamist underpinnings. "They emerged as victors, something that the generals did not intend. The [AK Party] is the most important unintended legacy of the intervention."⁵⁴ Adding insult to injury for the military was the fact that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the same Refah mayor of Istanbul that had been banned from politics for life, was elected prime minister shortly after the AK Party's rise to power.

⁵³ Öhis and Senses. *Turkey and the Global Economy*, 4.

⁵⁴ Yinanç, Barçın. "Feb 28 Coup Unintentionally Spawned AKP, Says Academic." *Hürriyet Daily News*. 21 Apr. 2012. <http://bit.ly/I0tPsB>.

This new group of leaders set about making important revisions to the party's image. In order to distinguish itself from previous Islamist parties, the AK Party reengineered its "political image, discourse, and membership and transformed—rhetorically and practically—its ideology in such a manner that reassured both the people and the bureaucratic elite of its trustworthiness."⁵⁵ As Ziya Oniş and Fikret Şenses point out, "compared to its rivals, the party appeared to be forward-looking and reformist in its approach, aiming to come to grips with the forces of globalization meaning capitalizing on its material benefits whilst aiming to correct some of its negative consequences at the same time."⁵⁶ Upon entering office, the lynchpin of the AK Party's strategy became the Copenhagen reform process.

The AK Party's promises began to bear fruit almost immediately. From 2002-2008, Turkey experienced an annual GDP growth rate of 5.94 percent per year.⁵⁷ Exports grew from \$36 billion in 2002 to \$107 billion in 2007, an average annual growth of 15%, foreign direct investment soared, and foreign capital earnings increased dramatically.⁵⁸ Such positive indicators undergirded the public's confidence in the EU process as well as confidence in the AK Party itself. They also helped insulate the party from political reprisals by rivals and denied the military a justifiable reason to intervene, even if the AK Party's Islamist credentials were troubling to them. The military's stated reason for involving itself in politics had always been to protect the nation's security or secular credentials. Unseating the AK Party, although perhaps in keeping with this prerogative, would have come at the expense of the economic growth that so

⁵⁵ Yıldız, Ahmet. "Problematizing the Intellectual and Political Vestiges: From 'Welfare' to 'Justice and Development'" *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey: The Making of the Justice and Development Party*. Ed. Ümit Cizre. New York: Routledge, 2008, 41.

⁵⁶ Oniş and Şenses. *Turkey and the Global Economy*, 4.

⁵⁷ International Monetary Fund. *World Economic Outlook Database, April 2011*

⁵⁸ Akyuz, Abdullah. "Political Economy of Turkey: In Search of Stability Amid Domestic and Global Crises." *Center on the United States and Europe - Brookings Institution*, March 16, 2009.

many Turks were benefiting from and thus would have been widely unpopular. In short, the military's hands had been tied.

Subjective Shifts on the Heels of Copenhagen

As previously noted the Copenhagen reforms began to limit the military's political power and started a process of downgrading its status as the dominant partner in the civil military relationship. This new phase marks the first qualitative shift in subjective control between the civilians the military. Subjective B (SUB B), as it is termed, extended from 1999 until 2003 and was characterized most notably by changes to the role of Turkey's National Security Council, the *Milli Güvenlik Kurulu* (MGK).⁵⁹ Changes to the constitution in Article 118, for example, emphasized the advisory nature of the MGK, increased the number of civilian members to four, and downgraded the priority of the council's decisions.⁶⁰

Other societal changes occurred parallel to these political reforms. The Turkish public had grown increasingly complex and connected to the globalized world. New public interests—exemplified in the Copenhagen criteria—began to emerge and receive the support of Turkish citizens. As economic growth continued, new opportunities emerged and people began to pursue business and use the free market as a means of improving their social standing. Prior to this phase, the military had been a primary ladder for social advancement; those seeking and education or a prestigious profession, but who otherwise lacked the financial means to secure one, entered into service.⁶¹ Alternatives to this option now existed and Turks were availing themselves of them.⁶²

⁵⁹ A full spectrum table and analysis of the constitutional and legal reforms implemented is available in Zeki Sarigil's forthcoming article "The Turkish Military: Principle or Agent?" Sarigil, Zeki. "The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent?" *Armed Forces and Society* (Forthcoming). Referenced with author's permission.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Mehmet Ali Birand provides a comprehensive analysis of the Turkish military as a vehicle of social advancement in *Shirts of Steel*. He details the process through which young boys are taken from their homes, trained in military schools, and thrust into an "honorable profession." The military's promise of a better life increased its prestige

In November, 1999, parliament approved a bill reflecting these sentiments. Under the temporary law, called the Military Exemption Tax, those who were born before January 1, 1973 or were 26 years of age or older would be able to avoid military service (except for basic training) by paying a “tax” the 1999 equivalent of \$8,000 USD.⁶³ The passing of the bill in parliament was motivated in part by the government’s need to generate funds to respond to a devastating earthquake which had just struck the country, but the fact that the bill, which dictated military recruitment policies, was even considered in the first place is significant in of itself. Perhaps unwittingly, the bill also complimented prevailing attitudes that the military was not the only path to a better life. Indeed, the bill inadvertently helped spread the attitude by introducing the idea publicly to those who may have previously been unaware. Upon passing, approximately 72,290 individuals took advantage of the opportunity.⁶⁴

As popular public support of the government grew, along with the belief that the EU process was best for the nation, so did the attitude that a politically involved military was “at best anachronistic and at worse incongruent with the [government’s] commitment to the norms associated with liberal democracy and free market capitalism.”⁶⁵ In that same democratic spirit, two months later in December, 1999, the 1913 Ottoman Civil Servants Law was repealed, thus ensuring that members of the military and security forces would be held accountable for human rights violations.⁶⁶

among large swaths of the population and ensured continued support for the military both politically and as a trusted institution of the state. Birand, Mehmet A. *Shirts of Steel: An Anatomy of the Turkish Armed Forces*. London: Tauris, 1991

⁶² "Interview with Nihat Ali Ozcan, Foreign Policy Studies Fellow, TEPAV." Personal interview. 13 Mar. 2012.

⁶³ "Turkey: Possibilities of Exemption from Military Service; Possibility of Deferral of Military Service for Studies." Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 8 June 2000. 19 Apr. 2012. <http://bit.ly/Jd9tMw>.

⁶⁴ Haber, Yeni. "Bedelli Askerlikten Kaç Kişi Yararlandı? [How Many People Have Benefited from the Military Exemption Tax?]." *Sabah (Turkish)*. 22 Nov. 2011. 19 Apr. 2012. <http://bit.ly/JselwI>.

⁶⁵ Cizre, "The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Political Autonomy," 151.

⁶⁶ Sarigil, Zeki. "The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent?"

The active variable in the shift from SUB A to SUB B was the Copenhagen reform process; the AK Party was secondary to the EU process. Although the AK Party maintained a strong, dominant position in the parliament, and was thus able to overcome some the challenges that had hamstrung previously weak, factionalized, coalition governments, without the Copenhagen criteria present to provide political cover from the military, it is highly unlikely that the AK Party would have been capable of accomplishing what it did with regards to rebalancing civil-military relations, particularly given its Islamist underpinnings. Several unique governments during the 1923-1999 SUB A era came to office through circumstances which were similar to the AK Party's in terms of promising better economic performance and more social freedoms. All later exited from power with no observable shift in subjective control; indeed, most saw a retrenchment of the military's continued control of the civil-military relationship.

When the reform package was introduced, it allowed the civilians to chip away at some of the military's long standing mechanisms of control in a manner that kept them politically insulated from both political rivals and the generals. A coup or intervention into politics aimed at protecting the military's political power would have been a major step backward for a Turkey with EU aspirations, and would have devastating effects on the economic growth that so many Turks were benefiting from. "If the military were to roll tanks into the street, or force the government from power, they would throw the Turkish economy into shock. This would be totally unpopular with the Turkish people."⁶⁷ Unlike previous interventions, there was no real excuse for interceding: Turkey's markets were growing, there were low levels of political violence, and citizens were happy with the economic benefits they were receiving.

