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YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

IMPACT OF INTERNAL THREATS ON
CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN TURKEY

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ÖZET

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Türkiye'nin Avrupa Birliği'ne katılım sürecinin bir parçası olarak ve Kopenhag Kriterlerinin siyasi koşullarını yerine getirmek amacıyla, Türk ordusunun siyasetteki rolünü azaltmak için son yıllarda bir dizi anayasal reform gerçekleştirilmiştir. Her ne kadar yapılan bu köklü değişiklikler, teoride Türk ordusunun siyasetteki rolünü azaltmış görünse de, pratikte, Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri, Türk siyasal yaşamındaki etkili rolünü sürdürmeye halen devam etmektedir. Bu tez, Türk ordusunun siyaset üzerindeki etkisinin neden azalmadığının sebeplerini; iç tehditler olan Kürt milliyetçiliği ve siyasal İslamın yükselişine bakarak arama çabası içerisindedir. Siyasal İslam'ın yükselişi, Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin laiklik ilkesini tehdit ederken, Kürt milliyetçiliğinin yükselişi ise, ülkenin toprak bütünlüğünü tehlikeye sokmaktadır. Laiklik ve toprak bütünlüğü, Türk Silahlı Kuvvetlerinin en fazla önem verdiği iki değerdir. Bu sebeple, bu çalışma, iç tehditler ülkeyi tehdit etmeye devam ettikçe, Türk ordusunun siyasette etkin bir rol oynamaya devam edeceğini savunmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, Türk ordusunun siyasetteki rolünü azaltmayı amaçlayan AB anayasal reform paketleri tam anlamıyla etkili olmayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: 1) Sivil-Asker İlişkileri **2)** İç Tehditler

3) AB İlerleme Raporları **4)** Uyum Paketleri.

ABSTRACT

Master Thesis

Impact of Internal Threats on Civil-Military Relations in Turkey

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Recently, as part of Turkey's accession process to the European Union, in an attempt to fulfill the political conditions of the Copenhagen criteria, a series of constitutional reforms were implemented in order to decrease Turkish military's role in politics. In spite of these dramatic changes that diminished role of Turkish military in politics on paper, in practice Turkish Armed Forces are still retaining their influential role in Turkish political life. This thesis represents an attempt to search for the reasons why the Turkish military's influence over politics did not diminish by looking at the internal threats, the rise of political Islam and Kurdish nationalism. While the rise of political Islam threatens the secularity principle of the Republic, rise of Kurdish nationalism puts the territorial integrity of the country in danger. Secularity and the territorial integrity are the two cherished values of the Turkish Armed Forces. Therefore, this thesis argues that as long as the internal threats continue to challenge the country, Turkish military will continue to play a dominant role in politics. Therefore, EU constitutional reform packages which aimed to decrease the role of Turkish military in politics will not be fully effective.

Key Words: 1) Civil-Military Relations, 2) Internal Threats,
3) EU Progress Reports, 4) Harmonization Packages

IMPACT OF INTERNAL THREATS ON CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN TURKEY

CHAPTER ONE

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AND INTERNAL THREATS

CHAPTER TWO

THE ROLE OF MILITARY IN TURKISH POLITICS

CHAPTER FIVE

TURKISH MILITARY AND THE RISE OF POLITICAL ISLAM

ABBREVIATIONS

AKP: *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* –Justice and Development Party

ANAP: *Anavatan Partisi*---Motherland Party

AP: *Adalet Parisi*---Justice Party

CHP: *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*---Republican People's Party

DEP: *Demokrasi Partisi*---Democracy Party

DGM: *Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemeleri*— State Security Courts

DP: *Demokrat Parti*---Democratic Party

DSP: *Demokratik Sol Parti*---Democratic Left Party

DTH: *Demokratik Toplum Hareketi*- Movement for a Democratic Society

DTP: *Demokratik Toplum Partisi*— Democratic Society Party

DYP: *Doğru Yol Partisi*---True Path Party

EC: European Community

ECHR: European Court of Human Rights

EEC: European Economic Community

EP: European Parliament

EU: European Union

FP: *Fazilet Partisi*—Virtue Party

HADEP: *Halkın Demokrasi Partisi*— Peoples' Democratic Party

HEP: *Halkın Emek Partisi*---People's Labor Party

HP: *Halkçı Parti*---Populist Party

IMF: International Monetary Fund

İHO: *İmam Hatip Okulları*— Preacher and Prayer Leader Schools

MDP: *Milliyetci Demokrasi Partisi*---Nationalist Democracy Party

MGK: *Milli Güvenlik Konseyi*---National Security Council

MHP: *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*---Nationalist Action Party

MNP: *Milli Nizam Partisi*---National Order Party

MSP: *Milli Selamet Partisi*---National Salvation Party

NATO: Northern Atlantic Treaty Organization

NSPD: National Security Policy Document

OECD: Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development

PKK: *Partiya Karkaran Kürdistan*-Kurdish Workers Party

RP: *Refah Partisi*—Welfare Party

RTÜK: *Radyo Televizyon Üst Kurulu*— High Audio-Visual Board

SHP: *Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti*---Social Democratic Populist Party

SP: S*aadet Partisi*—Felicity Party

TİP: *Türkiye İşçi Partisi*—Turkish Workers Party

YÖK: *Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu*—Higher Education Board

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INTRODUCTION

Starting from the days of Central Asia, throughout the Ottoman Empire era and particularly during the Republic of Turkey, military played a dominant role in Turkish politics. As a result of constant direct (1960 and1980) and indirect (1971 and 1997) military interventions, Turkish military continued exercising its influence in politics in an increasing pace. Recently, as part of Turkey's accession process to the European Union, a series of constitutional reforms were implemented in an attempt to decrease military's role in politics. Although on paper, these reforms dramatically decreased the role of Turkish military in politics, moving towards a more democratic civil-military relation, in practice they were not that effective. Military's influential role in politics continued its dominance. This dominance actually was a result of continuing impact of two significant internal threats, rise of political Islam and Kurdish nationalism.

This thesis represents an attempt to search for the reasons why the Turkish military's influence over politics didn't diminish in spite of the constitutional amendments held by the Turkish state in order to fulfill Copenhagen political criteria and to be qualified as a candidate to the European Union (EU). As the main argument of this thesis, this research will examine the continuation of the 'internal threats' in Turkey as an important variable that hinders the decrease of military's role in politics. Both internal threats; rise of political Islam and Kurdish nationalism do not open the room for the civilians to their role of civilians in civil military relations. Consequently this thesis argues that as long as the internal threats continue to have an impact on Turkish politics, military will continue to play a dominant role in politics. Therefore, EU constitutional reform packages which aimed to decrease the role of Turkish military in politics will not be fully effectual.

In its argument, the thesis points out the significance of 'internal threats' as an important variable in the study of civil-military relations. In an attempt to analyze the weight of internal threats in civil-military relations, the research first examines the literature of theories of civil-military relations. While the early studies of civil-

military relations from 1940s to 1970s mainly concentrated on the characteristics of the military –historical legacy, institutions, structures, interests, strategies and prerogatives of the armed forces— as explanatory variables, with the transitions from military to civilian rule during the 1970s, 1980s and 1900s, the literature started to concentrate on the civilian side of the relation as the determinant of civil military balance. Along the same line as will be analyzed in the next section in depth, civil-military relations literature on Turkey also concentrated on the dominant role of military in Turkish politics by looking at military's organization, its historical legacy and the military coups. Moreover, Turkish literature has been overloaded with descriptive studies of military interventions –mainly on events rather than causes.

However, both in general and Turkish civil military relations, scholars started to pay attention to a new variable, the "internal threats." Particularly, with the rise of global terror, not only external but internal threat concept started altering the relation between civilian authorities and the military in a direction that favored the military side of the relation. In Turkey, particularly, in the aftermath of 28 February 1997 soft coup, a few scholars started to pay attention to the role of internal threats as possible determinants of military's influence in politics. They mainly concentrated on the rise of political Islam and Kurdish nationalism as two significant internal threats that shape the civil-military relations in Turkey in favor of the military. An important framework that will be applied in this research will be adopted from Michael Desch's argument of 'the higher the internal threat in a country (under the assumption that the external threats are either stable or low), the military's dominance in politics is more likely to arise than civilian supremacy'.[1] Following Desch's argument, this thesis argues that internal threats are strong variables that shape current Turkish civil-military relations in spite of the constitutional reforms implemented to diminish the role of the military.

As a methodology, this master thesis mainly referred to secondary sources including books, journal articles, news accounts, reports of several think tanks, European Commission reports, official and unofficial statements, and analyses by

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[1] Michael C. Desch, **Civilian Control of the Military The Changing Security Environment,** The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1999.

journalists and newspaper articles both in English and Turkish. While the examination of the theories and historical background of civil-military relations were done through books and journal articles, for the analysis of the current period the research referred to news accounts, official and unoffocial statements, analyses by journalists and European Commission reports through the internet.

Chapter 1 lays out the theoretical framework for the analysis of current civil-military relations in Turkey which is mainly shaped by internal threats. The chapter will first go through a detailed review of civil-military relations theory literature by first concentrating on military-centric and civilian-centric approaches and then by examining new variables such as "internal threat" variable under Michael Desch's framework. Then the chapter will continue by applying the internal threats argument in an attempt to explain the increasing role of Turkish military.

Chapter 2 aims to provide a historical background to the role of the military in Turkish politics, including two direct interventions of 1960, 1980 and two indirect interventions of 1971 and 1998. The chapter will examine the dominant role of the military starting from the single-party years to multi-party years, from 1960 intervention to 1980 intervention. While doing this review the chapter will also concentrate on the significance of Kemalist principles and their impact on the powerful role of the military in Turkish politics. Then the chapter will briefly explain how the internal threats in the country rose and how the military reacted to this rise.

Chapter 3, after summarizing the history of Turkey-EU relations will concentrate Turkey's problems with the political conditions of the Copenhagen criteria. The chapter will continue by examining the European Commission Progress Reports towards Turkey's accession to EU (1997-2007) and the Constitutional Reform packages introduced by the Turkish government. The concentration of the chapter will be on the Seventh Reform Package and the Amendment to the Law on the National Security Council, which on paper dramatically diminished the powerful role of Turkish military in politics.

Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 are allocated to the internal threats. Aim of both chapters is to analyze the historical background and the roots of the threats and summarize their development throughout the single and multi-party years, post-1980 period and focus on their increasing pace today. Both chapters concentrate on the current increase in the rise of Kurdish nationalism and political Islam and military's reaction to this rise. The chapters try to demonstrate the continuing dominant role of the military in politics as a result of the rise in the pace of the internal threats

Finally, the conclusion summarizes the analysis of civil military relations in Turkey in the current era. It highlights how the internal threats hinder civilian control of the military in Turkey despite EU demands to enhance civilian control. The conclusion chapter is dedicated to summarize the general finding of the thesis which claims that as long as two internal threats of Turkey, rise of political Islam and Kurdish secessionism prevail, they will hinder civilians to take the control and subordinate military under their authorities.

CHAPTER ONE

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AND INTERNAL THREATS

The relations between the civilians and the military have always been a controversial issue of political science and particularly the democratic consolidation literature. Among others civil-military relations is one of the significant indicators of democratic consolidation.[2] According to the 'civil-military relations' condition, "democracy cannot be consolidated until the military becomes firmly subordinated to civilian control and solidly committed to the democratic constitutional order."[3] Therefore, in a democratic system, the proper power balance between military and civilians can only be established by the subordination of military to civilian authority.[4] Along the same line, Turkey has been facing the problem of the subordination of military to civilian authority. Despite a series of constitutional reforms to diminish the role of the military, Turkish Armed Forces still remain as one of the most powerful decision-maker of politics. This research argues that the main explanation for this outcome is the existence of internal threats in the country.

This chapter first aims to analyze the civil-military literature and define the issues and actors in these relations. Secondly, the chapter examines the civil-military relations literature written in the world and in Turkey by concentrating on the military and civilian centric analyses. As an attempt to explain the reason for the continuing significant role of Turkish military (despite the precautions taken), the chapter concentrates on the "internal threats" variable and analyzes the civil-military literature written on internal threats. Finally, the chapter is concluded by briefly examining the impact of internal threats on the rise of Turkish military's role in politics.

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[2] See Larry Diamond, "Introduction: In search of Consolidation" In **Consolidating the Third Wave Democracies** eds., Larry Diamond, Marc Plattner, Yun-han Chu and Hung-mao Tien, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1997, pp.xxi-xxxvi. According to Diamond, the other indicators are: political institutions, civil society, socio-economic development, and international factors.

[3] Diamond, p.xxviii.

[4] However, all of the civilian authorities are not always democratically elected. In this study, the analysis of civil-military relations is done in a democratic system.

I. CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS LITERATURE: ISSUES, ACTORS AND VARIABLES

There are two sides in civil-military relations, the military and the civilians. While it is easier to define the military side, which includes a variety of organizations and services assigned to national defense such as the army, navy and the air force, it is more difficult to identify the civilian side. If the civilian side is a democratic government, then it includes legislative, executive and judiciary. However, it is difficult to spell out what it would include if it were an authoritarian regime.[5] The main issue of civil-military relations is the formation of the balance of power between the civilian government and the military. In this balance it is important that the military is subordinated to the civilians. It is a paradoxical relation in the sense that the civilians give the military the legal power and the instruments of violence so that the armed forces could protect them. The problem starts when the military which has the legal possession of the instruments of violence use these weapons against the civilians who created them.[6] The military is not supposed to attack the civilians who established it in the first place and should not interfere into issues in politics other than defense. In a democracy, when people choose political agents to act on their behalf, they do not intend to give up their political privileges to the military. Richard Kohn summarizes this argument as military's purpose should be to "defend the nation, not to define it."[7]

Therefore, in democratic systems it is important to achieve the civilian control. Felipe Agüero defines civilian supremacy as "the ability of a civilian, democratically elected government to conduct general policy without interference from the military, to define the goals and general organization of the national defense, to formulate and conduct defense policy, and to monitor the implementation of military policy."[8] Kohn considers civilian control as an absolute and all-embracing and no responsibility or decision regarding administration in all terms

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[5] Felipe Agüero, **Soldiers, Civilians, and Democracy, Post-Franco Spain in Comparative Perspective**, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1995, p. 22.
[6] Peter D. Feaver, "The Civil-Military Problematique: Huntington, Janowitz, and the Question of Civilian Control", **Armed Forces &Society,** Vol.23, No.3, Winter 1996, p. 150.
[7] Richard H. Kohn, "How Democracies Control the Military", **Journal of Democracy***, v. 8, n.4 October 1994, p. 142.
[8] Agüero, p. 19.

could be undertaken by the military without proper assignment of this institution by the elected civilian authority.[9] Although both definitions clearly defines the boundaries of the military, currently, particularly in the aftermath of September 11, with the rise of global terror even in the countries which are defined as democratic, there is a modification in the balance between civilian and military leaders in favor of the military commanders.

Kohn argues that civilian control is not a fact but instead a process. The degree of civilian control differs from one extreme in a country ruled by military government to another country successfully subordinated its military under the civilian government in many aspects. Kohn believes that the relative balance between the civilians and armed forces within a country is shaped by several factors including time and place as well as personalities involved in processes and the circumstances giving military prestige in public opinion.[10]

A. Military and Civilian-Centric Analyses

Since the traditional concern of civil-military relations theory is the direct seizure of political power by the military, the literature generally studies military interference into civilian affairs and tries to find answers to the causes of military interventions. In this analysis, majority of the scholars concentrate on the military side of the relationship. Scholars usually focus on the institutions, structure, strength, organization and the corporate interests of the military. Among these scholars for example Morris Janowitz concentrates on the relative strength of organizational format of the military against civilians as an important dynamic for military's interference into politics. He argues that striking relative advantages of the armed forces against civilians is its control over the instruments of violence. As the organizational strength of the military, Janowitz examines skill structure and career

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[9] Kohn , p. 142.
[10] Kohn , p. 143.

lines, social recruitments and education, professional and political ideology, and cohesion and cleavage.[11]

Along the same line, Samuel Finer in his book *The man on Horseback: The Role of The Military in Politics*, argues that military intervention into politics is an exception rather than the rule and it is based on three political strengths of the military. He considers the "organization" of the military as its foremost advantage.[12] Similarly, Amos Perlmutter concentrates mainly "on the impact and the role of corporate professionalism as the most significant explanation for the military interventionism and for the political strains existing between the civilian and the military."[13] He argues that as a bureaucratic profession, the military is naturally in politics to a degree related to its role as a partner of the civilians within the process of the formation and implementation of national security policy.[14] In the same way, Eric Nordlinger, points out that the performance failure on the part of the government, such as the inability to preserve public order, strengthened the officers' resolve to act upon their interventionist motives.[15]

In Turkish civil-military relations too, there have been a focus on the historical legacy of the military combined with its modernization efforts, sophisticated training and high level of organization. The historical legacy of the Turkish military starting from the days of Central Asia to Turkish Kingdoms in Anatolia and from Ottoman Empire to Republic of Turkey has been recognized as an important factor in the military's dominance in politics. These works concentrated on the key role played by the armed forces in the establishment of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. Moreover, military's role as the guardians of Kemalist principles working on the modernization and the westernization of the country has

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[11] Morris Janowitz, **Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations**, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1977, p. 107-108.
[12] Samuel E.Finer, **The Man on Horseback, The Role of Military in Politics**, West View Press, Boulder, 1988, p. 6.
[13] Amos Perlmutter, **The Military and Politics in Modern Times**, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1977, p. 6.
[14] Perlmutter, pp. 2-5.
[15] Eric Nordlinger, **Soldiers in Politics,** Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1977, p. 64.

been the subject of Turkish civil-military relations.[16] Some other literature in attempt to show the effective organization of the Turkish military, focused on the recruitment patterns and the training of its officers.[17]

Besides the civilian-centric approaches, there has been an intensive focus on the direct and indirect military interventions. This literature, in an attempt to analyze the causes of military interventions concentrated on the relative weaknesses and poor performance of the civilian leaders. Majority of them were mainly descriptive studies of military interventions explaining what happened day by day.[18] For example, Osman Doğru in his book on 1960 military intervention, examines the legal anatomy of 27 May coup d'état.[19] Birand, Dündar and Çaplı in their book on 1971 coup by memorandum reveal the history of the events occurred since the execution of Adnan Menderes in 1960 to the 1971 military intervention.[20] Murat Belge in his book on 1980 military intervention publishes the newspaper articles written between 1984 and 1987.[21] Hulki Cevizoğlu's book on 28 February Soft-Coup held interviews with the significant actors who cause the intervention.[22]

In general civil-military relations literature, there has been some concentration on the significance of civilian leaders. Felipe Agüero, in an attempt to analyze the factors that have an impact on Spain's transition from authoritarianism to

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[16] Serdar Şen, **Cumhuriyet Kültürünün Oluşum Sürecinde Bir İdeolojik Aygıt Olarak Silahlı Kuvvetler ve Modernizm**, Sarmal Yayınevi, İstanbul, 1996; Birsen Örs, **Türkiye'de Askeri Müdahaleler**, Der Yayınları, İstanbul, 1996; Frank Tachau and Metin Heper, "The State, Politics and Democracy in Turkey", **Comparative Politics** 16, October 1983, pp. 17-33; William Hale, **Turkish Politics and the Military**, Routledge, New York, 1994; William Hale "Transition to Civilian Governments in Turkey", in **State Democracy and the Military**, eds., Ahmet Evin and Metin Heper, Walter de Gruyter, New York, 1988; Serdar Şen, **Silahli Kuvvetler ve Modernizm**, Melisa Matbaacılık, İstanbul, 1996. .