Finally, it must be mentioned that while the shift from SUB A to SUB B began to curtail the military's power, in aggregate terms, the government remained the weaker partner relative to the

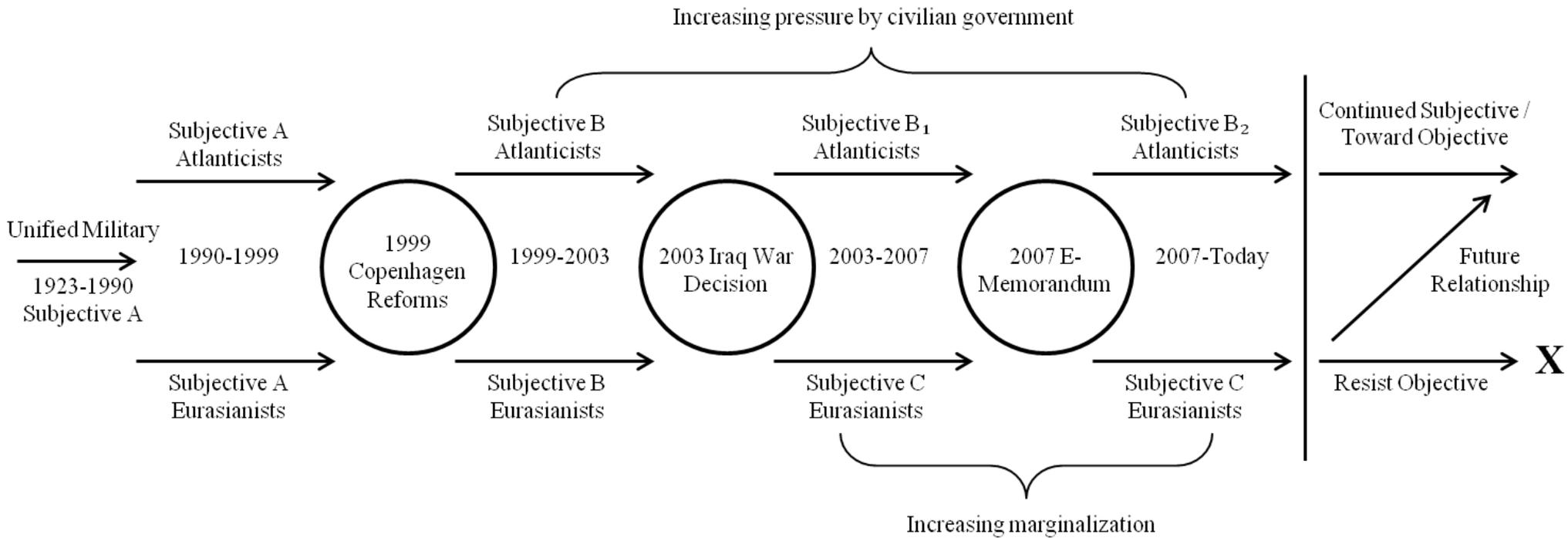
⁶⁷ "Interview with Ömer Taşpınar." Personal interview. October 31, 2011.

bifurcated military in the civil-military relationship. Atlanticists and Eurasianists, although internally divided, continued to lead and publicly present the military as a unified actor in Turkish politics. During this phase, the changes in subjective control were applied to the military as a whole institution; no distinction was made by Atlanticists or Eurasianists because there was no real evidential split from the perspective of the civilians. Finally, although the Copenhagen reforms began to erode their influence, the military retained some of its more powerful mechanisms of control. These include maintaining control of the MGK and its own budget, as well as the continued existence of Article 35—the “coup clause,” which provided the military with the legal authority to intervene into politics. These factors were important considerations in the military’s ability to ensure its own predominance and continued political power relative to the civilians.

A House Divided Revealed

The 2003 decision by the military and civilian government to refuse the United States access to northern Iraq from Turkey marked the next phase in the shifting dynamics of subjective control. Prior to then, the bifurcated military had received largely the same treatment at the hands of the civilians; similarly, despite being split between Atlanticists and Eurasianists, the military continued to behave as cohesive entity toward the civilians. Thus, both the Atlanticist and Eurasianist elements of the military were constant at SUB B. The 2003 decision is important because, for the first time, it publicly revealed the bifurcated nature of the military. The disagreement over Turkey’s strategic priorities, previously an in-house debate, spilled onto the Turkish political scene and as a result altered the dynamics of the civil-military relationship.

Figure B – Continuum of Turkish Subjective Control



subjective qualitative shift for Atlanticists (B → B₁).

In preparations for the invasion of Iraq, the US sent its Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Richard Myers, to Ankara with a proposal to send American troops through Turkey into northern Iraq. In a peculiar turn of events, the Chief of the General Staff, Hilmi Özkök, declined to grant the US permission. On February 28, 2003, the MGK convened to consider a proposal which would allow 62,000 US troops into Turkey as part of a force comprised of the 4th Infantry Division, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, 255 fixed wing and 65 rotary wing aircraft, unspecified special operations units, and combat support.⁶⁸ Breaking from the generals' traditional tendency, the MGK never issued its opinion, thus giving the civilian government "tacit approval" to come to a decision on its own.⁶⁹ On March 1, 2003, in a closed session of parliament, 264 MPs voted for the bill which would grant the US permission to launch operations into Iraq. 250 MPs voted against the bill while 19 MPs abstained.⁷⁰ Despite the majority "yay" vote, the required absolute majority of those present failed by four votes.

The incoming prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, was strongly in favor of the bill.⁷¹ He believed that strong ties with the West—particularly the US—were essential to insulating him and his party from coups by the military. Additionally, the strategy of economic development that had helped bring his party to power was contingent on the same ties. Cooperating with the US in security and foreign policy matters was thus an interdependent strategy that would help ensure the AK Party's ability to maintain power as well as promote economic growth. Opposition MPs viewed the issue differently. Deniz Baykal, leader of the

⁶⁸ Salmoni, Barack A. "Strategic Partners or Estranged Allies: Turkey, the United States, and Operation Iraqi Freedom." *Strategic Insights* 2.7 (2003). Naval Postgraduate School, July 2003. <http://bit.ly/I0fkDi>.

⁶⁹ "March 1, 2003: How to Explain the Turkish Foreign Policy Decision?" *The Journal of Turkish Weekly*. <http://bit.ly/JonOT9>.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Republican People's Party (CHP), was "strongly opposed to the bill as he considered its possible admission as being a part of the American plan of invading Iraq."⁷² Others opposed on the grounds of international legitimacy, calling the US invasion an abrogation of international law.

Observers were shocked when the MGK, headed by Gen. Hilmi Özkök, a known Atlanticist, convened to consider the issue and subsequently deferred to the civilian government. Most posit that Özkök, viewing strong ties to the US as essential to Turkey's security, but apprehensive about becoming involved militarily in a conflict with a southern neighbor, did not want to put the military in a position of having to decline the Americans.⁷³ Moreover, he also believed that a denial by the civilians would help discredit the AK Party in the eyes of the Americans and thus help eliminate a pillar of support for Erdoğan and his party. This would help denigrate the AK Party's political power without the military ever needing to take action; indeed, by not taking action Özkök, was able to claim that he was merely supporting the democratic process. Given the US domestic political environment at the time, this was not an unfair set of assumptions by Özkök; from the general's perspective, it was conceivable that the AK Party's Islamist credentials would be cited as reason for the government's lack of support for the invasion. In reality, Özkök would prove to have miscalculated: when the parliament defeated the bill it was the military, not the civilians, which drew the ire of the Americans, and the generals—including the Atlanticists—subsequently found themselves alienated from the Pentagon, which traditionally been their strongest external ally.⁷⁴

Worse yet for the generals, the civilians' decision to deny the US access to Iraq via Turkey brought the Atlanticist-Eurasianist divide within the military to the surface. Eurasianist elements within the military had opposed cooperating with the US in the first place and were

⁷² "March 1, 2003: How to Explain the Turkish Foreign Policy Decision?"

⁷³ "Interview with Deputy Political Counselor, US Embassy, Ankara." Personal interview. 12 Mar. 2012.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

infuriated with Özkök's deference to the civilians on a security matter they considered under their traditional purview.⁷⁵ From their perspective, Özkök and his allies had committed a double sin: they had abdicated their praetorian duties to the civilians, thus giving them a role in making security decisions which would be difficult to reclaim, while seeking to maintain a strategic relationship that was fundamentally misguided and outmoded.

These circumstances prompted a subjective mitosis in Turkey. Following 2003, the military assumed two distinct postures: one, the Atlanticists' (Subjective B₁ (SUB B₁)) was characterized by a more amicable, but by no means positive, relationship with civilians in which the military allowed the civilians to pursue its policies within certain bounds. In May, 2003 Özkök made his and the Atlanticists opinion clear when he "described the military's relationship with the Islamist-leaning [AK Party] government as harmonious, but at the same time made public declarations about the threat of regressive Islam and assured the public that the Turkish Forces would monitor any such developments with utmost diligence."⁷⁶ In summer 2003, then Vice-Chief of Staff General Yaşar Büyükanıt—also an Atlanticist—made it known that the military had prepared its opinions on the reform package that was being prepared and had submitted them to the government. He noted that "the government adopted only some of those recommendations, [but] upon Parliament's enactment of the reform packages into law it had become the duty of the military to comply with the new legislation."⁷⁷

Conversely, the Eurasianists (Subjective C (SUB C)) took a much more negative view of the civilians, and worked to contrast itself with the policies being pursued by the AK Party. The

⁷⁵ "Interview with Serhat Güvenç, Associate Professor, Kadir Has University." Personal interview. 16 Mar. 2012

⁷⁶ Aydın, Ersel. "Ergenekon, New Pacts and the Decline of the Turkish "Inner State"" Blikent University. <http://bit.ly/k4BIx1>.

⁷⁷ Heper, Metin. "The Justice and Development Party Government and the Military in Turkey." *Turkish Studies* 6.2 (2005): 215-31, 218.

group's opinion can be summed up with a statement made by General Tuncer Kılınç, a known Eurasianist:

Turkey absolutely needs to seek new alliances. In my opinion, the direction would be to seek an alliance with the Russian Federation, which would include Iran, without ignoring the United States if possible. Turkey has not received any help from the European Union. The European Union has negative approaches to the problems that concern Turkey.⁷⁸

By devaluing the utility of the EU, the Eurasianists attacked one of the most influential political issues that had helped facilitate the AK Party's rise to power. Kılınç's statement, a line in the sand between the Eurasianists and the civilians, was at best a critique of the AK Party's priorities; at worst, it was a warning to them.

Unlike the emergence of SUB B in 1999, the development of SUB B₁ and SUB C were consequences of the military's own actions—they were not the result of any specific action directed toward them by the civilians. The bifurcated nature of the military, which had now become public, led the Atlanticist and Eurasianist elements of the military to define their relationship with the civilians in different ways and in the process provoke different balances of control. SUB B₁ displayed a more favorable attitude to cooperating with the civilians, who shared similar perspectives on the importance of ties to the West, and enjoyed a greater amount of leverage with the government as a result. SUB C reflected genuine disapproval with the civilians and a severe reluctance to work with them. As their leverage vis-à-vis the Atlanticists and the civilians diminished, so did their respective share of the military's political power.

Over time, the civilians would begin to regard these elements within the military differently as well. From 2003 through 2007, however, the government continued its campaign to curtail the military's political power—again, in the name of satisfying the Copenhagen

⁷⁸ Gürgen, Murat. "Orgeneral Kılınç: Avrupa Bize Uymaz (General Kılınç: Europe Is Not for Us)." *Radikal Online*. 8 Mar. 2002. <http://bit.ly/HVa3Qe>.

criteria—relatively even handedly, despite the public split within the military. Further legislative reforms aimed at again limiting the MGK’s power were introduced. The executive powers of the MGK’s secretary general were eliminated and the council itself was reduced to an “advisory/consultative body.” Most telling of all, however, was the provision that the council must be headed by a civilian nominated by the prime minister and appointed by the president.⁷⁹ The EU, in its 2004 progress report, hailed this as an important achievement for Turkey and its attempts to rebalance its civil-military relations:

The duties, powers and functioning of the National Security Council (NSC) have been substantially amended, bringing the framework of civil-military relations closer to practice in EU Member States. The role of the Secretary General of the NSC has been reviewed and its executive powers have been abolished.⁸⁰

The MGK’s access to any public agency was also erased and frequency of meetings was reduced from once monthly to once bi-monthly. The civilians also moved to eliminate state security courts. Except in unique circumstances, military courts were no longer permitted to prosecute civilians in peaceful times.⁸¹ Additionally, although the legislature still did not play a full role in formulating and reviewing the military’s budget, the TGNA did succeed in establishing parliamentary audit power of the military’s properties.⁸²

These reforms further dismantled the military’s mechanisms of control over the civilian government. For the first time since 1923, the military—albeit a bifurcated one—faced a strong civilian partner in terms of relative strength. The AK Party’s strength, evidenced in its sweeping of the 2004 local elections with 42% of the vote, was mostly owed to its effective management of the Turkish economy and the perception amongst the public that Turkey was making positive

⁷⁹ The European Union. *2004 Regular Report on Turkey’s Progress towards Accession*. Commission of the European Communities, 6 Oct. 2004. <http://bit.ly/HZMPIO>.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Sarigil, Zeki. "The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent?"

⁸² Ibid.

strides toward EU membership. Ironically, however, the military's inability to resolve its ideological differences internally inhibited its ability respond cohesively to the civilians' reform of the civil-military relationship in Turkey. As a result, the government was able to further capitalize on its political strength relative to the military's.

An E-Compromise

In 2007, a final phase in Turkey's subjective control continuum began: Subjective B₂ (SUB B₂). Hilmi Özkök's tenure as chief of staff had ended and in 2006 his vice-chief, Yaşar Büyükanıt—the same general who had made public statements in 2003 about the military's need to comply with new legislation—assumed control of the position. A year into his post, tensions in the civil-military relationship—already heightened—began to rise further. Concerns were growing that the AK Party would attempt to put forth an Islamist candidate, ostensibly Abdullah Gül, whose wife wears the Islamic headscarf, for the position of the presidency. No overtly Islamic individual had ever before held the secular post of President. In response, Büyükanıt issued a statement saying that “the military must concern itself with the presidential election as the president of the Republic is also the Commander in Chief of the Turkish Armed Forces.” He continued to say that he “*hoped* that someone who is loyal to the main principles of the republic and committed to the secular, unitary structure of the state, not just in words, but in essence, will be the president.”⁸³

Given Büyükanıt's previous assertions regarding the military's need to respect new legislation and reforms, his statement is better viewed as an expression of concern over an openly Islamic individual assuming the presidency than as an explicit warning of intervention, except perhaps in response to any formal changes to the Republic. Regardless of Büyükanıt's

⁸³ Toktas, Şule, and Ümit Kurt. "The Turkish Military's Autonomy, JDP Rule and the EU Reform Process in the 2000s: An Assessment of the Turkish Version of Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DECAF)." *Turkish Studies* 11.3 (2010), 394.

true intent, the government moved ahead with its plans and on April 24, 2007 Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announced that the AK Party intended to nominate Gül for the presidency.

On April 27, 2007, in response to Gül's nomination, the military posted a message to its website emphasizing the sanctity of secularism and the military's willingness to protect it:

Turkish Armed Forces are concerned about the recent situation. It should not be forgotten that the Turkish Armed Forces are a party in those arguments, and absolute defender of secularism. The Turkish Armed Forces is definitely opposed to those arguments and negative comments. It will display its attitude and action openly and clearly whenever it is necessary. Those who are opposed to Great Leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's understanding of how happy is the one who says 'I am a Turk' are enemies of the Republic of Turkey and will remain so. The Turkish Armed Forces maintain their sound determination to carry out their duties stemming from laws to protect the unchangeable characteristics of the Republic of Turkey. Their loyalty to this determination is absolute.⁸⁴

The "E-Coup," as it subsequently became known, ultimately failed to prevent Gül from being elected president. After a brief delay, he was sworn in as president on August 28, 2007 in a ceremony boycotted by both the military and the CHP, the main opposition party at the time.