[17] Mehmet Ali Birand, **Shirts of Steel: An Anatomy of the Turkish Armed Forces**, I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, New York, 1991; James Brown, "The Military and Society: The Turkish Case", **Middle Eastern Studies,** No. 25, July 1989; James Brown, "The Military and Politics in Turkey", **Armed Forces and Society**, v. 113, no. 2, Winter 1987.

[18] Kurtuluş Kayalı, **Ordu ve Siyaset 27 Mayıs-12 Mart**, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2000; Cüneyt Arcayürek, **Demokrasi Dur: 12 Eylül 1980,** Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 1986; Mehmet Ali Birand, **The General's Coup in Turkey: An Inside Story of 12 September 1980,** Brassey's Defence Publishers, Washington, 1987;Emre Kongar, **28 Subat ve Demokrasi**, Remzi Kitabevi, İstanbul, 2000.

[19] Osman Doğru, **27 Mayıs Rejimi,** İmge Kitabevi, Ankara1998.

[20] Mehmet Ali Birand, Can Dündar, Bülent Çapli, **12 Mart, Ihtilalin Pencesinde Demokrasi**, İmge Kitabevi, Ankara, 1994.

[21] Murat Belge, **12 Yıl Sonra 12 Eylül**, Birikim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2000.

[22] Hulki Cevizoğlu, **28 Şubat Bir Hükümeti Nasıl Devrildi**, Beyaz Yayınları, İstanbul, 1998.

democracy between 1975 and 1978, examines the role of soldiers and civilians, emphasizing, the role of civilian leaders and institutions.[23]   Wendy Hunter in her analysis of the confrontation between the military and civilians in Brazil in the aftermath of the democratic transition in 1985 looked at the incentive structure and the political capacity of the military and the institutional context in which they operate.[24]   Along the same line, David Pion-Berlin in his study of civil-military relations in Argentina in the post-transition period of 1984-1994, in an attempt to explain why some of the military policies, crafted by both political leaders and the military, failed, while other policies succeeded focuses on "the organizational features of government."[25]

However, purely looking at the organization of the military or the performance of the civilian side, the democratic institutions do not explain the recent increase in Turkish military's role in politics. (in spite of the constitutional amendments that were implemented to diminish military's role in politics). Therefore, in the necessity of searching for other factors, this research came up with the "internal threats" variable.

B. "Internal Threat" Variable in Civil-Military Relations Literature

Although both military-centric and civilian-centric theories have had great contributions to the theories of civil military relations, they could not answer all of the questions. Theories which take the individual characteristics of civilian and military leaders to explain the civil military relations within a country, beg the

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[23] Agüero, pp. 1-3.
[24] Wendy Hunter, **Eroding Military Influence in Brazil, Politicians Against Soldiers**, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1997, p. 2-8. In her work Hunter shows how civilians were able to oppose the military on issues such as federal budget allocation, condition of labor rights in the contitution, and miltary's interest indeveloping and occupying Amazon region, by looking at the inentive structure and political capacity of the leaders and the institutional context in which they operate.
[25] See David Pion-Berlin, **Through the Corridors of Power, Institutions and Civil-Military Relations in Argentina**, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, Pennsylvania: 1997. By looking at the organizational features of the government, Pion-Berlin shows the need to look at the civilian institutions such as Ministry of Economics and independent judiciary in order to nderstand why the Argentine mililtary's budget decreased, why there was failure in reforming the nation's defense law or why some of teh human rights violators were not punished.

question of why different types of civilian or military leaders come to power at particular times. The theories which centered on changes in military organization were not able to explain the changes in the civilian side of the relation. Studies focusing on the changes in the civilian institutions of the government were too descriptive.[26] In an attempt to find an answer to the interference of military into politics other variables were taken into consideration. Among these 'internal threats' as an extension of the security environment had been an important topic of study. Similarly, this research will follow this trend and will attempt to bring an explanation to the rise of Turkish military's role in politics by concentrating on the increasing level of internal threats.

In his influential book *The Soldier and the State, The theory and Politics of Civil Military Relations,* Samuel Huntington in an attempt to minimize the power of the military vis-à-vis the civilian groups, suggests two kinds of civilian control; objective and subjective civilian control. While in his 'subjective civilian control,' civilian control is achieved by maximizing the power of civilian groups in relation to the military, in 'objective civilian control,' civilian control is gained by maximizing the professionalism of the military and thereby putting it into a purely military function, in other words by 'militarizing the military.' According to 'objective civilian control,' the more the military is professionalized the less it will interfere into politics.[27] While the 'subjective civilian control'[28] is disapproved for advancing one civilian group at the expense of another, 'objective civilian control' is criticized for increasing the role of military in politics. For example, Alfred Stepan, in his study of the authoritarian period in Brazil between 1964 and 1985 argues that the professionalization of internal security and national development increased the

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[26] This conception was borrowed from Michael C. Desch, **Civilian Control of the Military The Changing SecurityEnvironment,** The John Hopkins Unviersity Press, Baltimore and London, 1999, pp. 8-10.

[27] Samuel Huntington, **The Soldier and the State, The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations,** Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1964, pp. 80-84.
According Huntington a highly professional officer corps develops the ability to subordinate itself to the decisions and orientation of a legitimate civilian state authority.

[28] As Huntington explains, since the civilian groups are large in number, varied in character and have conflicting interests, attempts to maximize civilian power always lead to the maximizing of the power of some particular civilian group causing one group to posseess the civilian control.

involvement of the military in politics.[29] Similarly, Bengt Abrahamsson argues that the professionalization of the military breeds corporate interests, necessarily entangling the armed forces in political concerns.[30] Samuel Finer explains how highly professional officer corps, such as those of Germany and Japan had frequently intervened in politics.[31]

As a result of these critiques, Huntington later qualified his position by differentiating between cases where external threats are dominant and cases where threats to the state emerge internally. While the professional training of the military to confront external threats may keep the military out of politics, training of the military personnel with regards to internal security (for guerilla unrest or other separatist civilian insurrections) may actually draw the military into politics.[32] This research will follow Huntington's approach where he argues that internal threats draw the military into politics and consequently will argue that rise in the attacks of PKK and Islamist activities gives the space to Turkish military to intervene into politics.

Recent Turkish civil-military relations literature also started to concentrate on the variables of 'internal threats,' rise of Kurdish nationalism and political Islam argument. In an attempt to explain the rise of Turkish military's role in politics starting from mid-1990s on, scholars primarily focused on internal threats. For example, Ergun Özbudun, states that the military still saw itself performing a guardianship role against threats to its deeply felt values, such as the indivisibility of the state threatened by the rise of Kurdish nationalism. He concludes that as long as the threats to fundamental values cherished by the military existed, the military would continue to intervene.[33] Similarly, Ümit Cizre emphasizes how the growing influence of Kurdish nationalism legitimized an expanded political role for the

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[29] Alfred Stepan, eds., **Authoritarian Brazil, Origins, Policies and Future**, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, New Haven, 1973, p. ix.
[30] Bengst Abrahamsson, **Military Professionalization and Political Power**, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, 1972, p, 37.
[31] Finer, pp. 21-2.
[32] Samuel P. Huntington, "Patterns of Violence in World Politics", in **Changing Patterns of Military Politics,** ed. Samuel P. Huntington, Free Press, New York, 1962, pp. 21-22.
[33] Ergun Özbudun, **Contemporary Turkish Politics, Challenges to Democratic Consolidation**, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, 2000, pp. 120-121.

Turkish Armed Forces beginning in the mid-1990s.[34] Gareth Jenkins argues that the return of the armed forces to a more active political role in early 1990s was a direct response to what it saw as the resurgence of the threat of Kurdish nationalism.[35]

Along the same line, Michael Desch in his book *Civilian Control of the Military, The Changing Security Environment* argues that strength of the civilian control of the military in most countries is shaped by structural factors, especially the 'threats,' which affect individual leaders, the military organization, the state and society.[36] Desch evaluates the level of interference of the military in politics by looking at the changing levels of (high or low) both internal and external threats. He argues that if the state faces low external threats and high internal threats, then the country will experience the weakest type of civilian control of the military.[37] In other words, there will be a higher chance for the military intervention. Michael Desch's 'framework of analysis' will form the main argument of this thesis. The main argument of this research as already stated before will be— in spite of any kind of improvement (i.e. the constitutional reform packages) in civil-military relations, the higher the intensity of internal threat, the more the chance for a military involvement in politics.

II. FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

Turkish Armed Forces, as the founders of the Republic of Turkey and initiators of Kemalist reforms have been an important authority in Turkish political life. Whenever a chaos or anarchy started in the country, such as the ones in 1960s and 1970s, Turkish military intervened to put the political order back in shape. Once the military restored order, in a short time, it left the power to the civilians. Staring from 1990s, the rise of two internal threats, Islamists in politics and separatist PKK terror draw the military into politics. While one of them threatened the secularity

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[34] Ümit Cizre, **Politics and Military into the 21st Century**, EUI Working Papers, RSC No. 2000/24. European University Institute, pp. 4-8.
[35] Gareth Jenkins, **Context and Circumstance: The Turkish Military and Politics.** The International Institute for Strategic Studies, Adelphi Paper 337. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 39.
[36] Desch, p.11.
[37] Desch, pp.14-15.

principle of the republic, the other one put the territorial integrity of the country in danger. However, it is important to identify the distinction between the definition of internal threat by the "state elite" and "political elite" in this context. While the "state elite" is consisted of the military officers, senior government bureaucrats and some associated politicians, the "political elite" is composed of elected politicians in the parliament.[38] Particularly, in the case of rise of political Islam, while the state elite identified this rise as a threat to secularity principle of the Republic, the political elite saw it as part of the religious culture embedded in the society. In the case of rise of Kurdish nationalism both elites saw this rise as a threat to the territorial integrity of the country.

By late 1990s, in an attempt to realize its dream of qualifying for European Union membership, Turkish governments started to take precautions to apply the political conditions of Copenhagen criteria. Among these constitutional reform packages, 2003 package made dramatic changes particularly concerning the *Milli Güvenlik Konseyi*-MGK (National Security Council) to diminish the role of Turkish military in politics. However, in spite of these drastic measures, Turkish military's power continued to retain its influence in politics. This research, in an attempt to find an answer for the reasons of this rise is making use of the 'internal threats.' Consequently, it argues once the two above mentioned threats began rising, Turkish military's intervention into politics increased severely.

As the framework of analysis, this thesis will adopt Michael Desch's approach that integrates internal (domestic) and external (international) threats as independent variables by looking at their intensities (high or low). As his dependent variable he looks at the condition of the civil-military relations (ideal, good, poor, worst).[39] In other words, Desch actually looks at the interference level of military into politics. He calls a high interference as the 'worst' condition of civil-military relations and a medium interference as a 'poor' condition, low interference as a

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[38] Metin Heper, "Transitions to Democracy Reconsidered. A Historical Perspective", in **Comparative Political Dynamics: Global Research Perspectives,** eds. Dankwart Rustow and Kenneth Paul Erickson, Harper Collins Publishers, New York, 1991, p. 203.
[39] Desch, p.12.

'mixed' condition and no interference as a 'good' condition of civil-military relations. [40]

Using the above mentioned assumptions as signposts, Desch deduces a number of simple hypotheses and predictions about the strength of civilian control of the military in different structural threat environments. These predictions were supported with historical and contemporary evidence in his book. Desch distinguishes four different situations as the ones illustrated in the chart below.

Figure 1: Desch's Illustration of Civilian Control of the Military as a Function of Location and Intensity of Threat

		External Threats	
		High	Low
Internal Threats	High	(Q3) Poor	(Q4) Worst
	Low	(Q1)Good	(Q2) Mixed

Source: Desch, 1999, p. 16.

In this figure as can be seen in Quadrant 1, in the situations where states facing high external threats and low internal threats, the civil-military relations is the most ideal. Desch argues that a challenging international security environment is more likely to bring power to a civilian leadership experienced in and knowledgeable about national security affairs. He contends that civilian and military ideas will tend to be in harmony in such a threat configuration. He argues that few internal threats these countries faced at that period, helps to form the civilian control in politics. As

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[40] Desch, p.12. Desch argues that structural threat environment should affect the nature of the civilian leadership, the disposition of the military organization, the cohesiveness of the state institutions, the method of civilian control and the convergence or the divergence of military-civilian ideas and stances

examples of this quadrant Desch analyzes American and Soviet civil-military relations during the Cold War.[41] Second quadrant is about the states that face low external and internal threats. In this situation Desch argues that lack of clear threats may reduce military's cohesiveness and make it less capable of collective action. Desch asserts that the problem in this situation is not the insubordination but rather coordination. That is because there are internal splits in military, state and the society as well as among these groups. As examples of this quadrant Desch examines post-Cold War US and Russia.[42] In the third quadrant countries face high internal and external threats. Desch argues that outcome of this situation may vary. He expects to find serious problems with civilian control. Desch however, argues that the problems would be fever than Quadrant 4 where the external treat is low and internal threat is high. In this situation military's orientation may be uncertain; the presence of intense internal and external threats can provide the military more unified and capable of concerted actions. Desch proves this hypothesis with the examples of Germany during the First World War, France during the Algerian crisis, and Japan during the interwar period and the Soviet Union for a brief period in the late 1980s.[43]

The fourth quadrant— which this thesis adopts as its framework for analysis— presents the situation of a state facing low external threats and high internal threats. In such a situation, the country will experience the weakest type of civilian control of the military. The military will interfere into politics. Desch asserts that the civilian leadership is less likely to be dutiful about national security affairs. According to Desch an internal threat from society and state will unify the military and eventually lead to more coup attempts. As examples of this quadrant Desch examines civil-military relations in Brazil, Argentina and Chile from mid 1960s to late 1970s.[44]

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[41] Desch, p.14. The case studies in which Desch proved this case are the situations of the US and USSR during the cold war
[42] Desch, p. 16-17 and 22-65.
[43] Desch, pp.17 and 67-97.
[44] Desch, pp.14-15 and 97-114.

Starting from mid-1980s, Turkey has been facing high internal threats. These internal threats however are not intergovernmental wars as suggested by Desch in some countries. They are threats that target the territorial integrity of the country and secular structure of the Republic. In the situation of high internal threats, Desch mentions a threat to the military institution from the state and society. In the Turkish case, these threats in some ways are from the state and society too. The rise of Kurdish nationalism comes from the Kurdish population living in Turkey and therefore it is emerging from the society. The internal threat of 'rise of political Islam' is also coming from the religiously conservative population of Turkey and that is also pending from society. The threat sometimes comes from the state when extreme Islamists come to power as it happened in Refah Partisi-RP (Welfare Party) coalition in 1997. Consequently, under these dangers Turkish military becomes a staunch supporter of secularism and nationalism (in the sense of territorial integrity). As will be analyzed in Chapter 4 and 5, both threats currently are shaping Turkish political life.

Quadrant four also requires low external threats. In this respect Turkey cannot be ideally included in the group of countries with low external threats. The fragile security environment and substantial sensitive power balances surrounding the country is a concern for the Turkish state and the military. However, it would be an overstatement to put Turkey among the countries with high external threats. High external threat environment in Turkey was valid particularly during the Cold War. Soviet Union's threat to occupy Straits and eastern part of the country forced Turkey to take its place in the Western Alliance. Cold War was a period where there was an explicit external threat to Turkey's territorial integrity. In the aftermath of the Cold War, although the external threats did not decrease tremendously, they are not as high, direct and explicit as they used to be. Although currently Turkey may not face direct external threats, as a result of its location between the Middle East, Balkans and Caucasus, the country is still confronted indirect external threats which keep the Turkish military alert. The two Gulf Wars that have been taking place in its next door neighbor Iraq, unresolved Cyprus issue Turkey is dealing with Greece and the recent war between Georgia and Russia. These threats which cannot be classified as high external threats are not low either. Therefore, in this analysis, this research will

modify Desch's framework and place Turkey in a "moderate external threat" position. Consequently, in Desch's framework Turkey can be classified as a country with high internal threats and moderate external threats.

Figure 2: Turkey's Threat Environment

		External Threats		
		High	Moderate	Low
Internal Threats	High	(Q2) Poor	(Q6) Poor-Weak	(Q4) Worst
	Moderate	(Q5)		
	Low	(Q1)Good		(Q3) Mixed

Source: Modified from Desch's Framework

Another problem with the 'external threat' concept of Turkey is the overlapping between the two threats. In the majority of the time, internal threats of Turkey originate from the external sources. Actually there is a common belief among the military establishment that 'when enemies of Turkey can not destroy the country externally, then they refer to the methods to divide the country from inside (internally).' When the rise of political Islam is taken into consideration, it is well known fact that Islamist countries such as Iran and Saudi Arabia have been financially supporting the Islamist groups in Turkey.[45] For example, Iranian ambassador's efforts for the implementation of Sharia in Turkey as expressed in the gathering in Sincan were apparent. Similarly, the rise of Kurdish nationalism for decades had been supported by the Syrian government. Even the leader of PKK Öcalan spent most of his life in a house centrally located in Damascus.[46] Along the

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[45] Atay Akdevelioğlu and Ömer Kürkçüoğlu, "B) İran'la İlişkiler", in **Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar**, ed.,Baskın Oran, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002 Vol. 2, pp.152-153.
[46] Melek Fırat and Ömer Kürkçüoğlu, "Ortadoğuyla İlişkiler", in **Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar**, ed., Baskın Oran, Vol.2, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002, p. 140.

same line, Kurds of Iraq in an attempt to establish their own Kurdistan have been provoking the Kurds of Turkey and moreover, providing the PKK terrorist a safe haven in northern Iraq. In other words, the external threats Turkey faces mostly provoke the internal ones.[47] Occasionally, the threats coming from the external actors have been transformed into internal threats.

Consequently, in Turkey while the external threats are showing themselves in a moderate level, internal threats are rising in an escalating pace. After PKK's ended its unilateral cease-fire in 2004, terrorist attacks on the Iraqi border killing hundreds of soldiers and civilians and the bombings in the big cities targeting civilians have been continuing in a full speed. In February 2008, Turkish military executed a cross-border operation to Iraq in attempt to capture the PKK terrorists in their safe haven. Similarly, political Islam is rising dramatically and challenging the Turkish political life more than ever. The most important sign of this rise is the election of moderate (according to some scholars Islamist) *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* –AKP (Justice and Development Party) by the 47 percent of the vote. After receiving one out of two people's vote and placing its own candidate to the position of presidency, AKP now is openly pursuing its policies that are against the secularity principle of Atatürk as can be seen in its policies concerning the headscarf and *İmam Hatip Okulları*, (Preacher and Prayer Leader Schools).

In sum, in Turkey, currently both PKK terror and Islamist fundamentalism are on a hike. They are both escalating in a very high speed. While the internal threats are quite high, the external threats (which are actually directly and indirectly provoke internal threats) are showing themselves in a moderate level. Considering Desch's framework with my modifications, I can argue that this rise in the level of internal threats will force the military to continue to interfere into politics. Consequently, the constitutional reforms that were introduced to diminish the role of the military will not be effective. Next chapter will give a historical overview of role of military in Turkish politics.