The military's failure to prevent Gül from assuming the presidency underscored several important points about its position in politics. First, the method is telling. Unlike previous interventions—including the 1997 coup by memorandum, which although peaceful still saw the mobilization of troops—the military took no actionable steps to unseat Gül or the government. This reluctance to act reflects the military's acknowledgement of the effects an intervention would have on Turkey's EU prospects as well as how logistically difficult it would be to execute a successful coup. Controlling the lines of communication and broadcast centers, for example, was an enormously more complicated task in 2007 than it was in 1960, 1971, 1980, or 1997.

Their failure to follow through also indicates a level of uncertainty about whether or not lower ranking officers could be expected to execute the commands of the generals. Not only was

⁸⁴ "Excerpts of Turkish Army Statement." BBC News, 28 Apr. 2007. <http://bbc.in/ITZFDy>.

the military politically bifurcated between Atlanticists and Eurasianists, there was fear of a generational divide between higher and lower ranking officers which raised doubts about the internal obedience of the military.⁸⁵ Consequently, it appears likely that the military's Atlanticists and Eurasianists found commonality on how to respond: an E-Coup. Atlanticists could not afford to be viewed as lacking secular credentials, and despite finding some common cause with the civilians' strategic priorities, a staunch Kemalist ideology was still at the heart of their institutional identity. Moreover, by virtue of their amalgamated nature, they struggled to project an alternative to the Eurasianists, who perceived a genuine existential threat in Gül's nomination and who felt strongly about the need to respond. A classic coup which lacked unanimous support within the ranks, however, could at best result in an embarrassing fiasco for the military; at worst, it could be a politically disastrous event. Thus, a compromise—ultimately an ill-fated one—was born between the two loosely defined groups.

The E-Coup was regarded by much of Turkish society as an “excessive and inappropriate move” by the military. Moreover, the failed attempt strengthened the position of the civilians vis-à-vis the military. Not only did it showcase the military's loss of relative political power, it cast them as an institution which was an anathema to the process of reform Turkey was undergoing in order to meet EU standards of admission. The AK Party quickly capitalized on the military's miscalculation:

The government seized the opportunity of having been ‘victimized’ by the military via the e-coup attempt, and promptly called for elections, in a sense asking the society to judge its performance and the military's intervention discourse. The AKP gained 46.6% of the votes—a remarkable result by Turkish electoral standards—and fairly concrete evidence of the Turkish society demonstrating its growing opposition to the military's involvement in politics.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ "Interview with Ilter Turan, Professor, Bilgi University." Personal interview. 19 Mar. 2012

⁸⁶ Aydınli, "Ergenekon, New Pacts and the Decline of the Turkish "Inner State,"" 5.

The military was delivered a second blow by the EU when its Commissioner for Enlargement, Olli Rehn, stated that “the military should be aware that it should not interfere in the democratic process in a country which desires to become an EU member...It is important that the military respects the rules of democracy and its own role in that democratic regime.”⁸⁷

The general’s 2007 bumbling of the E-Coup further cemented the Atlanticist-Eurasianist split within the military, but also led to an increased marginalization of the Eurasianist elements who had favored an intervention in the first place. As Aydınli notes, the infeasibility of the Eurasianists’ preferred method—confirmed by the E-Coup’s failure and the strong public backlash to it—helped strengthen the Atlanticists’ hand relative to the Eurasianists. In the wake of the election, Büyükanıt and other Atlanticists seemed to attempt to capitalize on this by making statements about the government and Gül’s election which were generally cooperative.⁸⁸ In the public’s eyes, however, the generals had gone too far and in doing so had alienated themselves from three different segments of society simultaneously: those who were pro-government and pro-AK Party, for their unwillingness to cooperate with the civilians; those who were staunchly secular, for their inability to have prevented the rise of the AK Party; and those who were pro-business, for their continued involvement in Turkish markets through military owned corporations which were restricting profits they might otherwise be making.⁸⁹

The shifts that occurred in the civil-military balance of control as a result of 2007’s events, both the E-Coup and the AK Party’s impressive victory in parliament, led to a new phase in subjective control which continues through today: Subjective B₂ (SUB B₂) and Subjective C₁ (SUB C₁). SUB B₂, applied to Atlanticists, is characterized by even less involvement of

⁸⁷ Toktas, Şule, and Ümit Kurt. "The Turkish Military’s Autonomy, JDP Rule and the EU Reform Process in the 2000s: An Assessment of the Turkish Version of Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DECAF)." *Turkish Studies* 11.3 (2010), 395.

⁸⁸ Aydınli, "Ergenekon, New Pacts and the Decline of the Turkish "Inner State,"" 5.

⁸⁹ Interview with Serhat Güvenç, Associate Professor, Kadir Has University." Personal interview. 16 Mar. 2012

Atlanticist elements in politics. SUB C₁, applied to the Eurasianists, was characterized by a continued interest in politics, but a further loss in the capability to exert influence. The civilian government also repostured itself towards the Eurasianist, beginning to actively marginalize them.

Following this shift, additional steps to corral the military's power were taken: the secret Protocol on Cooperation for Security and Public Order, which permitted domestic military and intelligence operations without oversight, was repealed; additional oversight of the military's budget was established; and Article 125 permitted appeals of decisions rendered by the Supreme Military Council.⁹⁰ The EU's Turkey 2011 Progress report, in its review of civil-military reforms, noted that for the first time ever, President Gül briefed the Speaker of Parliament and the leader of the main opposition party about the content of the MGK's August meeting.⁹¹

Most recently, in a symbolic gesture, the military unit that was stationed on the grounds of the parliament was removed. The civilians had attempted to have it removed in 2005, but encountering fierce resistance from the military, the proposal was dropped. Although inconsequential in terms of having a material effect on the military's political power, the civilian's ability to see the change through in 2011 is an indicator how their power had increased relative to the military's. Upon learning of the proposal in 2005, the General Staff condemned the AK Party and the bill, calling it an "attempt to banish the Turkish Armed Forces, first from sight and then from the heart of the Turkish nation."⁹² In December 2011, the military stayed silent as the unit was removed. The next day, parliament passed a bill allowing eligible men to opt out of compulsory military service in exchange for 30,000 Turkish Lira (TL) (\$16,700).

⁹⁰ Sarigil, Zeki. "The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent?"

⁹¹ *Commission Staff Working Paper: Turkey 2011 Progress Report*. Commission of the European Communities, 10 Dec. 2011. <http://bit.ly/on5SQj>. 13.

⁹² "Military's Response Disproportionate." *Hurriyet Daily News*. 12 Dec. 2005. <http://bit.ly/I6Gnj0>.

Unlike a similar bill which had been passed in 1999, however, the December, 2011 bill also allowed men to forgo the twenty-one day basic training course thus denying the military the opportunity to impress itself upon every young Turk.

Another telling reform was Article 145 of the constitution, which allowed civilian courts to try military officials accused of “crimes against state security, the constitutional order, and the functioning of this order.” It also limited the jurisdiction of military courts to military services only.⁹³ In a strong move by the civilians, Provisional Article 15 was also adopted, which dissolved immunity vested in the 1982 constitution for the perpetrators of the 1980 coup. Forthcoming events would confirm the military’s suspicion that the civilians were preparing to take stronger action against them.

As with previous phases of subjective evolution, the characteristics of SUB Bs, in terms of the type of reforms and changes made, apply equally to SUB Cs; in other terms, government reforms initiated against the military made relatively little distinction being between Atlanticist or Eurasianist elements. The differences between SUB Bs or SUB Cs, and thus variance in Atlanticists and Eurasianists’ relative political power, were determined by those elements’ own behavior and how they defined their respective relationship with the civilians. This manifested itself in Atlanticists taking a more conciliatory approach while Eurasianists remained vehemently against cooperating with the civilians.

For the first time in Turkey’s continuum of subjective control, however, the shifts in SUB Bs and SUB Cs during the 2007-today phase cannot be accounted for by the military’s behavior alone. This phase sees the first instance of the civilians treating the Atlanticist and Eurasianist elements of the military differently and thus exerting uneven influence on their respective balances of political control and relative political strength. As a result, SUB C₁, applied to the

⁹³ Sarigil, Zeki. "The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent?"

Eurasianists, emerges. The consequence is a further alienation of Eurasianists from both the Atlanticists and the civilians. The resulting environment, which persists today, has potentially serious ramifications on Turkey's national security.