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[47] Only in August 2008, bombings in Güngören, İstanbul and Yağhaneler, İzmir killed civilians.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ROLE OF MILITARY IN TURKISH POLITICS

Turkish military has always been one of the most important institutions that shaped Turkish political and social life throughout the history. Starting from the days of Central Asia during sixth to eighth centuries, Turkish military acted as one of the crucial elements of state. Turkish warrior nomads living in Central Asia sustained their survival by conquering new lands. During the Ottoman Empire period conquest-*fetih* was one of the most important means of increasing wealth and economic development of the empire. As a result of the conquests of the Ottoman military, the empire extended into three continents, Asia, Europe and Africa. Turkish military and military leaders were the founders of the Republic of Turkey. They helped the founder of the country Mustafa Kemal Atatürk to establish his reforms. Once they saw these reforms in danger, they did not refrain from intervening into politics as can be seen in two direct interventions of 1960 and 1980 and indirect interventions of 1971 and 1997. During post-Republican era, there have been several attempts to decrease military's role in politics. Among these, most important attempt has been the constitutional changes made in 2003 by recent Turkish governments to subordinate military absolutely under the civilian administration as part of the European Union's (EU) requirements to qualify Turkey for full membership status.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the role of the Turkish military in politics to show its significant position in Turkish political life. In order to do this, the chapter will first briefly analyze historical background of Turkish military's dominant role in politics during the Ottoman Empire. It will then explore military's significance in politics during the Republican period by concentrating on the direct and indirect military interventions. The chapter will be concluded with an analysis of attempts to civilianize politics during the recent period, particularly during the rule of *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*-AKP (Justice and Development Party) with the changes foreseen by the EU Progress Reports.

I. TURKISH MILITARY DURING THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE PERIOD

Two hundred years after Turks came to Anatolia from Central Asia, in 1299 through their comquests, they managed to establish one of the glorious empires of the world, the Ottoman Empire. The military was not only significant for the sovereignty of the empire but it was also crucial for the sustainable existence of an economic and social life in the country. Ottoman economy mainly based on the system of conquest.[47]

There were different systems to recruit military personnel in the Ottoman Empire. In the "*Tımar*" system, during the period of peace *Sipahis* (the peasant cavalries) worked on the land given by the sultan and trained the people who worked for them as military men. They also collected taxes and supervised peasants. During the time of war, these Sipahis joined the Sultan's army with their own forces.[48] In the Ottoman Empire, the land belonged to the sultan. Therefore, there was no aristocracy or bourgeoisie in this system and all state functions were run by the military. The military fought for the empire, collected taxes, administered the provinces, supervised agricultural production, and looked after state enterprises.[49] The other system of recruitment of military personnel to the empire was called "*devşirme*". This system was based on drafting of young boys from the subject Christian population; on their conversion to Islam and rigorous training to serve the empire wither as officers in the palace or soldiers in the Sultan's special corps called Janissaries.[50]

When the Ottoman Empire started losing wars beginning from seventeenth century onward, modernization movement in the empire started from the military.

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[47] Zekeriya Türkmen "Türkiye'de Ulus Devletin Kuruluşuna Uzanan Süreçte Ordu-Millet Dayanışması", **Askeri Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi**, No.9, 2007, p. 58; Osman Metin Öztürk, **Ordu ve Politika**, Fark Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, p. 28.
[48] Türkmen, pp.58-59; Öztürk, p. 28.
[49] Bener Karakartal, "Turkey: The Army as Guardian of the Political Order", in **The Political Dilemmas of Military Regimes,** eds., Christopher Clapham and George Philip, Croom Helm, London,1985, p.47.
[50] Hale, p.7; İlber Ortaylı **Osmanlıyı Yeniden Keşfetmek,** Timaş Yayınları, İstanbul, 2006, pp. 27-34.

Sultan Selim III established a new modern military in 1792. Western instructors were brought to train the military personnel. Military officers began to learn the modernization concepts as part of their training. Westernization of the military eventually created a group of young officers called Young Turks, who accelerated the modernization of the state, establishment of a constitution that restricted the rights of the Sultan. Eventually this group led the transformation of the empire into the modern Republic of Turkey in the aftermath of First World War.[51] Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, as a military officer of the Ottoman Army started the War of Independence in the aftermath of the First World War and established Republic of Turkey with the assistance of the other military officers. Dominant role of the military during Ottoman period continued during the Republic of Turkey.

II. TURKISH MILITARY DURING THE REPUBLICAN PERIOD

Turkey was established after the War of Independence led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk during 1919-1922. Actually, Republic of Turkey was established by Atatürk and his cadre who were originally military men who served in the First World War and the War of Independence. After the establishment of the Republic in 1923, Atatürk continuing with the Young Turk tradition started a series reforms to modernize the country. In order to establish the republic, he first banned the sultanate and then the caliphate. He also outlawed the religious orders and closed religious schools in order to unify the educational system. Moreover, the Islamic law-*Sharia* was banned and Swiss civil code was adopted. Arabic alphabet was placed with Latin alphabet. Most importantly, the military assisted Atatürk in the implementation of these reforms.[52] These reforms were based on Atatürk's principles which are commonly known as the Kemalist principles and they include nationalism, statism, republicanism, secularism, reformism and populism.

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[51] Erik Jan Zürcher, **Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi (Turkey, A Modern History),** (trans. Yasemin Sanen Gönen), İletişim, İstanbul, 2000, p. 41; Kemal H. Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908", **International Journal of Middle East Studies,** Vol. 3, No.3, 1972, pp. 277-278.
[52] For further information about the Kemalist Reforms see Ergun Özbudun, "The Nature of Kemalist Political Regime", in **Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State,** eds., Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun C.Hurst, London, 1981.

The purpose of 'statism' principle was to create an economy led by the state. 'Statism' principle was firstly replaced with mixed economy and then, with liberal economic policies, therefore, lost its significance. 'Reformism' principle aimed at replacing the old state institutions with the new ones in order to bring the country to the level of the developed world. 'Populism' principle acknowledged the equality of the citizens against law and state structure. New legal arrangements such as giving women the right to elect and to be elected to the parliament –to make all the citizens equal regardless of their race, sex, religion were brought.[53] Most importantly, the Turkish military played a very significant role to promote and protect these principles since the early years of the Republic. They acted as the "guardians" of the Kemalist principles. The purpose of the 'republicanism' principle was to back the reforms and make sure that the country was governed by democratic principles and egalitarian democracy. 'Nationalism' principle was based on the establishment of an independent national state, on the basis of national consciousness. The aim of the principle was to establish a nationally and culturally homogenous, unified state on the territory of Turkish Republic. 'Secularism' principle envisaged the independence of state institutions from the influence of religious thought and institutions. Secularism principle is one of the most challenged principles alongside with nationalism since the establishment of modern Turkey.

While the majority of these principles were well accepted and adapted, two principles "nationalism" and "secularism" faced a lot of challenges. As secularism was challenged by the conservative Muslims of the Turkish community, nationalism principle that aimed to homogenize the community under the banner of Turkish nation state was challenged by the separatist fractions of the Kurds living in Turkey. Consequently, the Turkish military which accepted itself as the guardians of these principles had not refrained from getting involved into politics when these principles got into danger.

In the early years of the Republic of Turkey, majority of the deputies and the administrative staff were originally the military officers who still served in their

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[53] Özbudun, p. 88-90.

military positions. Quite a number these people were the war heroes who served during the First World War and War of Independence of Turkey. In order to end these dual positions, Atatürk wanted military people to resign from their positions to serve as civilian deputies.[54] On one hand, Atatürk was trying to civilianize the politics. On the other hand, he was afraid of an anti-republican military intervention that could be run by ex-war heroes who were against some of his principles. Consequently, he banned these military heroes from political and administrative positions unless they consented to leave their military positions. Although, quite a number of military officers left their title and started serving as civilian deputies, as a mentality, they still ruled the country from a militaristic point of view[55].

Turkey was ruled by Atatürk's Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi-CHP[56] (Republican People's Party) for 27 years. The party maintained its leading role by the help of military. Moreover, it relied on the armed forces' power during the implementation of the new reforms which transformed the social and political system of the country. Atatürk attempted to establish opposition political parties twice. The first attempt was the establishment of *Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*, TCF (Progressive Republican Party) in 1924. Groups who opposed Kemalist reforms were soon gathered in TCF. In the aftermath of Sheik Sait Revolt (a Kurdish uprising), the party was closed as a result of *Takrir-i Sükun* (Restoration-of-Order-Law) and the rebels in the party were put on trial in *İstiklal Mahkemeleri* (Independence Tribunals). The second opposition party, *Serbest Fırka*, (Free Party) was established by Fethi Bey with the encouragement of Mustafa Kemal in 1930. However, in a short time, separatists, monarchists and conservatives all took their place in this party and it too was dissolved.[57]

Early years of the Republic of Turkey was dominated by the rule CHP and Kemalist elites. Atatürk and the ruling elite who were mostly ex-military officers

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[54] Öztürk, pp. 56-57.
[55] Öztürk, p. 57.
[56] Symbol of CHP, the six arrows actually symbolizes the principles of Atatürk.
[57] Öztürk, p. 59; Atay Akdevelioğlu-Ömer Kürkçüoğlu "Orta Doğu'yla İlişkiler", in **Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular,Belgeler, Yorumlar, vol. 1,** ed., Baskın Oran, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002, p. 362.

believed that the only way to develop the country economically and socially were the implementation of Kemalist reforms and principles. It is obvious that the support of the military against the rebels, monarchists, conservatives and other opponents was the crucial element of success of Kemalist elites during the period. As the main force assisting the implementation of Atatürk's reforms, Turkish military had been the staunch supporter of the Kemalist principles starting from the early years of the Republic.

A. Transition to Multi-Party Period and Democrat Party

Turkey managed to stay out of the Second World War thanks to cautious policies followed by President İsmet İnönü. In the last days of the war Turkey symbolically waged war against Germany and sided with the Ally forces. Second World War years put Turkey in a serious economic crisis when the production dramatically decreased as a result of conscription of millions of men to the military. The need for a large army during the war, (although the country did not enter war) forced CHP to take harsh economic and political measures. While the economic measures made people poorer, the political measures limited their civil liberties making CHP the absolute power.[58] Consequently, CHP drastically lost the confidence of the people.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, when the Soviet Union started threatening Turkey by claiming a share in the Straits and eastern part of the country, Turkey found itself on the side of the capitalist West, the United States against the communist East, the Soviet Union in the new bipolar world. As a result, Turkey gave up its principle of neutrality in its foreign relations. Alliance with the West forced CHP government to take political and economic measures to harmonize its system to the Western liberal thought. The first sign of the new liberalization process was seen when president İnönü stressed the parliamentary characteristic of Turkish political

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[58] See Mustafa Aydın "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye,1939-1945", in **Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular,Belgeler, Yorumlar,** vol. 1**,** ed., Baskı Oran, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002, p. 421; Baskın Oran, "Dönemin Bilançosu", in ed., Baskın Oran, in **Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar,** vol. 1, ed., Baskı Oran, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002, p. 289.

system in his opening speech of Turkish Grand National Assembly in November 1944. Accordingly, a new political party called *Demokrat Parti*-DP (Democrat Party) was established by four former members of CHP in 1946.[59] People who have been unhappy with CHP policies started supporting DP. For example, farmers who felt abandoned by the regime's absorption in industrialization, businessmen who did not want a dominant state in economics, the urban workers who suffered during the war years and the religious conservatives who never liked secular principles of Atatürk – all started to support this new political party.[60] DP managed to receive 55 percent of the votes in the 1950 general elections and came to power under the premiership of Adnan Menderes. Consequently, the new emerging middle classes, religious conservatives, urban poor, mainly the ones who have remained in the periphery for decades came to power, for the first time during the history of the republic. Conversely, the Kemalist elite, bureaucratic class and the military that used to remain in the core for decades, this time were pushed to the periphery. The roles were shifted.[61]

In its first four years of DP (1950-1954) managed to bring an economic development to the country mainly as a result of American aid. DP leaders were motivated by advices of American experts and concentrated on agricultural investment. Economic development brought a new class of commercial entrepreneurs and businessmen. These new classes decreased the power of the military and the bureaucracy in politics. Since Menderes government realized the industrialization and the modernization of the agriculture through external borrowing, eventually, he had to pursue inflationary policies. These inflationary polices furthermore decreased the social and political status of the bureaucrats and the military. The social groups that used to be part of the core were quite unhappy

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[59] Hale, p. 89. Four CHP deputies, namely Celal Bayar, Adnan Menderes, Fuad Köprülü and Refik Koraltan started to have problems with the party as a result of the arguments on draft law concerning the distribution of agricultural land. They also demanded the withdrawal of government restrictions on the economy and the right to establish an opposition party. When their proposal was rejected, they left CHP and established Democratic Party in 1946.

[60] Hale, p. 89.

[61] Ergun Özbudun, "Turkey: Crises, Interruptions, and Reequilibrations", in **Politics in Developing Countries, Comparing Experiences with Democracy**, eds., Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, 1995, p. 230.

with the new situation.[62] Furthermore, Prime Minister Menderes scared of a military coup that could overthrow his government, dismissed the top commanders of the military[63]. Menderes also meddled with the appointments and based the promotions on personal loyalty to his party.[64] During Menderes period, the military was not happy with the policies followed by the DP government either. Among these policies were DP government's tolerance to religious orders, their permission to the broadcasting of readings from Koran over the state radio and increasing the budget of Directory of Religious Affairs.[65] Military was not happy about Menderes' statements on the rights of the Kurds to live in their own cultural autonomy.

In its second term, Menderes government's unplanned economic policies caused shortage of goods, foreign currency crisis and inflation.[66] Once DP figured out that it was losing its power, it started turning to undemocratic measures such as banning press from writing anything negative about DP and limiting the rights of the opposition party CHP.[67] Authoritarian tendencies and failing economic policies of DP created public resentment. Many groups such as university and military school students held demonstrations against the government, which in turn, triggered Democrats to harden their policies towards all the opponents.[68]

Kemalist principles in danger and Atatürk's CHP under attack, finally on 27 May 1960 Turkish military held a coup d'état against the government. The army announced that its motivation to hold such a coup was to prevent crisis into which Turkish democracy has fallen.[69] As a result of this military intervention, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and two other leaders of DP were executed. This was the

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[62] Frank Tachau and Metin Heper, "The State, Politics, and the Military in Turkey", **Comparative Politics,** No.14, 1983, pp. 20-21.
[63] James Brown, "The Politics of Disengagement in Turkey: The Kemalist Tradition", in **The Decline of Military Regimes, The Civilian Influence**, in ed., Constantine P. Danopoulos, Westview Press, Boulder, 1988, p. 134.
[64] Brown, p. 134.
[65] See Ali Yaşar Sarıbay, "The Democratic Party, 1946-1960", in **Political Parties and Democracy in Turkey**, eds., Metin Heper and Jacob Landau , St. Martin's Press, New York, 1991, p. 540.
[66] Kemal H. Karpat, "The Military, the State and Politics", in **State Democracy and the Military Turkey in the 1980s**, eds., Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, 1988, p. 140.
[67] Karpat, "The Military, the State and Politics", pp. 140-141.
[68] Karpat, "The Military, the State and Politics", p. 140.
[69] Öztürk, pp. 73-74.

first time that Turkish military directly intervened in politics in order to change the authoritarian government and put the country in order.

B. 1961 Constitution, New Political Environment and the 1971 Coup by Memorandum

The interim period between the coup d'état and the approval of new constitution was ruled by the *Milli Birlik Komitesi*-National Unity Committee, which was a body composed of 38 officers. A constituent assembly was formed with the participation of members of CHP and the intellectuals. The military's influence on the new constitution was obvious. While it guaranteed a wide range of civil rights and widened the scope of social rights given to the citizens, at the same time, it limited the power of the elected organs. In order to do this, 1961 Constitution first strengthened the power of judges and the Council of State, adopted a bicameral system of Parliament and granted autonomy to some public agencies. Second, it established the *Milli Güvenlik Konseyi*-MGK (National Security Council). The council was composed of the President as the chairman, Prime Minister, ministers who were determined by law, the Chief of General Staff, and representatives of the armed forces.[70] It authorized to submit its views to the Council of Ministers to assist them in decision making and advisory body to the Ministry of Council. By establishing such an institution, the military opened itself a room to participate and interfere into politics. 1961 Constitution took the position of Chief of General back under the Prime Ministry from Minister of Defense consequently, putting the military establishment in a more influential position.[71] Leader of the 1960 coup, General Cemal Gürsel was elected as the fourth President of Republic of Turkey. Until the election of Turgut Özal as the second civilian president of the republic in 1989, the subsequent Presidents were all retired military generals.

The first half of 1960s experienced unstable coalition governments that were orchestrated by the military. In spite of the 1960 military coup which aimed at

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[70] Jenkins, pp. 45-46.
[71] See: http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tarihce/kb11.htm for the general characteristics of 1961 Constitution and see http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa/anayasa61.htm for the full articles of 1961 constitution.

overthrowing DP, in the aftermath of 1961 election, the newly formed *Adalet Partisi-AP* (Justice Party), a successor DP came to power in consecutive elections of 1965 and 1969. More liberal atmosphere of post-1961 Constitution period created the extreme right and extreme left movements and their political parties such as religious right *Milli Nizam Partisi*-MNP (National Order Party), nationalist right *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*-MHP (National Action Party) and extreme left parties, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi*-TİP (Turkish Workers Party).[72] These extreme movements showed themselves as labor union strikes and student demonstrations. Extreme fragmentation and polarization of political parties led to chaos in the country. Only a decade after the 1960 coup, military intervened in March 1971, this time through a memorandum.

On March 12, 1971, Turkish Military sent a memorandum to President Cevdet Sunay and Turkish Grand National Assembly. The military held the AP government, under the leadership of Süleyman Demirel responsible for driving the country into anarchy. Prime Minister Demirel's government was forced to resign. However, the parliament was not dissolved. A new "above-party" or technocratic government and a non-partisan cabinet were established. The new technocratic government led by Nihat Erim, imposed suppressive policies to limit the liberties of the people in order to give an end to the turmoil in the country. They imposed martial law, censored newspapers, banned strikes, and arrested hundreds of extremists from both the left and the right[73]. Moreover, they also closed down the leftist TİP and the pro-Islamist MNP. In the aftermath of the memorandum, the power of the executive was increased and independence of judiciary was decreased.[74]

Military's autonomy was strengthened by the 1971 and 1973 constitutional amendments. Rather than "representatives," according to 1971 amendment, the

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[72] See İgor Lipovski, **The Socialist Movement in Turkey, 1960-1980**, E. J. Brill, Leiden,1992, for the Workers Party and other socialist political organizations in Turkey; Üstün Ergüder and Richard I. Hofferbert "The 1983 General Elections in Turkey: Continuity or Change in Voting Patterns", in **State Democracy and the Military Turkey in the 1980s,** eds., Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, 1988, pp. 90-91; Kemal H. Karpat, "Military Interventions: Army-Civilian Relations in Turkey Before and After 1980", in **State Democracy and the Military Turkey in the 1980s**, eds., Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, 1988, pp. 146-147.
[73] Zürcher, p. 272.
[74] Öztürk, p. 88.

"commanders," the five commanders of the army were going to join the MGK meetings. MGK's status was reinforced by substituting the expression *"recommends"* for *"submits"* and dropping the words to *"assist"*: "The National Security Council **recommends** the required basic views to the Council of Ministers concerning national security and ensuring coordination."[75]   Consequently, with the changes made in the aftermath of 1971 coup by memorandum, the militaristic character of MGK and its role in Turkish political life was strengthened.

1973 General elections brought back the fragmented political life. Once Atatürk's party, the protector of the Kemalist principles, CHP formed a coalition government with Islamist *Milli Selamet Partisi*-MSP (National Salvation Party).[76] This coalition government was followed by other coalition governments of the rightist parties. The politics of 1970s was marked by deep fragmentation between political parties and the groups in the society. Short-lived unstable governments, polarized political parties, anarchy and political violence between leftists and rightists on the street coupled with economic crisis created a full-scale turmoil in the country. Moreover, late 1970s Turkish politics witnessed the reawakening of Kurdish nationalism and the formation of Kurdish organizations including *Partiya Karkaran Kurdistan*-PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) which was established by Abdullah Öcalan in 1978.[77] As a result of tremendous amount of political violence, Turkish military held a coup on September 12 1980 to control the political life and bring order to the country.