The Civil-Military Problematique Reborn

The AK Party's overwhelming victory in 2007, on the heels of the military's failed E-Coup, dealt a strong one-two punch to the military. The military, now more so than ever, faced a strong, unified, and popular civilian government. The civilians, politically secure as a result of their recent victory, initiated a new offensive against the military which specifically targeted Eurasianist elements. This decision and those subsequent define the SUB C₁ phase for the Eurasianists.

Rumors of coup plots and secret groups within Turkey's elite had swirled since the late 1990s. Facing a reduced numbers of control mechanisms as well as a reduced effectiveness of those still in place, elements of the military began to explore more extreme measures: an active coup plot. Following the E-Coup, officials discovered evidence of an organization known as Ergenekon—long rumored to have existed—which is alleged to have been behind plots to overthrow the government. The group, believed to be comprised of ultra-nationalist and mostly Eurasianist members, subsequently became the target of numerous civilian probes.⁹⁴ On January 23, 2008 a major round of arrests were made. Thirty-three people, including Veli Küçük, a retired army general, and Fikret Karadağ, a retired army colonel, were detained in connection with the ongoing investigation.⁹⁵

Since then, increasing numbers of arrests have been made; the profile of those detained has increased as well. On July 1, 2008, two retired four-star generals, Şener Eruygur and Hurşit

⁹⁴ "Interview with Sabri Sayari, Professor, Bahcesehir University." Personal interview. 15 Mar. 2012.

⁹⁵ Grigoriadis and Özer. "Mutations of Turkish Nationalism: From Neo-nationalism to the Ergenekon Affair."

Tolon, were arrested along with several other high profile suspects.⁴⁵ Eruygur was the president of the Ataturkist Thought Association, an NGO that took a leading role in organizing the massive anti-AK Party “Republic demonstrations” in spring 2007.⁹⁶

In 2008, as part of the ongoing investigations, officials discovered the diary of Özden Örnek, a former Commander of the Navy, which further shed light on the Atlanticist-Eurasianist divide from the perspective of the military. Örnek revealed that while on active duty he and several other officers, including Eruygur, had planned to stage a coup in 2004. The diary also revealed, however, that the group eventually abandoned their plans “due to the unwillingness of some higher-ranking officers, the US attitude at the time, and the democratic stance of Hilmi Özkök, the then-chief of the Turkish General Staff.”⁹⁷ The writings, along with other evidence collected in the course of the investigation, revealed a “fundamental philosophical question of whether the civilians should be given the chance to show that they can successfully deal with the problems the country faces or whether they should be removed from power and taught a lesson in how to properly conduct themselves in politics.”⁹⁸

In early 2010, investigations expanded again with the revelation of the purported “Sledgehammer” plot. Under the auspices of a military war game, it was argued, 1st Army Commander General Çetin Doğan, a Eurasianist, had prepared plans for a military coup against the government. The scenario, which 29 generals and 133 officers participated in, involved the bombing of two mosques in Istanbul and downing of a Turkish airliner. Investigators alleged that the war game was in fact the outline of a plot designed to generate domestic unrest and thereby pave the way for the military to intervene into politics in the name of national security. Highlighting the politicized nature of the investigation, as well the Atlanticist-Eurasianist schism

⁹⁶ Grigoriadis and Özer. "Mutations of Turkish Nationalism: From Neo-nationalism to the Ergenekon Affair."

⁹⁷ "Ergenekon Investigation Ends Coup Diary Mystery." *Today's Zaman*. 27 Mar. 2008. <http://bit.ly/InK3tO>.

⁹⁸ Aydın, "Ergenekon, New Pacts and the Decline of the Turkish "Inner State,"" 7.

within the military, a report signed by then Chief of the General Staff Ilker Başbuğ later emerged in which Başbuğ criticized Doğan for making remarks which were beyond the limits of the war game scenario. The implicit message at the time was that the “High Command [Atlanticists] had disowned the rogue elements” [Eurasianists].⁹⁹

The shifting civil-military dynamics from 1999 through 2007 is best characterized as a death by a thousand cuts for the military: the slow, systematic removal of control mechanisms installed over many years. What has transpired since the E-Coup, however, is better seen as an attempt by the civilian government, under the leadership of the AK Party, to break the back of the military and rid it from politics once and for all. This shift in attitude will be critical to the future of Turkish civil-military relations.

DIVERGING PATHS IN ANKARA

The bifurcated nature of the military and its subjective evolution—in particular since 2003—have brought the generals and civilians to an important crossroads in Turkish civil-military relations. The Copenhagen reforms implemented since 1999 have allowed the civilians to make important and necessary inroads into curbing the military’s political power. This process, however, now risks exceeding the mandate of the original reforms or perverting it for political gains. If either comes to pass, it will be at the expense of the military’s cohesiveness and thus effectiveness. Considering the fact that the top-ranking officers are already divided between Atlanticists and Eurasianists, the possibility of damaging the institution of the military to the point of ineffectiveness, or worse incapacity, is even graver.

Thus, the government in Ankara faces two decisions: it can content itself with the progress it has made with regards to rebalancing civil-military relations in Turkey, and continue to pursue gradual, legal reforms aimed at furthering that progress; or it can continue to expand

⁹⁹ Aydınlı, "Ergenekon, New Pacts and the Decline of the Turkish "Inner State,"" 11.

the increasingly politicized and illiberal mechanisms through which it seeks to eliminate the military's influence in politics, identifying and prosecuting those elements which it believes to be most threatening. The former would be consistent with the AK Party's stated commitment to a free and democratic Turkey; the latter would reflect a prerogative dangerously at odds with that platform, and would leave the party susceptible to political reprisals. Regrettably, at this time the civilians appear inclined to the latter and show few indications that they take the potential consequences to either themselves or the military seriously.

Democratic Backlash

At this time, a resurgent military in politics seems highly unlikely; it has been stripped of many of the formal and informal mechanisms it historically used to intervene and has not been successful in engineering new ones. More importantly, large segments of Turkish society no longer support the idea of a politically active military. "As a whole, large segments of Turkish elite and society, from large and small businesspeople, lay people and intellectuals, liberals and nationalists, now appear united in their condemnation of the unaccountable, invisible "inner state"—the realm of the absolutist [Eurasianist] circles."¹⁰⁰

A failure by Prime Minister Erdoğan and the AK Party to be attuned to this public sentiment risks compromising the progress they have made in the realm of civil-military relations as well as undermining their position in government. Since the introduction of the Copenhagen reforms in 1999, Turkish citizens have enjoyed increasing levels of social freedom and economic independence. As these characteristics were increasingly integrated into society, and Turkey continued to globalize, so were the democratic norms associated with them. Thus, the pragmatic process aimed at achieving EU membership eventually lead to the internalization of democratic attitudes among Turkish citizens as well. Despite the recent lack of progress on

¹⁰⁰ Aydınli, "Ergenekon, New Pacts and the Decline of the Turkish "Inner State,"" 12.

Turkey's bid for accession, and increasingly negative public opinion about the attractiveness of the EU, Turkish society has largely retained its positive feelings regarding democratization and liberalization.¹⁰¹ As a result, the idea of democratization, both in terms of substantive norms and rhetorical concepts, now exists in Turkish society independent of the EU or Copenhagen reforms. In sum, Turkey's public has developed its own sense of democracy and branded it as part and parcel of their public sphere, thus giving it a particular "Turkishness."¹⁰²

This current attitude, which motivates the Turkish public's intolerance of an untouchable military, fosters similar attitudes regarding the necessity of having a liberal and politically accountable civilian government. To date, the Turkish public has permitted the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer investigations as a cathartic element of the democratization process. This tolerance is likely to have limits, however. As each investigation continues to unfold, the depth and breadth has expanded dramatically, particularly in the case of the Ergenekon affair. Concerns regarding the veracity of the evidence used to substantiate the arrests are becoming commonplace and public support for the investigations has increasingly diverged between those who support the process and those who feel it is being abused for political purposes.