C. Extreme Militarization in the aftermath of 1980 Military Intervention

By September 1980, political violence between leftists and rightists and different religious sects brought the state on the verge falling apart. Accordingly,

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[75] Law No. 1488, which passed on 20 September 1971. Also see Ergun Özbudun, **Contemporary Turkish Politics***,* Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, 2000, p.108.
[76] See Cem Başlevent, Hasan Kırmanoğlu, Burhan Şenatalar, "Empirical investigation of party preferences and economic voting in Turkey", **European Journal of Political Research** Vol.4, No. 44, 2005.
[77] See http://www.ataturk.com/content/view/28/62/ for Justin & Carolyn McCarthy, **Who Are the Turks? A manual for teachers,** (The American Forum for Global Education)**,** p. 93.

military's direct intervention on September 12, 1980 was met by the public with relief. Following the military intervention, the leader of the coup, Chief of General Staff Kenan Evren, promised to return to civilian rule within a reasonable time. The military assumed full executive and legislative powers. This time parliament was dissolved, the cabinet was dismissed and parliamentarians were ripped of their immunities. Blaming the politicians for the chaos of the pre-coup period, the military rule dissolved all the political parties, banned many politicians and political party leaders from politics and even abolished the duties of Mayors and Municipal Assemblies. Two main Labor Unions were banned alongside the political parties.[78] Although General Evren, the leader of the coup declared that they would return to a civilian rule after a reasonable time period, it was evident that the military regime was planning to make drastic changes in the nature of the political system before giving the power back to the civilians.

During this period, the military in an attempt to restructure the political system, adopted 669 new laws in order to prevent any kind of return to the days of anarchy. The new constitution written in 1982 was full of harsh limitations regarding political pluralism and personal freedoms. The military was hoping to transform the Turkish political structure into a two-party system in order to avoid the coalition governments that brought chaos to the country in the 1970s. Through the 1982 constitution military leaders tried to create a totally new stable political system by increasing the power of the executive, particularly the president.[79] Provisional Article 1 of the 1982 Constitution made acceptance of the charter contingent upon electing General Evren as President of the Republic for a seven year term. Therefore, Evren managed to preside at the highest level of decision-making as the representative of the military. Other generals who were involved in 1980 military intervention were

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[78] Revolutionary Labor Unions Confederation (Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu-DISK) with its socialist orientation and ultra rightist Nationalist Labor Unions Confederation (Miliyetçi İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu- MİSK). Zürcher, pp. 405-406.

[79] Military was actually assuming that Presidents will be elected from military generals. Therefore, by increasing the power of the president, they were hoping to increase the power of the military through the president. Armağan Kuloğlu and Mustafa Şahin, "The Past and Future of Civil Military Relations in Turkey", in **Governance and the Military: Perspectives for Change in Turkey**, **Harmonie Paper 19,** eds., Sami Faltaş and Sander Jansen, The Centre of European Security Studies Press, Groningen, 2006, p.88.

given the right to form a Presidential Council. The job of the council was to check the functioning of the legislature in passing laws and of the bureaucracy in implementing these laws.

In the aftermath of the 1980 military intervention, the military increased its influence on the executive branch. 1982 Constitution strengthened the role of MGK even more by increasing the number and weight of generals at the expense of civilian members.[80] The power of the MGK was further strengthened by asking the Council of Ministers to give priority consideration to the decisions of MGK concerning the measures related to "national security," which included preservation of the existence and independence of the State, the integrity and indivisibility of the country, and the peace and security of the society.[81] Actually, the military's definition of the "national security," was so broad that it included almost any policy area starting from education to environment, foreign policy to security policies. The right of Constitutional Court to open a trial against the decisions and laws coming from MGK was banned. Furthermore, 1982 Constitution established *Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemeleri*-DGM (State Security Courts) to try crimes against the indivisible integrity of the country, free democratic order and offenses directly involving internal and external security of the country. However, by appointing both civilian and military judges to work in these courts, constitution gave the right to the military to get involved into the trial of civilians.[82]

Once the new constitution was ratified and approved by the public and the anarchic environment started to diminish slowly, the military approved the formation of new political parties. The military was hoping to start a two-party system (a

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[80] Under Article 118 of the 1982 Constitution, under the chairmanship of the Preseident of the Republic, the MGK was composed of the Prime Minister, the Chief of General Staff, the Ministers of National Defense, Internal Affairs, and Foreign Affairs, the Commanders of the army, navy, air force and the General Commander of the Gendarmerie. When a sixth general was added as the MGK's general secretary, the Council was composed of six-high ranking military officers and five civilians. Özbudun, p. 112.

[81] Özbudun, p.108. This vague definition of national security was further expanded by the Law of MGK. Article 2 of Law 2945 defines national security as "the protection of constitutional order of the state, its national existence, and its integrity; of all of the interests in the international field, including political, social, cultural and economic interests; and of interests derived from international treaties against all external and internal threats.

[82] Articles 136 and 143 of the Turkish Constitution. Özbudun, pp. 111-112.

center-right and a center-left) in order to avoid the coalition governments of the past. Although there were many attempts to establish new political parties, President Evren vetoed majority of these endeavors because of their relation with pre-1980 coup period. The ones which President Evren confirmed were *Milliyetçi Demokrasi Partisi*-MDP (Nationalist Democracy Party) on the right led by a retired general Turgut Sunalp and the *Halkçı Parti*-HP on the left (Populist Party) led by a bureaucrat Necdet Calp. One last political party Evren confirmed was the center-right *Anavatan Partisi*-ANAP (Motherland Party), established by the former minister of state responsible from economics during the military regime Turgut Özal. In spite of the careful planning of President Evren to bring a military backed political party to power, (the MDP led by retired general Sunalp), Özal's ANAP managed to receive 46 percent of the vote and established the first democratic government of the post-1980 military intervention period.[83]

D. Back to Civilian Rule: Özal's Period

In the early years of the new democratic period, the military was still influential in politics through Presidential Council, MGK declarations, and wide authorities in the hands of President Evren. Although martial law was banned, the Armed Forces still continued to have an unlimited judicial power through State Security Courts. In his first four year term Prime Minister Özal conducted conciliatory relations with MGK and the military and particularly with President Evren. He avoided to directly opposing the views of President Kenan Evren regarding national security issues. Özal gave all his concentration on economic issues by starting his economic liberalization policies which were already started in 24 January 1980 by Demirel government. He tried to engage the country to the international liberal economy. He even applied to European Community to become a full member.[84]

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[83] Ergüder and Hofferbert, pp. 95–97.
[84] Ahmet Evin, "Demilitarization and Civilianization of the Regime", in **Politics in the Third Turkish Republic**, eds., Metin Heper and Ahmet Evin, Westview Press, Boulder, 1994, p. 26.

The politicians of the pre-1980 military coup period who were prohibited from politics were permitted to get back to the political arena. Consequently, the seasoned politicians of pre-1980 period gradually came back to politics. While Süleyman Demirel, leader of former AP established *Doğru Yol Partisi*-DYP (True Path Party), the leader of former CHP, founded *Demokratik Sol Parti*-DSP (Democratic Left Party). In addition to these Erdal İnönü[85] established the *Sosyal Demokrat Parti*-SHP (Social Democratic Party). Despite the existence of new competitors, Özal's ANAP managed to receive the 36 percent of the votes in 1987 elections.[86]

In the second term of his office, Özal began to ignore some limitations introduced by the military after 1980 coup regarding the political and social life. The government acknowledged the rights of the citizens for collective bargaining and strike, collective petitions, public demonstrations and rights to form associations. Furthermore restrictions on forming new political parties and institutions were removed. The banned Labor Unions were given right to operate again. Moreover, in 1987 Özal by taking advantage of his parliamentary majority amended some articles of the constitution. In 1987 the number of deputies serving in the parliament was increased from 400 to 550.[87] The state monopoly on television and radio broadcasting were all removed in the early 1990s.[88]

Military's power in politics gradually decreased in the late 1980s. In 1989, one of the most important tools of the military to influence politics, Presidential Council was dissolved when the generals came to the retirement age. In 1989 when President Evren's seven-year term expired, Turgut Özal was elected as the new President of Republic. During his presidency Özal almost captured an absolute executive power when he orchestrated the election of the prime minister in his party and brought his own choice Yıldırım Akbulut to the position. Once he managed to take over this power without the interference of the military, (since Evren got retired

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[85] Physics professor Erdal İnönün is the son of İsmet İnönü, the second president of the Republic of Turkey.
[86] Ergüder and Hofferbert, p. 95.
[87] Ergüder and Hofferbert, p. 95.
[88] Evin, p. 27.

and the Presidential Council was dissolved), he tried to transform civil military relations in favor of the civilians. His strong political authority, personal charisma and his party's majority in the parliament gave him the opportunity to take steps in civilianizing the regime. He attempted to resolve the Kurdish problem by designing a development plan for the underdeveloped Southeastern Region. He was offering civilian solutions to the increasing terror caused by the Kurdish terrorist group PKK. Özal requested from MGK a five year- plan for Turkey's National Security Policy.[89] Furthermore, in 1986, Özal interfered into the promotion process in the military and appointed of the General Necip Torumtay as the Chief of General Staff rather than Necdet Öztorun which was military's choice.[90]

During the Gulf War of 1991 Özal, endeavored to push Turkey to participate in the US led coalition against the Iraqi state. Although Özal couldn't get the official permission of the parliament empowering him with broad warfare authorities, he succeeded in gathering support for the United Nations sanctions that had been carrying out against Iraq.[91] By this way he opened the use of Turkish bases to the coalition militaries. Özal staunchly favored Turkey's entrance into war on the grounds that Turkey should take its share from the "Middle East Pie."[92] Özal's pro US efforts, irritated both the civilian bureaucrats and the military. It was the Chief of the General Staff Necip Torumtay's efforts that prevented Turkey to be engaged in the ongoing warfare. The controversy between the President Özal and General Torumtay, eventually led to the resignation of the Chief of the Armed Forces.[93] The resignation was among the most important events prevented Turkey to wage war against Iraq.[94] Despite all the civilian initiatives the last decision concerning

[89] Gerassimos Karabelias, **Civil Military Relations: A comparative Analysis of the Role of the Military in the Political Transformation of Post-war Turkey and Greece: 1980-95**, (Final Report Submitted to North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1998), pp. 32- 33.
[90] Karabelias, p. 33.
[91] William Hale, "Türk Dış Politikasındaki Ekonomik Sorunlar", in **Türkiye'nin Yeni Dünyası Türk Dış Politikasının Değişen Dinamikleri**, eds, Alan Makovski and Sabri Sayarı, İstanbul, Alfa Yayınları, 2002, p. 50.
[92] Baskın Oran, "Batı Bloku Ekseninde Türkiye-2", in **Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular,Belgeler, Yorumlar,** vol. 2, ed., Baskın Oran, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002, p. 29.
[93] Oran, Batı Bloku Ekseninde Türkiye-2, p. 29.
[94] Oran, Batı Bloku Ekseninde Türkiye-2, p. 29.

Turkey's position in this Gulf Crisis belonged to the military and the military did not want Turkey to take a role in this war.

E. Post Özal period and the 28th of February Process

In the aftermath of 1991 General Elections, DYP and SHP formed a coalition government which lasted until 1995. In 1993, soon after the sudden death of Turgut Özal, Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel became the new President of the Republic. During the premiership of Tansu Çiller who followed Demirel, military enjoyed a significant degree of autonomy. During her term in office for 3 years, Çiller vested military with full authority about the PKK insurrection. In this period military seemed to be autonomous in almost every decision it took regarding its actions.[95] The period was marked by increased influence of military in decision making processes and intense participation of this institution in political arena. In the aftermath of 1995 general elections, after a period of government-building crisis, finally leader of pro-Islamist RP formed a coalition with Çiller's DYP. Consequently, for the first time in the history of Turkey, a religious party was in the government as the senior partner of the coalition.[96]

As will be analyzed in detail in Chapter 5 on the rise of Political Islam, soon after they took the office RP deputies began to put their religious rhetoric into practice. Number of religious schools increase and religious practices in the government became apparent. Prime Minster Erbakan visited the fundamentalist countries such as Libya and Iran. Discourses on implementation of Sharia made the military uncomfortable and consequently, Turkish Armed Forces gave an ultimatum to the RP-DYP government in its 28 February 1997 meeting. The ultimatum included issues that the military was uncomfortable with the anti-secular practices of the RP.[97]

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[95] Henri J. Barkey, "The Struggles of a "Strong" State", **Journal of International Affairs**, Vol.54, No.1, Fall 2004, p. 101.
[96] In 1973, CHP established a coalition government with MSP. However, in that coalition MSP was the junior partner.
[97] Details of this memorandum will be analyzed in Chapter 5, on rise of political Islam.

Although in March 1997 Erbakan signed the directives, in June 1997 the military campaign forced the RP-DYP coalition to resign.

After a period of interim governments designed by the military, in 1999 center-left *Demokratik Sol Parti*-DSP (Democratic Left Party), nationalist right *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*-MHP (National Action Party) and center right ANAP formed a coalition government that lasted until 2002 early general elections. During this period, Turkey was given the candidacy status to the European Union in the Helsinki Summit of European Commission in 1999. In order to align the legal institutionalization of the state structure, the government began to implement several reforms including the ones regarding civil military relations.

III. THE RECENT PERIOD: AKP AND THE MILITARY

The 2002 general elections brought conservative *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*-AKP (Justice and Development Party) to power. By receiving 34 percent of the votes, AKP managed to come to power without forming a coalition. After the military carefully planned the 28 February 1997 soft coup to remove Islamist RP from power, it was not please to see another religious party in power. After working with the military relatively harmoniously in its first term (2002-2007), once AKP won the 46 percent of the votes in July 2007 elections and placed its former Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Gül at the post of presidency, it started to challenge the military with its anti-secular policies.

As will be analyzed in depth in Chapter 5, AKP's anti-secular policies concerning the lifting the ban on headscarf in universities, taking the graduates of *İmam Hatip Okulları* (Prayer Leader and Preachers Schools) to universities and infiltration of Islamists at every level of the bureaucracy among others have started to create friction between the government and the military. One of the significant signs of this friction was the last e-memorandum sent by the military in April 2007, criticizing AKP for its anti-secular policies. The friction between the government and the military is also related to the second internal threat in question. Concerning the

fight with PKK, Turkish military leaders criticized the government and the European Union for limiting Turkish Armed Forces task of protecting internal security. Although Turkish military wanted to initiate a cross-border operation from the Spring of 2007 on, the government finally in February 2008. In sum, during the period of AKP, in other words, during current period, the friction between civilians and the military seem to provide military a solid base to retain its influential role in politics.

IV. OVERVIEW

Military has always played an influential role in Turkish politics starting from the days of Central Asia to 21st Century. Although the intensity of this role changed from time to time, it never decreased its influence in politics. Moreover, military as the most respected institution in Turkey is deeply embedded in the minds of Turkish as the Turkish saying states "every [male] Turk is born as a soldier." Turkish military took part in the establishment of the Republic of Turkey and assisted Mustafa Kemal in the implementation of his reforms and principles. Turkish Armed Forces has played the major role in the protection and maintenance of the Republic and the Kemalist principles and always declared that it was not interested in interfering into democracy as long as the Kemalist principles were kept intact.

The military interfered in 1960, in order to protect Kemalist principles and Atatürk's party CHP against Democratic Party's threats. In 1971, it indirectly intervened into politics to stop the leftist and rightist violence on the street. Along the same line, 1980 military intervention was a result of the anarchy between extreme rightists and leftists. Military's purpose was to bring stability and peace to the country. Military gave both 1997 memorandum and 2007 e-memorandum to protect the "secularity" principle of Atatürk. Although military's dominant role in politics seemed to have eroded by the end of 1980s as a result of Özal's policies, it tremendously increased in mid to late 1990s when the PKK terror reached its peak point. Besides the rise of Kurdish separatist terror, rise of political Islam also increased role of Turkish military in politics as can be seen in 28 February 1997

process. During AKP governments, Turkish military in many occasions warned AKP for its anti-secular policies and even send an e-memorandum on the internet. The military expressed its concerns about Abdullah's Gül's election as the president and AKP's attempts to lift the ban on headscarf in universities. During AKP governments, although military seemed to be quiet in its interferences into politics, it still is watchful for any danger that can threaten the "secularity" principle. In spite of the series measures taken as constitutional amendments to reduce the military's power in politics, it is clear that as long as Kemalist principles will be threatened, Turkish Armed Forces will continue interfering into politics.

This chapter aimed at analyzing the military's continuous influential role in Turkish politics starting from the days of Central Asia to the current period. The next section will analyze the constitutional amendments made in civil-military relations in Turkey as part of the harmonization packages designed to prepare Turkey for a full membership to EU.

CHAPTER THREE

TURKISH MILITARY AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Turkish governments in an attempt to fulfill the conditions required by European Commission through the Progress Reports adopted a series of constitutional reform packages. Among the reforms made in these packages, the most significant ones were related to the Turkish civil-military relations. Particularly, in the Seventh Constitutional Reform Package of August 2003, dramatic reforms that were designed to diminish the role of Turkish military in politics were taken. These reforms mainly aimed to decrease the role of *Milli Güvenlik Kurulu*-MGK (National Security Council) in politics. However, in spite of all these constitutional amendments, in practice Turkish military continued to exercise its influence in politics. Actually, this thesis tries to find an answer to this puzzle and brings up the "existence of internal threats" as an explanation. However, before analyzing the internal threats, it is necessary to examine the reforms packages that adopted by the Turkish governments.

This chapter after giving a brief background of Turkish-EU relations will first examine the political criterion of Copenhagen Criteria and then analyze the EU Regular Progress Reports concerning civil-military relations in Turkey starting from 1998 until 2007 and then explore the constitutional reform packages adopted by the Turkish governments.

I. A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF TURKEY-EU RELATIONS

The major goal of the founders of the Turkish Republic was to generate an acceptance of Turkey as a European state. In order to do so, a number of reforms were adopted to modernize the country in legal, economic, social and political realms from 1923 to 1938. Most of the institutional design of the new Republic originated from the Western examples.[98] Since then Turkish Republic has closely aligned itself with the Western World. It has become one of the founders of the United Nations, a member of

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[98] The adoption of the first civil code of the Republic in 17 February 1926 inspired from the Swiss Civil Code is a good example of these applications.

Northern Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Council of Europe, OECD and other Western organizations. Turkey was also one of the most important allies of the Western World in the Middle East during the cold war. In order to align itself closely with the Western states and to have a place among the developed European countries, Turkey applied European Economic Community (EEC) in July 1959. For the Turkish political and economic elite, EC membership was the road to westernization.

Following upon its application on July 31, 1959, Turkey became an associate member of the European Community after the signing of the Association Agreement, the Ankara Treaty on September 12, 1963. The Ankara Treaty anticipated three stages for the Turkish-EC relations; a preparatory stage, transitional stage and a final stage. The Agreement made clear that a potential goal of the association was Turkey's full membership in the European Community.[99] Turkey's association with the EC was expanded with the 1970 Additional Protocol that ended the preparatory stage and began the transitional stage. The Additional Protocol ultimately aimed to actualize Customs Union between parties. Turkey's relations with the European Community from the 1960s to the 1980s did not develop smoothly due to the planned approach to economic development with implementation of an import-substituting industrialization strategy (ISI). The relations were suspended by Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit in October 1978 when Turkish economy faced a serious crisis.[100]

A turning point for Turkish-EU relations was the 1980 military intervention. Although the coup leaders declared that they were still in favor of the EC membership of the country,[101] EC stated that they could only negotiate with a democratic

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[99] Article 28 of the Ankara Treaty explicitly states "as soon as the operation of the Agreement has advanced far enough to justify envisaging full acceptance by Turkey of the obligations arising out of the Treaty establishing the Community, the contracting parties shall examine the possibility of accession of Turkey to the Community". See: http://www.belgenet.com/arsiv/ab/ab_ankara.html (10.10.2006) for the full text of Ankara Agreement (1963)

[100] The most important reason for this marked departure from policies of the past resulted from the fact that the Turkish economy was facing a serious crisis situation during this time, and a number of influential businessman, members of the media and politicians believed that implementing the necessary steps for EC membership would have detrimental effects on the economy.

[101] The reason for that was: Generals wanted to receive EC's support for the legitimacy of their coup. They also knew that they needed loans from EC to restore the economic crisis in the country. Moreover, in 1981 Greece was accepted to EC and would most probably try to deteriorate Turkey's

government and expected Turkey to return to civilian rule as soon as possible. In 1981, when the military government arrested the political leaders, the Community decided to suspend the Fourth Financial Protocol as anticipated by the Association Agreement. When the democracy was not restored in a year, the Community decided to freeze the Association with Turkey. Moreover, EU found the 1982 Constitution undemocratic as it restricted the freedom of association, freedom of assembly, and imposed restrictions on political participation on the pre-1980 political parties and their leaders.

During the period of 1980-1988, the EC, in an attempt force Turkey toward democratization used punitive measures such as the freezing of the Association and the suspension of the financial aid. Once the ANAP government came to power in 1983 in the aftermath of transition to democracy, Prime Minister Özal took some steps to normalize the tightened relations. Turkey's application for full membership to the EC in April 1987 (right after the Mediterranean enlargement)[102] was a premature move, since the strained relations of the Turkey-EC were not relaxed yet. In order to apply for full membership, Turkey was supposed to establish customs union, a certain level of economic development, and a well-functioning democracy.[103] Turkey's application was rejected in December 1999 primarily for political rather than economic reasons.[104] Instead, the Commission suggested Turkey to focus on getting into the Customs Union. Consequently, in 1995, Turkey became an economic partner via the customs union. Turkey's relations with EC went into a very severe phase when in Luxembourg summit of 1997 did not include Turkey to the list of candidate countries where Central European countries and Cyprus were taken.[105]

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relations with EC. See Çağrı Erhan and Tuğrul Arat "1980-90: Batı Bloku Ekseninde Türkiye-2 AT'yle İlişkiler", in **Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular,Belgeler, Yorumlar**, ed., Baskın Oran, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002 vol. 2, p. 83-84.

[102] Greece became a member in 1981 and Spain and Portugal became members in 1986.

[103] Yasemin Çelik, **Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy,** Praeger, Westport, Conn.,1999, p. 97.

[104] The reasons stated were as follows: The state of democracy in Turkey, its relative economic backwardness, the Kurdish problem, the disputes with Greece, the Cyprus problem and the lack of respect for human rights. EC Commission, "Opinion on Turkey's Request for Accession to the Community," SEC (89) 2290 final, Brussels, December 18, 1989.

[105] Meltem Müftüler-Baç, "The Impact of the EU on Turkish Politics", **East European Quarterly**, XXXIV, No. 2, June 2000, 162.

Turkey suspended its political dialogue with the EU as a reaction to Luxembourg summit decisions. Turkey was declined to attend to the European Conference in London on 12 March 1998, arguing that it was not treated as fairly as the other applicant countries. In October 1999, the commission recommended that Turkey should be given a candidate status. Finally, Turkey was accepted as a candidate state for membership in the EU in Helsinki Summit of 10-11 December 1999. The Helsinki European Council stressed that for Turkey to become a member of EU, it was supposed to meet the Copenhagen criteria. [106] Since then every single year European Commission published Regular Progress Reports to present its views concerning the developments Turkey had gone through.

II. COPENHAGEN CRITERIA AND TURKISH CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

The Copenhagen European Council held in June 1993 spelt out the conditions for EU membership known as the Copenhagen Criteria. These criteria were classified under three titles as political, economic and acquis criteria. While the "economic criterion" asked for a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU's internal market, "acquis criterion" inquired from the candidate countries the ability to take on all the obligations of membership, i.e. the entire body of EU law and policy known as the *acquis communautaire,* and adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union. Most importantly, the "political criterion" required candidate countries to have stable institutions to guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.[107]

In the Turkish context, particularly, political criterion has been a serious obstacle hindering Turkey's full membership since it requires stable institutions to guarantee democracy. Among the most important factors that enhance the consolidation of democracy is the achievement of civilian control, or in other words, the

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[106] İktisadi Kalkınma Vakfı, "Helsinki Zirvesi (Helsinki European Council/Helsinki Summit), http://www.ikv.org.tr/sozluk2.php?ID=1125 (04.03.2008)
[107] Presidency Conclusions, The Council of the European Union, Copenhagen, 1993.

subordination of the military to the civilian authorities.[108] Civilian control involves the ability of a civilian, democratically elected government to conduct general policy without interference from the military.[109] However, in Turkey Turkish military has an important impact on many political decisions. Turkish military intervenes into Turkish politics through formal mechanisms (institutional mechanisms) and informal mechanisms (non-institutional mechanisms).

Among the formal (institutional mechanism) mechanisms through which Turkish military continued to exert its power, the most significant one has been the *Milli Güvenlik Kurulu*-MGK (National Security). Ministry of Defense concerning the position of the Chief of General Staff and the organization of defense (military budgets, arms production, internal security, intelligence gathering and senior promotions) are other institutional mechanisms used by the military. Another formal mechanism which does not have any power today used to be the position of the presidency.[110]

A. Formal (Institutional) Mechanisms

1. National Security Council

As already analyzed in Chapter 2, the Role of Military in Turkish Politics, the MGK was established by 1961 Constitution in order to "serve as a platform for the military to voice its opinion on matters of national security."[111] In the aftermath of 1971 Coup by memorandum, MGK's role was further extended by the amendment approved in 1973 as "making recommendations to government"[112] The Council's role was enhanced by 1982 Constitution which stated that MGK's "recommendations would be given priority consideration by the council of ministers."[113] 1982 Constitution extensively broadened the competence and the influence of the council.

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[108] Diamond. p. xxviii.
[109] Kohn,, p. 140-143.
[110] Ümit Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, "The Anatomy of Turkish Military's Autonomy", **Comparative Politics**, v. 29, n. 2, Jan. 1997, pp. 157-161.
[111] 1961 Constitution of Turkish Republic, http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa/anayasa61.htm (20.06.2007)
[112] Aylin Güney and Petek Karatekelioglu, "Turkey's EU Candidacy and Civil-Military Relations: Challenges and Prospects", **Armed Forces & Society** 2005; 31 p. 444
[113] 1982 Constitution of Turkish Republic, http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/Anayasa.htm (20.06.2007)

According to 1982 Constitution, the MGK was supposed to submit to the Council of Ministers its views regarding formulation, establishment, and the implementation of the national security policy of the state. Council of Ministers was supposed to give priority consideration to MGK's decisions concerning the preservation of the existence and independence of the state, the integrity and the indivisibility of the country, and the peace and security of the society.[114] However, according to the article 2 of the 1983 Law on National Security Council the national security concept has quite a broad definition. It includes the protection of the constitutional order of the state, its national existence, integrity and all political, social, cultural and economic interests of the state in the international field.[115] This ambiguous definition had given the council the opportunity to close parties, prisons, TV stations, regulate broadcast hours, suggest the timing of the elections, determine curriculum in schools, stop performance of theatrical plays, advise electoral alignments between political parties, put embargo on so-called Islamic capital, make bureaucratic appointments and abolishing the penal immunity of certain members of the parliament.[116]

Since 1990s Turkey has been facing significant internal threats such as Islamic activism and secessionist terrorism. A recent illustration of the weight that the army and MGK carries in Turkish politics was the February 28, 1997 process. During this soft coup, the MGK handed down the constitutionally elected coalition government of pro-Islamist RP and its coalition partner DYP (True Path Party) a 20-point list of measures to outlaw "reactionary Islam" that forced Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the RP to resign. Eventually the RP was closed by the Constitutional Court in 1998. Two months after this soft coup, Turkish Chief of the General Staff announced the National Security Policy Document which stated that: "priority would be given to combating threats from Islamic activism and Kurdish separatism, rather than safeguarding the state against interstate wars and

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[114] Ergun Özbudun, **Contemporary Turkish Politics, Challenges to Democratic Consolidation**, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, 2000, p. 108; Gareth Jenkins, **Context and Circumstance: The Turkish Military and Politics**, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, p. 46
[115] Özbudun, p. 108.
[116] Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, p. 153.

external threats.[117] As it can be interpreted from the statement, military was planning to play a larger role in politics.

2. Ministry of Defense

Another institution through which Turkish military's role is embedded into Turkish politics is the Ministry of Defense. As already analyzed in Chapter 2, currently, the position of the Chief of General Staff is under the prime minister rather than the defense minister. This situation puts the chief of staff above the ministry of defense.[118] According to two separate laws which were passed in 1970 that specified the duties of the minister of defense and general chief of staff, the latter obtained autonomy in determining: Defense policy, military budget, future weapon system, production and procurement of arms, intelligence gathering, internal security and all promotions. Rather than the Minister of Defense, the incumbent general chief of staff selects his own successor, and suggests the candidate to the prime minister and the prime minister suggests to the president. Although the actual annual disbursement of defense funds and military allotments of the Turkish army occupies a high percentage of central government, expenditures the defense budget is usually not subjected to the parliamentary debate.[119]

3. Presidency

Starting from the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 until 1989, the majority of the Turkish presidents were elected from the retired generals.[120] Consequently, the presidential office had been used as an institution where the military could have exerted its power. The 1982 constitution designed by the military administration of 1980 coup gave the president the right to decide on the use of armed forces, to appoint the chief of general staff, to convene the National Security

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[117] Güney and Karatekelioğlu, p. 446
[118] While the position of the Chief of the General Staff was subjected to the prime minister in 1924 law, in 1949, it was placed under the control of Minister of Defense and in 1961 it was place under the responsibility of the Prime Minister. Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, p. 159.
[119] Cizre-Sakallıoğlu, p. 159; Güney and Karatekelioğlu, pp.444-445.
[120] Besides the third president Celal Bayar, the rest of the presidents until 1989 were former military generals: Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, İsmet İnönü, Cemal Gürsel, Cevdet Sunay, Fahri Korutürk and Kenan Evren.

Council, and to proclaim martial law –under the assumption that presidents would always be elected from the military personnel. However, this dynamic has changed since 1989 with the election of Prime Minister Turgut Özal to the presidency. Özal was followed with civilian leader, first with another former Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel, then by judge Ahmet Necdet Sezer and recently by former Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Gül. Consequently, office of the president is no longer a place where the military can exert its power into politics.

4. State Security Courts

Another institution through which the military's role was felt in politics had been the *Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemeleri*-DGM (State Security Courts). These courts which were established by Article 143 of the 1982 constitution, dealt only with political crimes such as separatism, terrorism and all activities against the Republic, that is all acts that fell under the Anti-Terror Law of the Penal Code. Through the DGMs, the military's role in Turkish politics was extended into the judiciary system. The DGMs used to have three judges, one of which was a military judge. Trial of civilians by military judges had constituted a problem for the European Union. In 1998, the European Court of Human Rights declared that the DGMs, due to the presence of a military judge, violated the European Convention of Human Rights.[121] The reform in this area was preempted by the Abdullah Öcalan trial, the trial for the leader of the Kurdish terrorist organization. PKK. Sensitivity of the EU and Council of Europe on this trial led to the constitutional amendment that removed the military judge from the DGMs on June 22, 1999. This was directly reflected at the Öcalan trial as a civilian judge replaced the military one the following day. By adopting this amendment, the Turkish government was able to defend at least procedurally the independence of its courts.[122]

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[121] Müftüler-Baç, p. 169.
[122] Müftüler-Baç, pp. 169-170.

B. Informal (Non-Institutional) Mechanisms

Informal mechanisms through which the military is exerting its power is more difficult to examine compared to the formal (institutional) mechanisms. These are the mechanisms which are embedded in the social and cultural life of Turkish people. It is about the Turkish society's love and respect to the military. Since, the Turkish nation in the days of Central Asia was an army before it was a nation, the military as an institution throughout the Ottoman period and particularly, during the Republic of Turkey as the saviors of the nation from imperialist powers, founders of Republic of Turkey and the guardians of Atatürk's reforms has always been sincerely respected by the Turkish people. As Ayşe Gül Altınay states in her comprehensive book on cultural impact of military nation on Turkish people, "the idea that the Turkish nation is a military nation (*ordu-millet or asker-ulus*) is one of the foundational myths of Turkish nationalism".[123] Altınay states that "the popular saying *'Her Türk asker doğar'* (Every Turk is born a soldier) is repeated in daily conversations, school textbooks, the speeches of public officials and intellectuals and is used as a drill slogan during the military service."[124] She argues that the myth of the military is central to Turkish identity, and this myth acts to shape politics.[125]

In numerous public opinion polls Turkish military has come out as the most trusted institution in the country.[126] People, who lost their faith to the corrupt politicians, trusted the military. Consequently, the discourse and the actions of the military leaders, particularly the Chief of General Staff has always been significant in Turkish politics. As will be analyzed in depth in the upcoming sections of this chapter, after the constitutional amendments of 2003 that diminished the role of MGK in Turkish politics, European Commission Reports concentrated on the informal speeches

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[123] Ayşe Gül Altınay, **The Myth of the Military Nation,** Palgrave- MacMillan, New York, 2004, p. 13.

[124] Altınay, p. 13.

[125] Altınay, back cover of the book.

[126] The latest poll made in this issue is the Eurobarometer Opinion Poll, http://www.avrupa.info.tr, (05.03.2008) According to this poll a total of 84 percent of Turks named the military as the most trusted institution in the country, compared with just 63 percent who had confidence in the government.

given by the military members of the MGK. The reports argued that these speeches were shaping the opinions of the public.

III. EU REGULAR PROGRESS REPORTS VERSUS TURKISH CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM PACKAGES

Starting with the 1998 Regular Progress Report, the interaction between the European Union and Turkey increased tremendously. Since then European Commission published regular progress reports for Turkey. In response, Turkish governments worked on constitutional reform packages to meet the demands of the Commission of the European Communities in the reports. These Regular Progress Reports included political, economic and administrative issues. Among the political issues and most of the time under the title "democracy and rule of law," progress reports discussed civil-military relations and mainly the role of MGK. In these reports European Commission continuously voiced its uneasiness with the army's powerful role in Turkish politics.

A. 1998-1999-2000 Regular Progress Reports and Constitutional Reform Package of 2001

The common critic of the 1998-1999-2000 Regular Progress Reports concerning Turkish civil-military relations was the non-subjectivity of the Turkish military to civilian control. All three reports agreed that the Turkish military had a dominant role in many areas of political life through the MGK. These reports argued that MGK's recommendations were not only binding, but also had a strong influence on the government policies. They criticized the military for holding large scale military operations without government's knowledge. Another critic was about the State Security Courts and how they affected the independence of judiciary. The special situation of the Chief of the General Staff being responsible to the Prime Minister rather than Ministry of Defense was another subject of criticism. Another critic that was made by 2000 Progress Report was the existence of a military member selected by Chief of

General Staff in the Council of Higher Education and the Higher Education Supervisory Board.[127]

In 1999, Law on DGMs was amended and the military judge was placed by a civilian judge. As a result, European Commission stated its appreciation for this move in its regular progress report of 1999.[128] As already stated the most significant reason for this move was the trial of PKK leader Öcalan. More positive developments took place with the implementation of Constitutional Reform Package of 2001. The first important change took place on October 17, 2001 with amendments in the article 118 of 1982 Constitution. The amendment made in the first clause of the article, added Minister of Justice and Deputy Prime Ministers among the members of the MGK.[129] As a result, the number of civilians in MGK increased from five to eight exceeding the number of military officers. Moreover, a second clause of the same article was amended. According to this amendment, role of MGK was limited to recommendations. Government was required to evaluate the MGK's recommendations instead of giving them priority consideration.[130] These were dramatic changes in Turkish civil-military relations since the MGK had been the most significant mechanism through which the military exerted its power in Turkish politics.

B. 2001-2002 Regular Progress Reports

Both 2001 and 2002 reports appreciated the amendments made in the Constitutional Reform Package of 2001. However, both reports put emphasis on the significance of monitoring whether these amendments contributed to an enhancement in de facto civilian control over military or not. Both reports continued criticizing the impact of MGK for acting as an important actor in domestic politics and giving its

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[127] **1998 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession,** http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report_11_98/pdf/en/turkey_en.pdf (10.10.2007)
1999 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession, http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report_10_99/pdf/en/turkey_en.pdf (10.10.2007)
2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession, http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report_11_00/pdf/en/tu_en.pdf (10.10.2007)
[128] Constitutional and legal amendments removing the military judge in the DGMs were adopted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly and entered into force on 22 June 1999. Commission of the European Communities, **1999 Regular Report,** p. 12.
[129] "Anayasa Değişikliği 4709 Sayılı Yasa", http://www.belgenet.com/yasa/k4709.html (20.07.2007).
[130] "Anayasa Değişikliği 4709 Sayılı Yasa".

opinion on a number of governmental issues. They argued that MGK's opinions had carried more weight than mere recommendations.[131] The 2002 progress report also criticized the frequency of the MGK meetings that were held every month.[132] Furthermore, the report criticized senior military officers for expressing their opinions on various issues such as –emergency rule in the Southeast, fight against terrorism, political and economic reforms made in order to qualify for EU membership and the Cyprus question— publicly. Furthermore, the autonomous decision-making power of the armed forces on defense budget was another subject of criticism of the European Commission.[133]

C. A Major Milestone: Seventh Harmonization Package

Seventh Harmonization Package that passed from Turkish parliament on 30th of July 2003 was consisted of the most remarkable changes in the history of Turkish civil-military relations. Seventh Constitutional Reform package abrogated the extended executive and supervisory powers of the Secretary General of the MGK by limiting his actions on the initiative of the prime minister and putting implementation of the MGK's decisions under the supervision of the deputy prime minister. Moreover, MGK's power to have an unlimited access to any civilian agency was limited. In addition, position of the Secretary General of the MGK was also reserved for civilians.[134]

Consequently, Turkey has turned its national security council into a civilian-headed advisory body on defense and military issues. In a way, the council was transformed from an executive panel dominated by the military to an advisory body meant to aid the Defense Ministry and office of the Prime Minister. The first civilian Secretary General of MGK Yiğit Alpogan, a former career diplomat who came to

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[131] **2001 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession,** http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report2001/tu_en.pdf (10.10.2007)
2002 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession, http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report2002/tu_en.pdf (10.10.2007)
[132] **2002 Regular Report.**
[133] **2002 Regular Report.**
[134] **2003 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession** , http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report_2003/pdf/rr_tk_final.pdf (10.10.2007), pp.18-19;
İhsan Dağı "The JDP: Identity, Politics and Human Rights discourse in the Search for Security and Legitimacy", **The Emergence of a New Turkey Democracy and AK Party**, ed., M. Hakan Yavuz, The University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, 2006, p. 99-100.

power in August 2004 stated that they were not an executive body but a consultative institution. He added that they had become a limited think-tank where their findings were not for public but for the MGK alone.[135] Moreover, the number of civilians working at the MGK General Secretariat was increased. For example in 2004 only 15 of the 294 employees were military officers.[136]

Furthermore, the frequency of the meetings of the MGK was decreased from once a month to every two months. Purpose of this decrease was to diminish the influence of MGK in politics. Court of Auditors upon request of Parliament could now be authorized to audit accounts and transactions of all types of organizations including state properties owned by the armed forces. This was an important step to reduce autonomy of the military in its transactions. This article 'enables the Court of Audits, on behalf of the Turkish Grand National Assembly and its inspection committees, to scrutinize all types of public expenditure, the revenues, expenditures, and property of institutions without any exception and without exempting any institute from being accountable.'[137] Another amendment made was the removal of the representative of the MGK in the *Yüksek Öğrenim Kurumu*-YÖK, (High Education Board), Supervision Board of Cinema, Video and Music. Consequently, the package diminished the MGK's influence on the civilian boards influencing the education and art and broadcasting. In addition the transparency of defense expenditures will be enhanced. Finally the prosecution of the Civilians in Military Courts will be ended.