In 2009, a 2,455 page indictment accused an additional 56 suspects of being involved in plots to topple the government.¹⁰³ In addition to being full of pedantic, difficult to decipher legal writing, the document is fraught with internal contradictions. In detailing the purported coup plot, the indictment claims—in three different places within the text—that a land forces commander was in Istanbul, Izmir, and his military post in southern Turkey all on the same

¹⁰¹ "Interview with Özgehan Şenyuva, Asst. Professor, Middle East Technical University." Personal interview. 13 Mar. 2012.

¹⁰² "Interview with Atilla Sandikli, President, BiLGESAM (Ret. COL.), Head of International Relations Dept., Turkish War College." Personal interview. 15 Mar. 2012.

¹⁰³ "Second Ergenekon Indictment Focuses on Coup Plans." *Today's Zaman*. 26 Mar. 2009. <http://bit.ly/K7tyjX>.

day.¹⁰⁴ It also notes that certain suspects had access to enormous amounts of explosives and weaponry, which evidenced their intention to make a coup. Those listed were in fact military commanders who had access to the arms as part of their normal military duties.¹⁰⁵ These concerns have fueled speculation that the civilian government, in particular the AK Party, has perverted the investigations in order to eliminate political rivals and consolidate political power.

The accusations that the investigations, although perhaps legitimate in their limited initial form, have become a politically expedient tool of the AK Party gains traction as the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer affairs continue to grow. As a result, not only does the process threaten the civilian government's democratic credentials with the public, it risks alienating the AK Party's political allies as well. This includes those Atlanticist elements of the military which had demonstrated cautious signs of being willing to accept a new civil-military relationship with the government. Short of that, the investigations will continue to undermine the military's corporateness and esprit de corps.

In 2009, Chief of the General Staff Ilker Başbuğ, an Atlanticist, traded barbs with Prime Minister Erdoğan, showcasing the possibility that the civilians could be moving toward a scenario in which they alienated the more conciliatory elements of the military. In June that year, Erdoğan made public comments in which he doubted the sincerity of an internal military investigation into plans to make a coup against the government. Başbuğ, whose behavior had been generally respectful of the civilians' rule, issued a sharp rebuke: "Keep your hands off the military. Give up trying to politically identify yourselves through the Turkish Armed Forces."¹⁰⁶ His statement highlighted the degree to which the AK Party was in fact playing with political fire and trying the patience of the military's more accommodating elements.

¹⁰⁴ "Interview with Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, Professor, Sabanci University." Personal interview. 19 Mar. 2012

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Demirtaş, Serkan. "'Keep Your Hands off the Military'." *Hürriyet Daily News*. 27 Jun. 2009. <http://bit.ly/Ha5u1>.

The Enemy of my Enemy & The Threat Within

In January, 2012, Başbuğ was arrested for his supposed connection to the 2007 E-Coup, making him the most recent former Chief of the General Staff to have been jailed. In addition to being an Atlanticist, he is the highest ranking officer to be jailed. Observers of Turkey were shocked; many had thought that senior officers such as Başbuğ were too recently removed from their military experiences and too senior to face prosecution. Additionally, although his relationship with Prime Minister Erdoğan was rocky at best, few other recent high ranking officers can claim the type of working relationship with the civilians that Başbuğ could. His arrest is indicative of the civilian's confidence in their new strengthened position, but it also suggests potentially dangerous turn of events in the ongoing investigations and civilian attempts to cow the military.

Prior to Başbuğ, the majority of arrests had seemingly targeted either legitimate coup-planners or Eurasianist elements of the military. Başbuğ's arrest is a notable break from this "legitimate" method to a politicized one and sends a signal to Atlanticists that their cooperation with the civilian government will not necessarily constitute immunity from prosecution. As a result, the ongoing investigations risk making strange bedfellows of the bifurcated elements of the military which are currently at odds with one another; the perceived need to salvage and defend the military's corporateness from civilian siege is a potentially strong motivator for internal reconciliation. To date, a significant factor in the civilian's ability to assert their dominance over the civilians has been the military's inability to present a united counter-front.

Consequently, if the AK Party continues on its present war path against the military, it not only risks denigrating the institution to the point that it suspends its differences and unites against the civilians, it risks jeopardizing the progress it has made in disassembling the military's

influence in politics over the last thirteen years. In short, in an attempt to eviscerate coup-planning elements from the military, the civilians potentially and inadvertently pave the way for an intervention to unfold—particularly if the economic growth which has buffered the AK Party to date begins to slow or reverse itself. GDP growth is forecasted to drop to 5.1% in 2012, a 3.4% decrease from the 2011 rate of 8.5%.¹⁰⁷ Although still high, economists worry that the AK Party might revert to Turkey's legacy of populist economic policies in an attempt to maintain high growth rates and political support, thus creating problems in the Turkish economy.

Short of a coordinated, military-wide intervention into politics, there is still a threat that a lower ranking commander—disillusioned with the civilian's treatment of the military as well as his superiors inability to “do their duty”—could be spurred to act against the government. Although dramatic, and unlikely to be ultimately successful, a scenario in which a major or colonel mobilizes the troops under his command is not out of the realm of possibility. Lower ranking officers have watched the events of the previous thirteen years unfold before them and some are very likely of the opinion that their worldview—the ideological, Kemalist order—is being existentially challenged and that it is their praetorian duty to protect it.¹⁰⁸

This Hollywood scenario is not without precedent in the region or in Turkey; indeed, in 1971 the General Staff moved to oust the civilian government precisely because it feared elements within the military would mobilize in support of a more radical coup, lead by the then Commander of the Air Force. If such a situation did develop, it would put the military in an extremely difficult position. Not only would it likely lead to a very public, worldwide revelation of the Atlanticist-Eurasianist schism, it would demonstrate that the Turkish military is wracked by a generational divide as well. The consequences would be disastrous for the military and

¹⁰⁷ *The Global Outlook in Summary, 2009-2013*. Rep. The World Bank. <http://bit.ly/nSaKbc>.

¹⁰⁸ "Interview with Atilla Sandikli, President, BiLGESAM (Ret. COL.), Head of International Relations Dept., Turkish War College." Personal interview. 15 Mar. 2012.

Turkey and embarrassing for the US, which continues close cooperation with the Turkish military. It would simultaneously validate the ongoing Ergenekon and Sledgehammer allegations while giving the civilians carte blanche to take even stronger action against the military. Moreover, Turkey's economy and international image—which the AK Party has worked so hard to improve—would be severely blemished.

The Dangers of Division

These threats and scenarios aside, the bifurcated nature of Turkey's military—now an established characteristic—presents serious concerns about the country's overall national security. The Turkish military has shown itself to not only be divided politically on how to regard its new relationship with the civilians, it has proven to be in disagreement on issues related to strategy. This argument has repeatedly borne itself out since 1990 when the military initially split: Atlanticists and Eurasianists were divided in the wake of the Cold War over Turkish grand strategy, in 1992 following the Gulf War over force posture, and again in 2003 over Turkey's support for the US invasion of Iraq.

The political and strategic division at the top of Turkey's armed forces is concerning for reasons related to the military itself, but it is equally worrying from a national security perspective. Given the range of politically delicate, potential national security issues Turkey presently faces—the uncertainty surrounding Iraq's future, the prospect of a nuclear Iran, the worsening security situation in Syria, and a conflagration of any of these with issues related to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Kurds—Turkey cannot afford, at the moment of crisis, to be internally divided over critical questions of strategy and military response.

It is not entirely clear the extent to which the civilians would employ the military in support of political objectives. Turkey's recent involvement in the NATO Libya mission

suggests that the civilians continue to distrust the Turkish armed forces: the troops sent to Libya in support of aid and training operations were members of Turkey's national police force, not the army.¹⁰⁹ Recent statements and actions by Prime Minister Erdoğan do suggest, however, that the foreign policy coming out of Ankara is likely to continue being assertive, self sufficient, and nationalistic.¹¹⁰ As these sentiments strengthen within Turkey, likelihood that the civilians will need to call upon their military in support of policy objectives also increases.