Seventh harmonization package was a milestone in Turkish civil-military relations. The MGK that had been dominant at all walks of Turkish political life was reduced to an advisory body. Military budget which was a taboo subject of discussion was now open to inspection of the Courts of Audit. MGK will not any more have access to any civilian agency. Civilian agencies were not supposes write reports

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[135] "Turkey puts civilian over its National Security Council, reduces role," worldtribune.com http://www.worldtribune.com/worldtribune/WTARC/2004/me_turkey_12_02.html (21.07.2008)
[136] "Turkey puts civilian over its National Security Council, reduces role."
[137] Ayşe Nilüfer Narlı, "Aligning Civil-Military Relations in Turkey: Transparency in Defense Sector and the EU Reforms", http://www.bmlv.gv.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/10_wg9_taf_110.pdf. p. 13. (28.08.2008).

requested by the military. These were going to be dramatic changes for Turkish civil-military relations if they do not stay on paper.

D. 2003-2004-2005-2006-2007 Regular Progress Reports

The Regular Progress Reports on Turkey's progress toward accession between 2003 and 2004 all started with their appreciation of the Constitutional Reform Package of 2003 and its developments. However, after one or two paragraphs of appreciation they all continued with their critics. The critics can be classified under a couple of titles. The most significant critics which were seen in the majority of the reports was about the impact of the military members of the MGK on politics through a series of informal mechanisms such as expressing their opinions about political, social and foreign policy matters in public speeches, statements to the media and declarations. Second critic was about the Article 35 and Article 85/1 of the Turkish Armed Forces Internal Service Law that extended the duties of the Turkish Armed Forces to almost every policy area. A third critic that was stated in the 2006 and 2007 reports were on a secret protocol the military and Ministry of Interior signed in 1997. This protocol allowed military operations to be carried out for internal security matters under certain conditions without request from the civilian authorities. The rest of the critics concentrated on procurement and military budgets. Differing from the others, 2007 report criticized the interference of the military into the presidential elections through an e-memorandum.

The 2004 Regular Progress Report expressed the appreciation of EU concerning positive developments that have taken place in Turkey. Among these the EU was happy with the appointment of a senior diplomat as the first civilian Secretary General of the MGK in August 2004; the decrease in the frequency of the meetings of MGK; abolition of the secret status of decrees governing the activities of the MGK General Secretariat; strengthened role of the Under Secretariat for Defense in defining budgetary; amendment adopted in May 2004 which allowed the Court of Auditors to control the state property in possession of the Armed forces; the removal of the military member from Higher Education Board and High Audio-Visual Board; and increase in

spending on education budget vis-à-vis the defense budget.[138] The 2005 Regular Progress Repot too began with the paragraphs of appreciation. It cherished the convening of MGK for the first time under the chairmanship of the new civilian Secretary General in October 2004.[139]

Both 2003 and 2004 Regular Progress Reports argued that in spite of the constitutional changes that were made to alter the composition and role of MGK, these reforms had not modified the way in which the MGK operated in practice. 2003, 2004 and 2005 reports argued that Turkish Armed Forces, besides MGK also has exercised influence through a series of informal mechanisms. The informal mechanisms referred by the report were the expression of the MGK's military members' opinions about political, social and foreign policy matters in public speeches, statements to the media and declarations. 2005 Report added that statements by the military should only concern military, defense and security matters and should only be made under the authority of the government, while the civilian authorities should fully exercise their supervisory functions. Along the same line 2006 and 2007 reports also criticized senior members of the armed forces for expressing their opinions on domestic and foreign issue including Cyprus, secularism, the Kurdish issue, and on the indictment concerning the Şemdinli bombing.[140]

Both 2004 and 2005 Regular Progress Reports argued that there were legal and administrative structures which were not accountable to the civil structures. The legal and administrative structure the report was referring to was Article 35 and Article 85/1 of the Turkish Armed Forces Internal Service Law. This law defined the duties of the

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[138] **2004 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession** , http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report_2004/pdf/rr_tr_2004_en.pdf (10.10.2007), p. 23.

[139] **2005 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's on Progress Towards Accession**, http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report_2005/pdf/package/sec_1426_final_en _progress_report_tr.pdf (10.10.2007), p.14.

[140] Şemdinli bombing was only included in 2006 Progress Report. **2003 Regular Report, 2004 Regular Report, 2005 Regular Report, 2006 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's on Progress Towards Accession**, http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report_2006/pdf/package /sec_1426_final_en_progress_report_tr.pdf (10.10.2007).
2007 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's on Progress Towards Accession, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/turkey_progress_reports_en.pdf, (10.10.2007)

Turkish Armed Forces as to protect and preserve the Turkish Republic on the basis of the principles referred to in the preamble of the Constitution. In the preamble of the Constitution territorial integrity, secularism and republicanism were included. Such a duty description gave the military a wide area to move. Moreover, Article 2a of the National Security Law defined National Security in such broad terms that it included almost every policy area.[141] Both 2006 and 2007 Regular Progress stated that the Article 35 and Article 85/1 of the Turkish Armed Forces Internal Service Law which gave the military a large area to move had remained unchanged.[142]

2006 Regular Progress Report also criticized a secret protocol on Security. In March 2006, a draft report of the Şemdinli Investigation Commission of Parliament revealed the existence of a secret protocol on Security, Public order and Assistance Units (commonly called EMASYA). This protocol which was signed by the General Staff and the Ministry of Interior in 1997, allowed for military operations to be carried out for internal security matters under certain conditions without request from the civilian authorities. According to this protocol, the military could gather intelligence against internal threats. 2007 Regular Progress Report stated that the 1997 EMASYA secret protocol on Security had remained unchanged.[143]

Moreover, 2006 Regular Progress Report pointed out that most procurement projects were funded separately from extra-budgetary funds. The report stated that no further progress had been achieved in terms of strengthening parliamentary overseeing of the military budget and expenditures and no internal audit of military property had yet taken place. 2007 Regular Progress Report indicated that no progress had been made in terms of strengthening parliamentary oversight of the military budget and expenditure. Both 2006 and 2007 reports indicated that no measures had been taken to enhance civilian control over the Gendarmerie.[144]

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[141] **2004 Regular Progress Report and 2005 Regular Progress Report**
[142] **2006 Regular Progress Report and 2007 Regular Progress Report**
[143] **2006 Regular Progress Report and 2007 Regular Progress Report**
[144] **2006 Regular Progress Report and 2007 Regular Progress Report**

2007 Regular Progress Report criticized the interference of Chief of General Staff to the presidential election by publishing a memorandum on its website expressing concern at the alleged weakening of secularism in the country. Another critic toward the senior members of the armed forces was related to their attempt to restrict academic research and public debate concerning the security and minority rights issues.

III. OVERVIEW

Upon its acceptance as a candidate state for membership in the European Union in Helsinki Summit of 1999, Turkish governments in an attempt to meet Copenhagen criteria started to take precautions to harmonize its legal, political and economic structure with the European Union. Since then European Commission began to monitor Turkish government by publishing yearly regular progress reports. These reports evaluated Turkey's progress towards accession. The reports mainly criticized the dominant role of the military in Turkish politics which was provided by MGK and the problems of accountability of the Turkish Armed Forces. Consequently, Turkish governments made several reforms concerning the Turkish civil-military relations. The first important change about civil-military relations took place in 2001 with amendments in the article 118 of 1982 Constitution. These amendments aimed to erode the dominant role of MGK in politics. More dramatic reforms were made in 2003 as part of the Seventh Harmonization Package. These reforms aimed to decrease the power of MGK by transforming it from an executive panel dominated by the military to an advisory body.

However, in spite of these dramatic changes that aimed to diminish the role of Turkish military in politics, the dominant role of the Turkish Armed forces in the political arena is still one of the primary concerns of the European Union. Despite the amendments made on paper, in practice Turkish military is still keeping its influence in politics. The main reason for this influence is the existence of two serious internal threats which will be analyzed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

TURKISH MILITARY AND THE KURDISH PROBLEM

As one of the two significant threats, which have been shaping Turkish political life since early 1980s, the rise of Kurdish nationalism has opened an avenue for Turkish Armed Forces to play a dominant role in Turkish politics. This increase in Kurdish nationalism which reflected itself as the PKK (*Partiya Karkaran Kurdistan*) terror has been controlling Turkish politics for a couple of decades. Since one of the purposes of this rise in Kurdish nationalism is to establish a separate land for Kurds of Turkey, it has so far challenged the territorial integrity of the country. Therefore, this separatist movement turned into a national security issue and fell within the military's sphere of control. Starting from 1984 on with the violence in Şemdinli and Eruh, PKK attacks continued in an increasing pace causing the life of 37000 people. These attacks slowed down during the period of 1999-2004 after the arrest of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan. However, PKK started its attacks again in 2004 by attacking Turkish military bases in the southeastern part of Turkey and by bombing shopping centers, parks and neighborhoods in the big cities all over the country.

The purpose of this chapter is to show that Turkish military's dominant role in politics will continue until the PKK terror will end. In other words, as long as the PKK terror continues in Turkey, the Turkish military will continue to have a dominant role in politics. Unfortunately currently, PKK terror is continuing in full speed all over the country. Although Turkish government as an attempt to become a member of EU made a series of amendments to reduce the role of the military in politics, with the rise of PKK terror Turkish Armed Forces will continue to act as a leading actor in politics. In order to analyze how the PKK terror has been shaping Turkish politics, the chapter will first give a brief background of the Kurdish problem in Turkey. Then it will analyzing the way the Turkish governments, politicians and the military during coups dealt with the problem and it will end by examining how the threat is still compelling and harming the Turkish political life.

I. BACKGROUND OF KURDISH PROBLEM

Kurds that constitute approximately 20% of the total population in Turkey, make the second largest group in the country after the Turkish majority. Although majority of the Kurds live in the southeastern part of the country, there is quite a large number of Kurdish population who live in İstanbul and other big cities. Indeed Kurds in Turkey constitute the most populous block of the total Kurdish population living in the Middle Eastern countries such as Syria, Iraq and Iran.[145] The Kurdish language constitutes a common language for all of this population despite dialectal differences. Most of the Kurds including the ones in Turkey are Sunni Muslims and belong to the Shafei School. Others are Shi'tes and Alawites as an offshoot of Shi'ites.[146]

The rise of Kurdish nationalism dates back to the Ottoman era in which the groups of the society were defined in terms of religious affiliation instead of ethnicity. During Ottoman period, while the Turks, Kurds and Arabs were forming the core Muslim community, Jews, Greeks and Armenians were making the minority of the Empire. As members of the majority during the Ottoman era Kurds have enjoyed a high degree of autonomy. Kurdish emirates established in the 16th century were treated as a distinct group by the Sultans and they were autonomous in their internal affairs in exchange for their loyalty to the state.[147] They helped the state by paying their taxes regularly and providing armed forces when necessary. Some Kurdish insurrections took place during the 19th century when the Ottoman

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[145] It is estimated that half of the total Kurdish population lives in large cities of Turkey. See: Doğu Ergil "The Kurdish Question in Turkey", **Journal of Democracy**, Vol.11, No. 3, July 2000, p. 123. In the mid 1990s it was estimated that 20-25 million Kurds were living in the Middle East (approximately 12 million in Turkey, 6 million in Iran, 4 million in Iraq, 1.5 million in Syria, 0.5 million in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan and 0.7 million in diasporas in Jordan, Lebanon, Western Europe, North America and Australia). See Omar Sheikhmous, "The Kurdish Question: Conflict Resolution Strategies at the Regional Level", in **Building Peace in the Middle East Challenges for State and Civil Society,** ed, Elise Boulding, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, 1994, pp. 147-148; M. Hakan Yavuz and Michael M. Gunter, "The Kurdish Nation", **Current History,** Vol.100, No.642. January 2001 p. 33.
[146] There are two main (Kurmandji and Sorani) and three minor dialects (Zaza, Hewrami, and Kirmanshahi) of the Kurdish language. They mostly speak Kurmandji and Zaza. Svante E. Cornell "The Kurdish Question in Turkish Politics" **Orbis**, Vol. 45 No. 1, Winter 2001, p. 35.
[147] Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller Turkey's **Kurdish Question**, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham, Maryland, 1998, p. 6.

administration increased its imperial intervention to the region as a result of its war with Iran and Russia. However, these uprisings were not nationalistic in character. Nearly all of them were suppressed.[148] During the rule of Sultan Abdülhamid in the late 19th century, Kurds were included in the Hamidiye regiments to fight against the rising nationalist movements and maintain order in Anatolia.[149] The rise of Turkish nationalism that started with the Young Turks' movement showed its domino effect in the Kurdish population of the Ottoman Empire and the first Kurdish nationalist organization, the Rise and Progress of the Kurdish Society was established in the aftermath of 1908 Young Turk Revolution.[150]

Sevres Treaty was signed in 1920 in the aftermath of the collapse of Ottoman in the First World War. This treaty divided the former empire along ethnic lines and gave Kurds the right to establish a homeland and self-rule. However, this was not realized when the Turkish nation under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk started the War of Independence and dissolved this treaty. In the Lausanne Treaty that was signed with Ally powers in 1924 in the aftermath of War of Independence, Kurds were excluded from the definition of a minority group and they were not awarded any special status.[151] Kurds who joined the War of Independence on the side of the Turks were disappointed since they were expecting to have equal cultural and governing rights with the Turks.[152]

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[148] Kemal Kirişçi and Gareth M. Winrow, **The Kurdish Question and Turkey, An Example of a Trans-state Ethnic Conflict**, Frank Cass, Portland, 1997, pp. 104-105.
[149] Mesut Yeğen, "The Turkish State Discourse and the Exclusion of Kurdish Identity", **Middle Eastern Studies,** Vol.32, No. 2 April, 1996 p. 218. This system actually divided the Kurdish community into different tribes.
[150] Kirişçi and Winrow, p. 105.
[151] Lausanne Treaty legitimized the territorial integrity and unitary nature of the newly declared republic. While considering Greeks, Armenians and Jews as minorities, it did not make any reference to other non-Turkish minorities. See Ergil, pp. 124-5.
[152] Ümit Cizre, "Turkey's Kurdish Problem: Borders, Identity, and Hegemony" in **Rightsizing the State**, eds., Ian Lustick, Brendan O Leary and Thomas Callaghy, Oxford University Press, London, 2001, pp. 226-227; Henri J. Barkey, "The Struggles of a "Strong" State", **Journal of International Affairs**, Fall 2000, Vol. 54, No.1 p. 88.

II. KURDISH PROBLEM IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE REPUBLIC

Founders of the Republic of Turkey considered Turkish nationalism and nation-building as the most important factor of cohesion. As a result, they perceived Kurdish nationalism as a threat to the integrity of the modern nation-state under construction. Under the 1924 constitution, only Turks could be considered "citizens".[153] This situation left Kurds with two options. They would either leave their ethnic identities in order to adapt the new regime or they would accept alienation. Without giving up their ethnic identities they now couldn't be treated as Turks with full rights and opportunities of the citizenship of Turkey. Banning of caliphate had deteriorated the relations between Turks and Kurds even more since the religion was the most significant unifying element shared by two communities.[154] Since the days of the Ottomans, Kurds were not only loyal to the Sultan for acting as the highest administrative authority, but also for representing the highest authority of the Muslim world. While some of the Kurds, who moved to other parts of Turkey, mixed with Turkish groups adapted this new situation, the ones who stayed in the remote, southeastern part of the country did not get used to these new circumstances. Actually, the Kurds that accepted the Turkish identity enjoyed the full rights of citizenship and had even occupied important ranks such as premiership, presidency, membership in the cabinet and high positions in the military. The ones who were left behind in the isolated and economically backward southeastern part of Turkey kept their Kurdish identity.[155]

Furthermore, the autonomous structure of the Kurdish regions and the privileged positions of Kurdish local notables that existed during the Ottoman era were threatened by the both centralization and secularization policies of the Kemalist regime.[156] These resentments of Kurds led to numerous Kurdish insurrections in the early years of the republic. Between 1925 and 1940, there were over twenty Kurdish

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[153] Edward Mead Earle, "The New Constitution of Turkey", **Political Science Quarterly**, Vol.40, No.1, March 1925, p. 89.
[154] Barkey, p. 89.
[155] Svante E.Cornell, "The Kurdish Question in Turkish Politics", **Orbis,** Vol. 45, Issue 1, Winter 2001, p.32.
[156] Islam was the most significant means of the Kurdish notables (Sheiks, Tribal Chiefs, Aghas and others) in maintaining their authority over the people living in the region.

uprisings in the southeastern part of Turkey, all of which were suppressed by the military. Among these Sheikh Sait Revolt which started in 1925 with a nationalist and religious motive was suppressed by the Turkish military. As a result of the revolt, Turkish government passed an emergency law and called *Takrir-i Sükun* (Law of Order) and established *İstiklal Mahkemeleri* (Independence Tribunals) in order to equip itself with ultimate authority for the trial of the Kurdish rebels.[157] Turkish government in an attempt to prevent the unification of the Kurdish tribes against the Turkish Republic, passed a law to send Kurdish families from southeastern Turkey to the western provinces. These rebellions led the Turkish leaders to regard the Kurds a major challenge to the territorial integrity of the Republic of Turkey.[158] Consequently, the new regime aimed at integrating the Kurdish people completely into Turkish society.

III. KURDISH PROBLEM DURING THE MULTI-PARTY PERIOD

During the early 1950s when transition to multi-party system was accomplished in Turkey, there was no significant indicator of the rise of Kurdish nationalism within the country. It looked as the Kurds had been integrated into Turkish society.[159] *Demokrat Parti*-DP (Democrat Party) that came to power with the majority of the vote after 27 years of *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*-CHP (Republican Peoples Party) rule employed a much more liberal view in their new party program. DP brought a period of relative freedom of expression and permitted Kurds to express their criticisms. In this liberal atmosphere political activities of Kurds increased immensely. DP also recruited prominent Kurdish families to run on their party lists.[160] During their election campaign, although DP leaders promised to ease some of the cultural restrictions in the southeastern part of Turkey, once they came to power they refrained from doing so. DP leaders did not want to be accused for engaging in separatist activities by giving cultural rights to Kurds.

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[157] Zürcher, p. 251.
[158] Philip Robins, "The Overlord State: Turkish Policy and the Kurdish Issue", **International Affairs**, v. 69. n.4 1993, p. 660.
[159] Ergil, p. 125.
[160] Barkey, pp. 94-95.

New liberal economic policies of the DP government led to an emergence of a commercial bourgeoisie, which included Kurdish businessmen groups. However, even the Kurdish businessmen preferred to make their investments in the western part of the country rather than the eastern part where the majority of the Kurds lived. This inclination consequently increased inequality between regions and led the poor Kurdish population of the eastern and southeastern Anatolia to engage themselves in the extreme left wing political activities.[161] Authoritarian and anti-secular policies of DP government and the deteriorating economic conditions led to 1960 military intervention. The military administration followed a hard-line policy concerning political liberalism and arrested hundreds of Kurdish activists and sent 55 Kurdish notables into exile to the Western parts of the country. Moreover, military administration initiated a campaign to rename the Kurdish villages.[162] Ironically, this hard-line military administration introduced the most liberal constitution of the Turkish Republic. In the liberal atmosphere created by 1961 Constitution, citizens received more comprehensive civil rights, universities gained greater autonomy, and workers established trade unions. Under these circumstances increasing awareness of Kurdishness led to the intensification of Kurdish political activities.[163]

Kurdish intellectuals in their struggle for equality and economic development for their region found a voice in left wing political mobilization. They were organized under *Türkiye İşçi Partisi*-TİP (Turkish Workers Party), which openly argued that there was an ethnic problem in Turkey. In 1969, Kurds established *Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları* (Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Hearths) which provided an avenue for a large number of other Kurdish revolutionary groups, including PKK.[164] PKK was originally established by Abdullah Öcalan as a Kurdish Workers Party under the ideology of Marxism-Leninism (late it was transformed into a separatist movement) and its purpose was to protect the exploited Kurdish proletariat and peasantry from the Turkish ruling class and its Kurdish collaborators

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[161] Zürcher, p. 36; Barkey and Fuller, p. 15.
[162] Kirişçi and Winrow, p. 107; Barkey and Fuller, p. 14. 1960 military intervention arrested approximately 484 Kurds and exiled 55 *aghas* (Kurdish tribal leaders) to western cities. 54 of these leaders were DP Members.
[163] Barkey and Fuller , p. 15.
[164] Cornell, p. 38.

namely Kurdish feudalists and bourgeoisie. This ideology led to the formation of *Doğuculuk* (Eastism) which similarly rebelled against the exploitation of the Eastern Anatolia by the capitalist Turkish state. Supporting these arguments, Kurds held many meetings called *Doğu Mitingleri* (East Meetings).[165] The movements of rise of Kurdish consciousness and nationalism were repressed by the military interventions of 1971 and 1980. Consequently, this urban educated, intellectual generation of Kurds who were hoping to receive cultural rights through peaceful methods were replaced by younger, inexperienced, bitter, rural cadres, who opted for armed struggle.[166]

IV. KURDISH PROBLEM DURING AND IN THE AFTERMATH OF 1980 COUP

Anarchy caused by the extreme leftist and rightist movements led to 1980 military intervention. The military coup aimed to stop the violence on the street and bring peace to the country. In the aftermath of the coup, the military government's repressive policies targeted Kurdish nationalism along with extreme leftist and rightist movements.[167] Under the military rule the PKK organization fled to Syria. PKK terrorists were trained in the Syrian camps. During this period any activity concerning rise of Kurdish nationalism was severely punished by the military.[168] The military government put a strict emphasis on "Turkishness" and reflected this in the 1982 Constitution. Article 5 of the Constitution clearly defined the unitary characteristic of the state structure and the Turkish state's safeguarding role of the independence and integrity of the Turkish nation and the indivisibility of the country. Moreover, Article 26 of the 1982 Constitution banned the use of any language prohibited by state. Article 68 prohibited the formation of political parties that would

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[165] Barkey and Fuller, p. 15; Kirişçi and Winrow, p. 107. Kurds were also organized under *Yeni Türkiye Partisi*-YTP (New Turkey Party) which received 30 percent of the votes in the eastern provinces in the 1961 Elections. YTP managed to force CHP to permit the 55 exiled Kurdish notables to return to their homeland.

[166] Ergil, p. 126-7 and Barkey and Fuller, p.15.

[167] During this period in the aftermath of 1980 military intervention quite a number of Kurdish nationalists as well as leftists sought political asylum in Western European countries. See Robins, pp. 662-3.

[168] For example, Şerafettin Elçi a former CHP deputy was sentenced to one year in prison by the military court because of his public expression of his Kurdishness. Barkey and Fuller, p. 111

harm the indivisible integrity of the state.[169] However, the precautions taken by the military government were not able to stop the emergence of PKK terror.

PKK killed more than a dozen people in its first attack in 1984 in Şemdinli and Eruh. Doğu Ergil argues that demolition of the democratic Kurdish organizations by the government and the prohibition of all expressions of Kurdish identity caused the rapid growth of the PKK.[170] Young Kurds saw the organization as a means to break the feudal ties and reach their personal liberation.[171] In 1980s and early 1990s, the PKK seriously hurt regular Turkish troops, who were not experienced, prepared and well equipped for such a guerilla combat. PKK terrorist activities were directed towards economic, military and civilian targets. Among the economic targets there were electric power plantations, communication lines, factories, petroleum installations and construction equipments. PKK was trying to prevent the state to provide basic public services for the region.[172] PKK attacked and burned villages and schools in the southeastern part of Turkey. They killed more than 128 teachers between 1984 and 1994 and bombed tourist centers in order to undermine booming tourism sector.

Once the Turkish military and the governments realized the seriousness of the problem, Turkish Armed Forces prepared itself for this guerilla combat by organizing special police forces, special teams and the village guard system.[173] Turkish government established an emergency rule system in the southeastern part of Turkey by replacing the eight-and-a-half year-old martial law regime with a 'Regional State of Emergency Governorate.' The purpose of the new administrative system was to coordinate the activities of provincial authorities in the struggle against the PKK terror under a civilian regional governor who was given extraordinary powers.[174] Moreover, in order to deal with PKK terror an Anti-Terror

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[169] See the 1982 Constitution. Available at: http://www.byegm.gov.tr/mevzuat/anayasa/anayasa-ing.htm (21 December 2007).
[170] Ergil, p. 127.
[171] Michael Radu, "The Rise and Fall of PKK", **Orbis**, Vol. 45 No. 1, Winter 2001 p. 52.
[172] M. Hakan Yavuz and Michael M. Günter, "The Kurdish Nation", **Current History**, Vol. 100, No. 642, January 2001, p. 35.
[173] Barkey and Fuller, p. 28.
[174] Robins, p. 664.

Law of April 1991 was adopted. The first article of this Law included a broad definition of a terrorist act and with the article 8 it even banned the spreading of ideas.[175]

A. Özal's Liberalization Efforts

The first change in Turkish governmental policy toward the Kurdish question emerged during the era of Prime Minister/President Turgut Özal (1983-1993). In the aftermath of the 1983 military coup, once Özal's ANAP won 1983 elections, Özal initiated a series of economic and political liberalization measures. He gradually placed the traditionally dominant and established elite in the bureaucracy and the military with a new class, predominantly from business circles.[176] During his second term serving as the prime minister, in 1987 Özal attempted to liberalize policies concerning the Kurdish question. Rather than following a militaristic approach, Özal tried to pursue political solutions to the problem such as lifting the ban on Kurdish and holding negotiations with Iraqi Kurdish leaders and providing a safe haven for Iraqi Kurds in Northern Iraq with the help of international forces. He tried to engage PKK democratically into political process.[177] During the first Gulf War of 1990-1991, under Özal's initiation Turkey joined the anti-Iraq policy of the United States. Özal started dialogues with Iraqi Kurdish leaders trying to persuade them not to support PKK. He even supported the idea of educating and broadcasting in Kurdish.[178]

During this period, the first pro-Kurdish political party *Halkın Emek Partisi-* HEP (People's Labor Party) was established in 1990 by a group of nationalist Kurdish deputies. Hard-liner politicians and the military regarded HEP as the political wing of PKK, viewing it as a threat to the territorial integrity of the country.

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[175] Gülistan Gürbey, "The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Turkey since the 1980s" in **The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East,** ed., Robert Olson The University of Kentucky Press, Lexington, KY, 1996, pp.11-12.
[176] Gürbey, pp. 13-14.
[177] Morton I Abramowitz, "Dateline Ankara: Turkey after Ozal" **Foreign Policy**, No.91, Summer 1993, p. 164-165; Kirişçi and Winrow, p. 113. Özal even declared that he had Kurdish blood and he had Kurdish ancestors. Although the accuracy of this statement was in question, it was important in the sense that a president accepted the Kurdish reality.
[178] Konrad Hirschler, "Defining the Nation Kurdish Historiography in Turkey in the 1990s", **Middle Eastern Studies**, Vol. 37, No. 3, 2001, pp. 148-149.

However, Özal saw HEP and later its follower Demokrasi Partisi –DEP (Democracy Party) deputies as mediators who would form a dialogue between Turks and Kurds.[179] Özal believed that the only solution to Kurdish problem could be achieved through dialogue. In order start this dialogue a ceasefire was necessary. Consequently, in March 1993 PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire. However, the military and the hard-liners in the government refrained from holding talks with a terror organization. Özal was hoping to grant an amnesty for the PKK to pave the way for a political solution.[180] The sudden death of President Özal in 1993, led to a backlash in state policies regarding the liberalization attempts on Kurdish question

The leaders of the new coalition government *Doğru Yol Partisi*—DYP (True Path Party) and *Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti*—SHP (Social Democrat Populist Party), Süleyman Demirel and Erdal İnönü respectively while recognizing the "Kurdish reality," declared that accepting Kurds as an ethnic minority was impossible. They argued that granting minority rights to the Kurdish society would substantially lead to the partition of the country. Concerning the Kurdish problem, majority of the time Prime Minister Demirel sided with hard-liners. He argued that there was no way to find a political solution to the Kurdish problem before PKK was completely destroyed.[181]

B. Çiller's Hard-Line Policies toward the Kurdish Problem

Once Süleyman Demirel filled the post of presidency after the death of Özal, Tansu Çiller was elected as the prime minister by her party members. Çiller started her premiership by looking for political solutions to Kurdish problem such as discussing the issue with the leaders of opposition parties. Then, she attempted to form a joint inter-party "Parliament Security Commission" as a kind of civilian national security council to investigate the Kurdish problem. At one point, she even brought out the 'Basque Model' as a means to resolve Turkey's ethnic problem. However, when she received negative responses from the members of her own party,

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[179] Gürbey, p. 15. The deputies who acted as mediators between President Özal and the PKK leader Öcalan eventually lost their immunities and their membership in the parliament.
[180] Kirişçi and Winrow, p. 131.
[181] Barkey and Fuller, p. 137; Gürbey, p. 15.

opposition parties, President Demirel, and the Chief of General Staff Doğan Güreş, she decided to side with hard-liners, seeking a military solution. As an inexperienced politician this was the only way she could strengthen her legitimacy.[182]

Consequently, Çiller employed a political campaign equating all issues related to Kurdish question with the PKK terrorism. She engineered the closing down of the pro-Kurdish party and arresting some of its deputies following the demands of the Chief of the General Staff Doğan Güreş. She considered DEP deputies as the representatives of PKK in the parliament. In sum during her two years in office in 1993-95 as Barkey and Fuller state, the Çiller government reduced the Kurdish question from a political policy issue to a military campaign to eliminate the PKK, focusing on body counts, cross-border raids, village evacuations, and imprisonment of pro-Kurdish DEP deputies.[183] Accordingly, during this period, military measures were intensified in the southeastern part of the country. During Çiller government, the number of village guards and military's special teams were increased. The effectiveness of "Super Governor" of the Regional State of Emergency Governorate was increased. In attempt to cut logistic support to PKK numerous villages were evacuated and cross-border operations were initiated.[184] Although the Turkish military during Çiller's period gained an upper hand in their fight with the PKK, the operations and repressive policies increased the polarization of the society. The rise of Kurdish nationalism gained an impetus and the consciousness of Kurdishness reached to the young Kurds in the big cities who were not originally interested in separatist movements.[185]

C. Refah Party's Ineffective Policies toward the Kurdish Problem

In the aftermath of 1995 general elections pro-Islamist *Refah Partisi*-RP (Welfare Party) under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan came to power by forming a coalition with former Çiller's DYP. The 1995 elections were held in such a

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[182] Barkey and Fuller, p. 137.
[183] Barkey and Fuller, p.138.
[184] Gürbey, p. 16; Yavuz and Günter, p. 35; Kirişçi and Winrow, p. 132. Number of village guards were increased to 65,000.
[185] Yavuz and Gunter, p. 35; Ergil, p.127.

fragile environment. In 1995 elections, pro-Kurdish DEP's successor, *Halkın Demokrasi Partisi*-HADEP (Peoples' Democratic Party) achieved great success in the eastern provinces. However, it was not able to get into parliament since it received less than 10 percent of the total votes.[186] Erbakan's close relations with religious orders, sheikhs and his anti-secular discourses started infuriating the military as soon as he came to power. Prime Minister Erbakan did not have an effective policy to resolve the Kurdish issue. His only policy was revolving around the concept of religion. His main argument was that Kurdish and Turkish people were two groups of people who were both Muslims.[187] When Erbakan could not bring a political solution to the problem, Turkish military continued with its own policies to deal with the issue and maintained its struggle with PKK. From time to time the military did not even inform Erbakan government about its activities such as its cross-border operations.

While Erbakan government was not dealing with one internal threat properly, it was at the same time accelerating the second internal threat, the rise political Islam. (This issue will be explained in the next chapter in depth.) During this period Turkish Armed Forces began to perceive radical Islamic movements as a bigger threat than PKK terrorism. Consequently, Turkish military orchestrated the fall of Erbakan's pro-Islamists government from power by warning them through a memorandum on the 28 of February 2007.[188]

D. PKK Leader Öcalan's Capture

In the aftermath of military's so called soft coup or post-modern coup, an interim coalition government led by leader of *Demokratik Sol Parti*-DSP (Democratic Left Party) Bülent Ecevit. During the interim government's period, PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan who was expelled by Syria (and spend some time in Italy) was captured in Nairobi Kenya in February 1999. Syria's decision not to host

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[186] Hamit Bozarslan "Turkey's Elections and the Kurds" **Middle East Report,** April-June 1996 p. 18
[187] Michael M. Günter, "Turkey's Floundering Eu Candidacy And Its Kurdish Problem", **Middle East Policy**. Vol.14, No.1, Spring 2007.
[188] İlhan Uzgel "TDP'nin uygulanması" in **Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar**, ed., Baskın Oran, Vol.1, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002, p. 85.

Öcalan anymore was a result of security agreement signed between Turkey and Israel in 1998. Moreover, Turkish government warned Hafez al-Asad that the Turkish military would take all the necessary steps against Syria if the Damascus government continued to support PKK.[189]

Capture of Öcalan was a milestone in Turkish military's struggle with PKK. During his trial Öcalan expressed his regret and stated that he was ready to serve Turkey in its path to democratization and finding a solution to the Kurdish question.[190] Öcalan was sentenced to death. However, Turkish government accepted the demand of the European Court of Human Rights to suspend the execution of Öcalan, on the conditions that PKK stopped its terrorist attacks.[191] Consequently, Öcalan's execution was suspended and he was sentenced to life. During this time period Turkey was recognized as a candidate for the membership to European Union in December 1999. This candidateship status had an important impact on Turkish judiciary's softening attitude toward banning Öcalan's execution.[192] Moreover, constitutional reform package of 2001 paved the way for the use of languages other than Turkish including Kurdish and brought freedom of speech.[193]

The PKK violence slowed down after the capture of Öcalan in 1999. During this period, The PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire moved its militants to northern Iraq.[194] However, despite the 'peaceful-looking' façade of this (1999-2004) period terrorist attacks continued at a slower pace –PKK attacks in 2000 caused 584 casualties and 1500 in 2003.[195] Moreover, when a number of European states declared PKK as a terrorist organization, in an attempt to recover from PKK's terrorist image and provide a new image to their cause, Kurdish separatists established KADEK (Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress) in 2002. Similar

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[189] "Sabrımız taşmak üzere", **Hürriyet**, 17 September 1998, http://dosyalar.hurriyet.com.tr/hur/turk/98/11/16/html/suriye.htm (02.12.2008).
[190] Cornell, p. 42.
[191] Nicole F. Watts, "Activists in Office: Pro Kurdish Contentious Politics in Turkey", **Ethnopolitics** Vol. 5 No. 2 June 2006, p.133.
[192] Evren Balta Peker, **"The Ceasefire This Time"**, **Middle East Report Online**, 31 August 2005, http://www.merip.org/mero/mero083105.html (12.06.2007).
[193] **2001 Regular Report,** p. 18.
[194] Peker, **"The Ceasefire This Time"**.
[195] Emrullah Uslu, "Turkey's Kurdish Problem: Steps Toward a Solution", **Studies in Conflict& Terrorism,** Vol.30, No. 2, February 2007, p. 159.

to Öcalan's statements, KADEK also acknowledged that rather than seeking for an independent state, they were searching for a democratic solution for the Kurdish problem in Turkey.[196] However, soon after US Department of State, added KADEK into its list of terrorist organization in May 2003, KADEK changed its name into Kongra-Gel (Kurdistan Society Congress).[197]

V. KURDISH PROBLEM DURING AKP GOVERNMENTS: LIMITED REFORM INITIATIVES

Period of coalition governments that started in 1991 ended when *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*-AKP (Justice and Development Party) came to power winning 34 percent of the votes in November 2002 elections. After assuming power AKP leaders tried to follow a more moderate approach to the Kurdish issue. As part of AKP's aspiration to qualify for the full membership of the EU and the fulfill the political conditions of Copenhagen criteria, AKP government accelerated the constitutional reforms. In its August 2002 reform package, AKP government granted the right of broadcasting Kurdish on state-run TV and opening Kurdish language schools. Although these reforms have not been properly implemented, they were significant in the sense that they represent the first de facto recognition of the Kurdish culture by the Turkish state.[198] Moreover, in October 2004, AKP government released the Kurdish deputies who were imprisoned for their connection with PKK during Çiller's period. These former deputies formed a new movement called *Demokratik Toplum Hareketi*-DTH (Movement for a Democratic Society) to replace the pro-Kurdish DEHAP.[199]

Actually, in the power vacuum created in northern Iraq in the aftermath of American invasion to Iraq in March 2003 and execution of Saddam Hussein, PKK started to strengthen its terrorist organization. When northern Iraq became an semi-

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[196] Uslu, p. 159.
[197] Sırrı Yüksel Cebeci, "Yeniden PKK", **Tercüman**, 04.06.2004, http://www.tercuman.com.tr/v1/yazaryazi.asp?id=13&yazitar=04.06.2004&yaziid=6945 (15.06.2006).
[198] Rabia Karakaya Polat, "The AKP and the Kurdish Issue-What Went Wrong?", SETA, May 2008, No.14, http://www.setav.org/document/Policy_Brief_No_14_Rabia_Karakaya_Polat.pdf p.2; Peker, **"The Ceasefire This Time"**.
[199] Watts, p. 129.

autonomous region under the rule of Kurds of Iraq, it has created a hotbed for PKK terrorist to train themselves and hide in the mountains.[200] Northern Iraq has now become a safe haven for the 3,000 PKK militants. Washington assured Ankara that PKK would not be tolerated in northern Iraq. However, in order to avoid conflicts with their only allies in the region, US government has been turning a blind eye to the PKK militants in the region.[201]

PKK completely broke its cease-fire in 2004 as a result of disputes within the movement and refusal of Turkish government to issue a general amnesty to PKK. Since 2004, PKK has been steadily attacking Turkish military, police, and governmental targets near the Iraqi border. Only in 2005, Turkish casualties that resulted from attacks by the PKK had mounted at a rate close to that experienced by US forces in Iraq.[202] PKK declared a unilateral cease-fire in August 2005 in the condition of a general amnesty for PKK militants and the release of Öcalan. it was not accepted by the Turkish government and military. The Chief of the General Staff Hilmi Özkök dismissed the ceasefire and stated that the aim of the Turkish Armed Forces was to ensure the subordination of the separatist terrorists to the Turkish nation. Similarly, MGK urged AKP government to dismiss PKK's offer to preserve 'the independence of the nation and the indivisibility of the country.' [203]

In an attempt to increase the civilian control of the military, such EU reforms as the amendments on the "anti-terror" law limited the authority of the armed forces in a time when the PKK terror was increasing tremendously. Therefore, such reforms have made the Turkish military uncomfortable with the EU demands.[204] Although Prime Minister Erdoğan declared that his government was planning to resolve the Kurdish issue through democratic means, rise of PKK attacks made this plan

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[200] Under Saddam Hussein's regimes it was more difficult for the PKK terrorists in northern Iraq since Saddam forces were also fighting against them.