In April, 2012, evidence of this began to emerge. In response to the ongoing crisis in Syria, it was reported that Turkey had allegedly drawn up plans to create safe zones across its border in order to harbor civilians from regime violence.¹¹¹ Later that same month, Erdoğan issued a harsh statement in response to the death of four Syrian refugees who were killed inside Turkey by Syrian forces as they attempted to flee. In his statement, Erdoğan raised the possibility of invoking NATO's Article 5 in order to protect Turkish borders from incursion by Syrian forces.¹¹² Either of these two scenarios—the creation of safe zones inside Syria or the enlistment of Article 5—would require detailed and coordinated cooperation between Turkey's civilians and military. There is little evidence to suggest that the foundation or trust required for that type of relationship currently exists. Indeed, recent events—particularly the ongoing Ergenekon and Sledgehammer investigations—have prompted a sardonic joke about the military's attitude toward executing the civilians' orders: upon receiving a directive, the first thing the generals do is call their lawyer to ensure they are legally protected.

¹⁰⁹ "Interview with Soli Ozel, Professor, Kadir Has University." Personal interview. 17 Mar. 2012.

¹¹⁰ This issue is explored by Ömer Taşpınar in "The Rise of Turkish Gaullism." He concludes that Turkish and American interests no longer enjoy the same confluence that they once did as Turkey has increasingly opts for an independent, assertive, and nationalist foreign policy aimed at projecting its influence throughout the region. Taşpınar, Ömer. "The Rise of Turkish Gaullism: Getting Turkish-American Relations Right." *Insight Turkey* 13.1 (2011): 11-17. The Brookings Institution. <http://bit.ly/Jza64p>.

¹¹¹ Malas, Nour, and Joe Parkinson. "Turkey Draws Plans for Syrian Civilians." *The Wall Street Journal*. 3 Apr. 2012. <http://on.wsj.com/Hbnzic>.

¹¹² "PM: Turkey May Invoke NATO's Article 5 over Syrian Border Fire." *Today's Zaman*. 11 Apr. 2012. <http://bit.ly/HDimg5>.

The negative effects of these strategic debates and disagreements are not likely to affect Turkey's military acumen on the tactical level; disagreements over strategy do little to influence how unit commanders direct the soldiers, sailors, and airmen under their command. The possibility does exist, however, for disputes to generate a lack of confidence in the generals from the ranks below. Başbuğ's rebuke of Doğan in 2010, in the wake of the alleged Sledgehammer plot, is likely to have sent a message to the lower ranks that senior officers, when under pressure, cannot be guaranteed to stand by their fellow soldiers.

This raises important questions about the military's ability to operate as a cohesive force capable of reacting quickly and decisively to the national security challenges it is tasked to confront. Unit commanders are less likely to make judgments quickly and decisively if they fear retribution from an opposing element of a politicized command staff because those actions don't conform to that senior commander's strategic outlook. Again, given the volatile, intertwined, and rapidly evolving nature of Turkey's potential national security challenges, this becomes doubly concerning.

Positive Alternatives

The current situation in Turkey presents many challenges to both civilian and military leaders, but arriving at an amicable balance is not impossible. There are a series of steps which each partner could take to improve the existing civil-military relationship and thus affirm a new, agreeable balance of control. These positive alternatives begin with the civilians rapidly bringing the ongoing investigations into the military to a close and working to curb new ones. While legitimate cases do exist, investigations are increasingly based on limited, circumstantial, or weak evidence, or some combination thereof. The detentions and trials, although initially well intentioned, have assumed a snowball effect in which many military and non-military individuals

have likely been unjustly accused. The added benefits of continuing the investigations are far outweighed by the illiberal and vindictive light it paints the AK Party in as well as the damage they do to the military's corporateness. Although it will likely be years—if ever—before it is entirely clear to what extent actual plots to overthrow the government existed, the effects of the investigations are real and immediate. The longer the process continues the more demoralized and less effective the military becomes. Moreover, the likelihood that divided elements within the military will find common cause with one another and unite against the civilians increases.

Second, the civilians should return to a path of reform which is democratically justifiable and politically sustainable. For the time being, the AK Party seems to recognize this with their continued emphasis of the EU process, which provides a democratic cover for completing additional reforms while assuring that others do not regress. To this end, the AK Party recently abolished mandated national security courses taught by military officers in public high schools.¹¹³ They have also worked to convert buildings which house military recruitment offices into preschools.¹¹⁴ These educational reforms align with the greater process of democratization which Turkey has worked toward in the name of EU accession. Although seemingly insignificant in curbing the military's influence, these changes represent the type of incrementalism which is politically sustainable and best suited to cementing a civil-military culture shift in Turkey.

The civilian government needs to take steps to influence the military's curriculum as well. Currently, the majority of courses taught at the national military academies and staff colleges are taught by officers. The academies, widely viewed as a primary mechanism of ideological indoctrination of the officer corps, have no civilian oversight. The curriculum will

¹¹³ "Gov't Abolishes Controversial National Security Courses." *Today's Zaman*. 24 Jan. 2012. <http://bit.ly/xYx62f>.

¹¹⁴ "Military Recruitment Office Buildings to Be Used as Preschools." *Today's Zaman*. 1 Feb. 2012. <http://bit.ly/JmEAaG>.

need to be changed so that it incorporates lessons that reflect democratic values, the principles of objective civil-military control, and professionalism. Moreover, they will need to be taught by professors who believe in these values and can expound upon them. Currently, those who take this approach are shunned within the faculty and often reassigned to other posts.¹¹⁵

The civilians' ability to affect these types of changes hinges on another important reform: reorganizing the civil-military chain of command. Presently, the Chief of the General Staff reports to the Prime Minister. The Turkish Ministry of Defense (MOD) also reports directly to the Prime Minister. In most parliamentary democracies, the Chief of the General Staff reports to the Minister of Defense who in turn is accountable to the President. The current arrangement in Turkey limits the MOD's ability to develop a relationship with the military as well as its ability to make objective changes to policies and procedures, such as the educational curriculum of the military. Subordinating the military to the MOD would not only allow for more effective management of the armed forces, it would help depoliticize the institution as a whole. Thus, reorganizing the Turkish defense establishment so that the Chief of Staff is not accountable directly to the Prime Minister is a critical step in helping Turkey end its legacy of subjective control.

These changes will need to be formally enshrined in Turkey's new constitution. Burhan Kuzu, an AK Party member and head of the current committee tasked with writing and presenting a new constitution to Parliament, notes that despite the current constitution being modified 17 times for a total of 115 amended paragraphs, the 1982 constitution is still the military's constitution.¹¹⁶ For example, Article 35—the infamous “coup clause” of the 1982

¹¹⁵ "Interview with Atilla Sandikli, President, BiLGESAM (Ret. COL.), Head of International Relations Dept., Turkish War College." Personal interview. 15 Mar. 2012.

¹¹⁶ "Interview with Burhan Kuzu, AK Party Member, Head of Constitutional Commission." Personal interview. 13 Mar. 2012.

constitution—remains in effect. The article provides the legal justification for the military’s interventions into politics and complicates the ongoing trials of generals charged with crimes against the state for the interventions; technically, there is a legal precedent for their behavior.

Recently there have been promising developments in efforts to initiate legitimate civil-military reforms. In April, 2012, the AK Party submitted a proposal to amend Article 35 with the support of nearly all opposition parties.¹¹⁷ Amending the clause would be a symbolic demonstration of the civilians’ desire to see the military gone from politics for good; if the clause is passed in parliament with the support of opposition parties, it sends an even stronger signal. Later that month, President Abdullah Gül reiterated his support for the change, saying the article “should be revisited from the very beginning to avoid any misinterpretation.”¹¹⁸ Regrettably, it appears highly unlikely that a new constitution—which the AK Party had promised to deliver upon reelection—will be passed during this session of parliament. As such, it is not clear if or when changes to Article 35 will be formally adopted.

Finally, the civilians need to work to rebuild a working relationship with the military. This will likely take years to come to fruition, and will require the internalization of new norms by both partners, but if Turkey is to realize its national ambitions it will be a necessary process. This relationship will need to be grounded in mutual respect and recognition of each other’s boundaries. Attempts by the civilians to influence the military’s internal system of promotion, for example, compromise the military’s corporateness. The military signaled in August, 2011 that it would not tolerate this type of interference when Chief of General Staff Işık Koşaner and the commanders of the army, air force, and navy resigned en masse.¹¹⁹ The resignations,

¹¹⁷ "Opposition Supportive of Ruling AK Party’s Proposal to Change Coup D’état Article." *Today's Zaman*. 4 Apr. 2012. <http://bit.ly/HuKIM1>.

¹¹⁸ "Gül Reiterates Call for Change of Article 35 of TSK Code." *Today's Zaman*. 17 Apr. 2012. <http://bit.ly/JGtNFP>.

¹¹⁹ Cook, Steven A. "Tarnished Brass." Editorial. *Foreign Policy*. 2 Aug. 2011. <http://bit.ly/oyP02y>.

although perhaps of symbolic and cathartic value, fuel bad blood and do not bode well for either partner's ability to arrive at an amicable balance of control.

The Future Path

Through the twentieth century, the military in Turkey made its presence in politics felt with effect. The civilian government was a mirror of the military, which was the unquestioned dominant partner in the civil-military relationship. Through the continuum of shifting subjective control, the civilians gradually used the bifurcated nature of the military to divide and conquer it, making it the junior partner in the civil-military relationship.

Although the iterations of subjective control applied to Turkey's Atlanticists (SUB B, SUB B₁, SUB B₂) resemble one another in terms of the types of legislative and judicial reforms they are characterized by, each is qualitatively different because they correlate to changes in the power dynamics in the civil-military relationship. The same can be said for Turkey's Eurasianists. (Reference: Figure A – Progression of Relative Political Strength (page 33)). The complexity and intensity of the reforms increases from SUB B through SUB₂ and from SUB B through SUB C₁ for the Atlanticist and Eurasianist elements of the military respectively. It was not until the final phase of this continuum, however, that the political power and strength of both elements of the military vis-à-vis one another were sufficiently uneven enough to create a hazardous national security situation.

During this final phase, the civilians also departed from their traditional legitimate mediums of reform to pursue politically expedient and illiberal methods. In doing so, they began distinguishing between Atlanticist and Eurasianist elements, specifically targeting the latter and thus exacerbating the divide between the two elements. This has further undermined

Turkey's national security and raises serious questions about the political sustainability of the AK Party's current strategy.

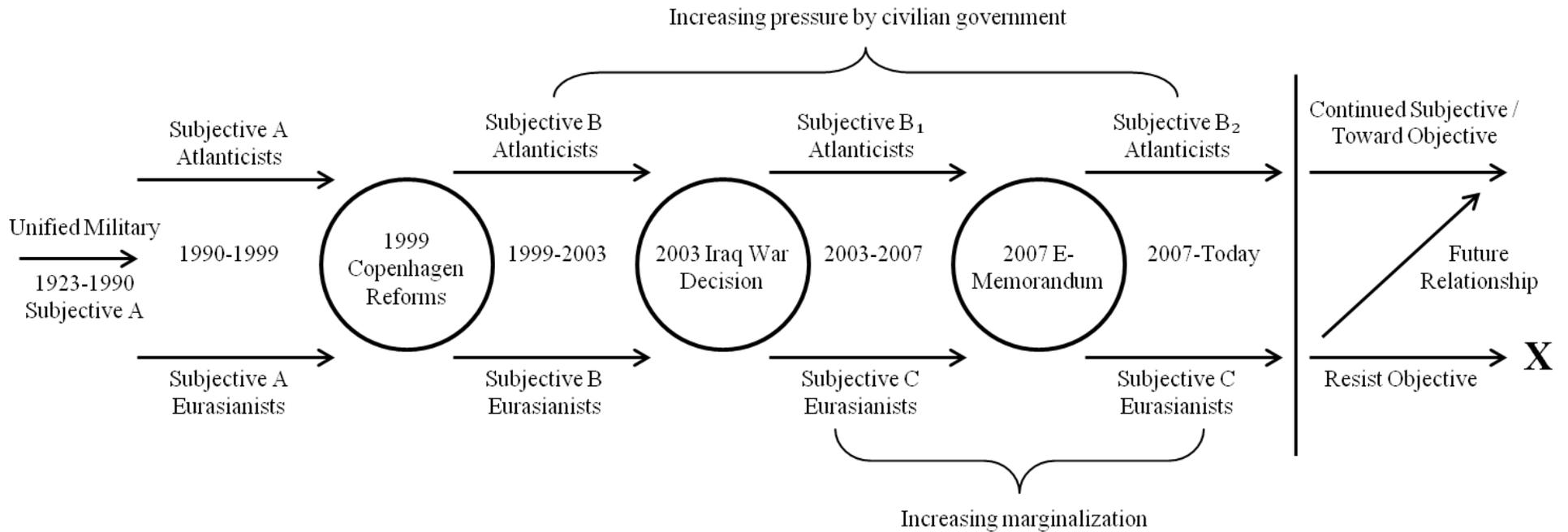
Important progress has been made in rebalancing Turkish civil-military relations, but it is worrying that until a crisis which calls upon the military to take action, it will be unclear to what extent this rebalancing has actually been institutionalized. A security or foreign policy crisis is not the moment at which Turkey should test its progress. Thus, at this time, the future of civil-military relations in Turkey appears dim. In an attempt to resolve the civil-military problematique, the civilian government in Ankara has found itself trapped within a second civil-military paradox: if it fails to rehabilitate the military, encourage reconciliation within the ranks, and promote professionalism through steps aimed at establishing objective control, it risks putting Turkey at risk at the critical moment of a national security crisis. If it prolongs the civil-military crisis currently at hand by demoralizing and denigrating the military through illiberal investigations and arrests, it risks fomenting a reunification of the military's bifurcated elements on ideological grounds antithetical to a democratic society. Neither situation supports the process of democratization in Turkey or the country's national security.

Turkey must choose which path it will take in its new civil-military relationship. If it is wise, it will choose the third way: the path which professionalizes the military and respects it as an institution. Regrettably, at this time, there is little to suggest that this wisdom will prevail in Ankara. As a result, although the pashas may be divided and conquered, their future in Turkish society has yet to be fully decided.

APPENDIX OF FIGURES

Figure A – Progression of Relative Political Strength			
<u>1923-1990</u>	<u>1990-2003</u>	<u>2003-2007</u>	<u>2007-Present</u>
M c	M ₁ M ₂ c	M ₁ m ₂ C	m ₁ m ₂ C
SUB A	SUB A (1990-1999) SUB B (1999-2003)	SUB B ₁	SUB B ₂
		SUB C	SUB C ₁
<p>M – Strong Military 1 /  – Atlanticists C – Strong Civilian Government m – Weak Military 2 /  – Eurasianists c – Weak Civilian Government</p> <p>NB: This model makes relational strength assessments. E.g. the strength of the military relative to the civilian government and the strength of the civilian government relative to the military.</p>			

Figure B – Continuum of Turkish Subjective Control



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Bulent Aliriza, Director and Senior Associate, Turkey Project, CSIS. 26 Oct. 2011

Ömer Taşpınar, Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution. 31 Oct. 2011.

Steven Cook, Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations. 10 Apr. 2012.

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Şaban Kardaş, Professor at TOBB University. 12 Mar. 2012.

Reha Denemec, Vice Chairman AKP (Research and Development). 12 Mar. 2012.

Deputy Political Counselor, US Embassy, Ankara. 12 Mar. 2012.

Özgehan Şenyuva, Assistant Professor, Middle East Technical University. 13 Mar. 2012.

Nihat Ali Özcan, Foreign Policy Studies Fellow, TEPAV. 13 Mar. 2012.

Bulent Aras, Chairman, Turkish Foreign Ministry's Strategic Research Center. 13 Mar. 2012.

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Gürman Timurhan, Political Adviser to Umut Oran, CHP. 13 Mar. 2012

Zeki Sarigil, Assistant Professor, Bilkent University. 14 Mar. 2012.

Yasin Aktay, Director, Institute of Strategic Thinking. 14 Mar. 2012.

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Atilla Sandikli, President, BiLGESAM (Ret. COL.), Turkish War College. 15 Mar. 2012.

Aslıhan Turan, Research Fellow, BiLGESAM, 15 Mar. 2012.

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Mustafa Aydın, Rector, Kadir Has University. 16 Mar. 2012.

Serhat Güvenç, Associate Professor, Kadir Has University. 16 Mar. 2012.

Gencer Özcan, Professor, Bilgi University. 16 Mar. 2012.

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