[201] Peker, **"The Ceasefire This Time"**

[202] Soner Çağatay and Fikret Cem S., "Europe's Terror Problem: PKK Fronts Inside the EU", **Policy Watch**, # 1057 (Dec., 2, 2005), http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=2413 (20.08.2008)

[203] "Şartsız ateşkes çağrısı", **Sabah**, 19.08.2005, http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2005/08/19/gnd110.html (12.06.2007); Peker, **"The Ceasefire This Time"**.

[204] "Özkök: Kısıtlanmış yetkiyle mücadele ediyoruz.", **Hürriyet**, 05.08.2005, http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?viewid=613700 (12.05.2006).

unfeasible.[205]   For example, in August 2006 Erdoğan declared on state TV that Kurdish problem and PKK terrorism were two different things that should not be confused. In an attempt to hunt Kurdish votes, he asserted that Kurdish citizens were his citizens.He stated that Kurdishness was a sub-identity under the main Turkish identity. However, his statements were criticized in the August 2008 MGK meeting. The generals requested him not to spell out the expression "Kurdish Question," again. [206]

VI. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS: THREAT IN ITS PEAK AGAIN

Once the Turkish military started building up in the border region of Iraq , in April 2007, PKK attacks increased tremendously, killing 6 Turkish soldiers in May and 7 in June and 3 in August. In September 2007, the PKK killed 12 civilians in a minibus who were traveling in Beytüşşebap district of Şırnak. One of the heaviest losses of Turkish military came in early October 2007 when the PKK militants killed 13 Turkish soldiers close to the Iraqi border. All of these ambushes increased military pressure on the Turkish government to send troops across the border. Moreover, this bloodshed created a nationalist backlash in Turkey. Most of the Turks started blaming US government for renewed PKK violence emanating from Northern Iraq. As a result of these developments, on the 17th of October 2007, in an attempt to destroy PKK camps in Northern Iraq, the Turkish parliament approved a military cross-border operation to Iraq with an overwhelming majority of 507 to 19.[207]

Cross-border operation took place in February 2008, after Prime Minister Erdoğan met with American President Bush and received his confirmation in November 2007. Deploying approximately 10,000 troops, military supported its soldiers with armored vehicles and aircraft. The US government and Northern Iraq Local Administration called for an end to the incursion. A week later on 29th of

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[205] "Erdoğan: Kürt sorunu demokrasiyle çözülür", **Radikal,** 11.08.2005, http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=161151 (02.03.2007).
[206] Peker, **"**The Ceasefire This Time"; Kürt sorunu farklı bir olay, PKK sorunu farklı olaydır", **Sabah**, 22.08.2006, http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2005/08/22/siy110.html (08.02.2008).
[207] "Tezkere onaylandı; hükümete tam yetki verildi", 17.10.2007, http://www.dunyabulteni.net/news_detail.php?id=25740 (06.05.2008).

February Turkish military publicly announced that the incursion was finished and troops were pulled out of northern Iraq after they had achieved their objectives.

Nowadays PKK terrorism and Kurdish activism are still in their peak. PKK began launching bomb attacks in metropolitan areas.[208] The military perceives the issue as a very serious threat to the territorial integrity of the country and maintenance of the regime. Despite some moderate approaches followed by the AKP government, (in attempt to fulfill Copenhagen Criteria), Kurdish problem is still under the domain of the national security sphere of the military.

VII. OVERVIEW

Starting from the late period of the Ottoman Empire until today, rise of Kurdish nationalism with its ebbs and flows have had a significant impact on Turkish political life. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Kurds of Anatolia started to express their uneasiness when they found themselves in the territories of the newly established nation-state of Republic of Turkey. They showed this uneasiness through a series of uprisings that were all suppressed by the military. While they were quiet under the repressive policies of the single party, during the multi-party period they tried to find some space for themselves in politics. Liberal 1961 Constitution opened them the avenue to express their identities. In 1970s where there was a polarization between leftists and rightists, they chose the leftist to express their ideas. Eventually, end of 1970s witnessed the establishment of the PKK and its full-blown terrorist activities in the aftermath of 1980 military coup.

Turkish political life was completely occupied with PKK terror throughout 1980s and 1990s where tens of thousands of people were killed in violent attacks. Rise of Kurdish nationalism that reflected itself in PKK terror shaped the Turkish political structure (including its economy, its civil-military relations) during this period. While 1980 military administration took militaristic measures towards rise of Kurdish nationalism, Prime Minister/President Özal searched for ways to resolve the

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[208] Fulya Özerkan, "PKK spiral of violence spreads to cities", **Turkish Daily News**, 05.01.2008, http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/article.php?enewsid=92900 (04.05.2008).

issue politically, peacefully and democratically. Prime Minister Çiller, after a quick attempt to bring a peaceful solution to the problem, in a short time referred to the most hawkish and militaristic resolutions. These militaristic solutions included evacuation of villages, cross-border operations to Iraq and establishment of special teams. President Demirel was not ready for any political solution before the PKK was destroyed. Capture of PKK leader Öcalan brought a relative quiet period concerning PKK terror. However, once Öcalan did not get everything he requested from the government such as amnesty for his friends, PKK violence started from where it was left. By early 2000s, Turkish governments in their attempt to be qualified as EU candidate started to bring some democratic openings to the problems such as broadcasting Kurdish on state-run TV and opening Kurdish language schools. However, these reforms mostly remained on paper rather than practice.

Starting in 2004 on PKK violence once again has become part of Turkish political life bringing the Turkish military back on the central political stage again. As part of EU harmonization packages, Turkish military's role in politics was diminished. However, with the increasing PKK terror, military started to take its place once again, in Turkish political life dominating civilian governments. Another 'internal threat' that shapes Turkish political life and brings military to the center of the political stage is the "rise of political Islam." Consequently, the following chapter will be an analysis of this internal threat and military's attitude towards it.

CHAPTER FIVE
TURKISH MILITARY AND THE RISE OF POLITICAL ISLAM

The resurgence of political Islam is the second significant internal threat that has been influential in Turkish political life starting in early 1980 and continuing throughout 1990s and 2000s. Although the rise of political Islam can be traced back to the beginning of multi-party system in 1950s, it has been an important subject of debate in Turkish politics since 1980s. Since this rise in political Islam is perceived by the state elite and the military a threat to the secular characteristics of the republic, it opens another avenue for the guardians of Kemalist reforms, the military to intervene into political life.

Despite vast secularization reforms of Atatürk that were established in the early years of the Republic, Islam which was embedded in the social life of people continued to play an important role in their value system. Starting with the multi-party period under Democrat Party rule, Turkish politics has witnessed a revival of religion and the integration of religiously conservative groups into politics. This revival showed itself as the establishment of Islamist-oriented political parties such as *Milli Nizam Partisi*-MNP (National Order Party), *Milli Selamet Partisi*-MSP (National Salvation Party) and their successor in the aftermath of 1980 military intervention *Refah Partisi*-RP (Welfare Party), which brought further legitimization of religion in politics. However, when these religious parties tried to exercise an excessive degree of Islamic influence over public policy and tried to create alternative state structures that would follow the Islamic Law *Sharia*, Turkish military intervened into politics in 1997. Despite the military's effort to reduce the impact of religion in politics, since 2002 the rise of political Islam increased its pace tremendously with the coming of another pro-Islamist party *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*-AKP (Justice and Development Party) to power.

This chapter aims to show that the Turkish military's role in politics will remain central as long as the rise of political Islam will continue challenging the

secularity principle of Atatürk. Currently, Islam's role in politics is increasing dramatically. In response military is constantly expressing its aim that country will remain secular. Although Turkish government as an attempt to become a member of EU has been making a series of amendments to reduce the role of the military in politics, as long as any kind of threat to secular character of the republic will exist, Turkish Armed Forces will continue to intervene into politics. In order to analyze how rise of political Islam has been shaping Turkish politics, the chapter will first give a brief background of the rise of political Islam in Turkey by discussing the concept of secularism. Then the chapter will continue by analyzing different periods where the role of Islam in politics increased starting from the multi-party period and continuing with the post-1960 and 1980 military intervention periods. After concentrating on the 28 February 2007 soft coup, the chapter will be concluded with an analysis of how the rise of political Islam is still very persuasive in Turkish political life.

I. RISE OF POLITICAL ISLAM IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE REPUBLIC

During the Republican era the principle of "secularism" or actually the way it is called in Turkish "laicism"[209] has been the most controversial one. Turkish secularism resembles much more to the French model of laicism rather than Anglo-Saxon secularism. While Anglo-Saxon secularism is primarily concerned with the separation of Church (in this context, mosque) and state, the Kemalist version of laicism however, rather than separating religion and politics, subordinates religion to the public realm.[210] Kemalist elites of the Republican period saw religion as an obstacle for establishing a westernized and modernized state. Moreover, Islamic circles were posing a threat to the new government's authority. Kemalist transformation had no place for religion in the state and in the public sphere. They

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[209] The word laicism in Turkish was taken from French.
[210] Pınar Tank, "Political Islam in Turkey: A state of controlled secularity", **Turkish Studies**, Vol.6, No.1, 2005, pp. 4-5; Nilüfer Göle, "Secularism and Islamism in Turkey: The Making of Elites and Counter Elites", **Middle East Journal**, Vol.31, No. 1, Winter 1997, pp. 48-49.

sought to subordinate Islam under state structure.[211] Consequently, the military perceived the rise of political Islam as a threat to the laicist character of the republic.

A. Kemalist Reforms

In this respect Kemalist elite sought to undertake several reforms in order to secularize the whole system. They first tried to secularize the state, education and judicial life. Second, they tried to secularize the societal life. The first wave of the Kemalist reforms included the secularization process of the state, education and judicial life. Following the abolishment of Sultanate and the Caliphate, a secular Republic and a constitution were introduced between 1922 and 1924. The removal of the provision accepting Islam as the state's religion from the constitution in 1928 was the ultimate operation of this process. Education system was secularized and unified by bringing all educational institutions under the control of the Ministry of Education. Sharia Law was completely banned with the adoption of Swiss civil code and Italian penal codes in 1928. *Şeyh-ül Islam*, the highest religious authority of the Ottoman state system was abandoned and a *Diyanet İşleri Reisliği*, (Presidency of Religious Affairs) and *Evkaf Umum Müdürlüğü,* (Public Directorate of Pious Foundations) were founded.[212] The foundation of these institutions obviously revealed that the content of Kemalist laicism was not the separation of the state and religion, rather the supervision of the state over religion.

The second wave of Kemalist reforms aiming to secularize the society started with religious symbols. The traditional head covering of the Muslim Ottomans, fez was outlawed in 1925 and the use of a Western Hat and dresses were promoted.

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[211] Erik Jan Zürcher, **Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi (Turkey, A Modern History),** (trans. Yasemin Sanen Gönen), İletişim, İstanbul, 2000, p. 281.

[212] Binnaz Toprak, "Islam and the Secular State in Turkey", in **Turkey: Political, Social and Economic Challenges in the 1990s**, Çiğdem Balım et.al. (eds), E. J. Brill, New York, 1995, p.89; M. Philips Price**, A History of Turkey From Empire to Republic**, George Allen &Unwin, London, 1956, p.136; Armağan Kuloğlu and Mustafa Şahin, "The Past and Future of Civil Military Relations in Turkey", in **Governance and the Military: Perspectives for Change in Turkey**, Sami Faltaş and Sander Jansen (eds), The Centre of European Security Studies Press, Groningen: 2006, p. 93; Göle, p. 50.

Religious dress was limited only to be used by the religious staff working in the mosques. Weekly holiday was changed from Friday to Sunday.[213] These reforms also aimed to cut Turkish society's connection with the Muslim world. The alteration of the women's role in the society by initiated reforms brought to mind anti religious connotations. The reforms did not only include formal initiatives like voting rights, but also encouraged women to take their places in professional jobs.[214] Replacing Arabic alphabet by the Latin script in 1928 was another method of cutting the links with the Muslim world. Most important reform of secularization of the society was the prohibition of Dervish lodges and mystical Sufi brotherhoods. Moreover, prayer calls (ezan) was translated from Arabic to Turkish.[215]

Despite this vast secularization policy, Islam continued to be a significant component of the value system of the masses. Islam was part of the social life of the people. It was more than a doctrine or private belief or worship, it was a culture. It had an impact on all aspects of interpersonal relations.[216] Consequently, religiously conservative people began to establish their own informal networks and education system when the religion was excluded from their life by the secular elites. This diversion created a cultural divide between the secular elites of the cities and religiously conservative people of the small towns. [217]

B. CHP's Attitude toward the Rise of Political Islam

Although Atatürk's political party *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*-CHP (Republican People's Party) was the initiator of the secularist reforms, once it began to lose public support in the 1940s (mainly as a result of the deteriorating economy of the World

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[213] Zürcher, p.273.
[214] Rainer Hermann, "'Political Islam in Secular Turkey", **Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations**, Vol.14, No.3, 2003, p 267.
[215] Zürcher, p. 277.
[216] Alan R. Taylor, **The Islamic Question in the Middle East Politics,** Westview Press, Boulder, 1988, p. 91.
[217] M. Hakan Yavuz, "Cleansing Islam from the Public Sphere," **Journal of International Affairs**, Vol.54, No.1, Fall 2000, pp. 24-5; Şerif Mardin, "Center-Periphery: A Key to Turkish Politics," **Daedalus**, 102, 1973, pp. 169-90 and Sencer Ayata, "The Rise of Islamic Fundamentalism and Its Institutional Framework", in **The Political and Socio-Economic Transformation of Turkey**, Atilla Eralp et.al. (eds), Praeger, Westport, 1993, pp. 51-63.

War II period),[218] the party under the leadership of İsmer İnönü started to backtrack from these reforms. When the 27-year single party period ended and *Demokrat Parti*-DP (Democrat Party) entered to the political sphere as a significant opposition party, İnönü and members of CHP sought to limit DP's success by initiating measures against the firm secularism principle. Democrat Party's program included many projects concerning religion such as introduction of religion courses to schools and establishment of a Theology School to train preachers (imam). In an attempt to seize some of DP's votes, CHP took over these policies and introduced them. In 1947 the Ministry of National Education introduced elective religious courses in public schools. In 1948, pilgrims going to Mecca were allowed to have foreign exchange. In 1949, a Faculty of Theology was founded in Ankara. Furthermore, CHP government lifted the ban on the Dervish lodges and mystical Sufi brotherhoods. However, these efforts couldn't help CHP to maintain its power. DP came to power as the sole authority in 1950 elections.

While Kemalist reforms succeeded in the urban centers and among the state elite, bureaucracy and the military, their impact was quite limited in the rural areas and as Şerif Mardin states in the periphery. The people living in the periphery were indifferent to these reforms. They continued living according to their old traditions and they were still under the influence of sheiks and other traditional authorities. Despite the drastic transformation Turkey went through in the early years of the Republic, only the people living in the center made use of these changes. People living in the periphery, who constituted the majority of the population did not benefit from these reforms. Moreover, people living in the periphery brought Democrat Party to the power in the 1950 elections. [219]

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[218] Although Turkey did not take place in the Second World War until the last couple months of it, its economy was terribly affected from it as a result of the mobilization of its military. Majority of the men that contributed to the work force were recruited as soldiers.
[219] Mardin, pp. 304-305.

II. POLITICAL ISLAM DURING THE MULTI-PARTY ERA

While it was not difficult to follow secular policies and keep the religious groups under control during single party years, this process was not that easy during the multi-party years when the competitive politics started. During the multi-party period religiously conservative masses were integrated into politics. Democrat Party used religion as an instrument in order to appeal to the masses in elections.[220] The leaders of DP deployed more religious slogans and symbols in their election propaganda. Once they came to power their attitude toward religion was more accommodating and the government control over religious activities was relaxed.[221] Consequently, religious groups have started to have influence on governmental affairs.

DP leaders made a number of concessions to enlarge the Islamic sphere. They constructed new mosques, permitted the Quranic broadcasting on the radio, reinstituted the prayer calls to Arabic from Turkish and made religion courses in public schools mandatory.[222] They tried to eliminate the secular state elite from governmental positions and forced many university secular professors and high ranking generals for retirement.[223] As a result of DP governments' investments to agriculture in the periphery, a new commercial entrepreneurs and businessmen group emerged. During its election campaigns in 1954 and 1957, DP received the support of religious orders such as the *Nurcus*.[224] Leader of DP, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes in many occasions followed an anti-secular discourse in his speeches. In 1955, in a party group meeting, in an attempt to explain his deputies how powerful they were, Menderes declared that DP deputies could even bring *Sharia* rule to the

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[220] Mehmet Geyikdağı, **Political Parties in Turkey: The Role of Islam**, Praeger, New York, 1984, pp. 73-88.
[221] Ayata, p. 63.
[222] In their first seven-year period, DP built 1500 mosques. Zürcher, p. 339.
[223] Metin Öztürk, **Ordu ve Politika,** Fark Yayınları, Ankara, 2006, pp. 68-69; Cüneyt Arcayürek, **Atatürk'ten Sonra Bugünlere Nasıl Geldik?**, Detay Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2008, p.223.
[224] Fulya Atacan, "A Kurdish Islamist Group in Modern Turkey: Shifting Identities", **Middle Eastern Studies**, Vol.37, No. 3, 2001, p. 114.

country if they wanted. Moreover, Menderes presented DP's commitments to make İstanbul a quasi-Mecca and make Eyüp Sultan Mosque a quasi Kaaba.[225]

The more DP started losing its power, the more the DP leaders increased their authoritarian tendencies and referred to deliberalization policies. They tightened the press law, amended the electoral law and banned the opposition parties from putting forward joint lists. Their anti-secular policies created a serious reaction among the state elite and the military. Increasing inflation caused a decrease in the social status, economic power and political significance of the military and the civilian bureaucracy. Moreover, intervention of Menderes into the promotion process in the military and basing these promotions on the personal loyalty to his party was the last straw for the Armed Forces. Consequently, all these developments led to the 1960 military intervention.

A. Political Islam in the Aftermath of 1960 Military Intervention

Democrat Party was removed from power by the military administration of 1960 coup. In a short time Turkey returned to civilian regime and elections took place. *Adalet Partisi*-AP (Justice Party) replaced DP and once it came to power, it also started seeking compromise between the strongly secular position of the military and the demands of the religious elements in the country. Although the military carefully planned the intervention in order to remove DP from power, in the aftermath of the coup its successor AP won the elections. During this period silent religious groups were mobilized as a result of socio-economic transformation of the society and the social mobilization. As a result of masses migrating from rural areas to big cities to find a better life, the country went through a serious socio-economic transformation. These people when they came to the big cities experienced an

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[225] Arcayürek, pp.249-250.

"unfair" income distribution and referred to their traditional values caused by the difficulty in adjusting to an urban way of life.[226]

Until the end of 1960s, constituents with Islamic motives, continued to portray themselves under the framework of AP. When AP managed to come to power on its own in 1965, it started implementing its economic policies that favored agricultural sectors. The global rise in the cereal prices and several successive years of good yield brought an extraordinary wealth to the rural areas. State investments in infrastructural projects such as construction of roads and dams contributed to the agricultural development and indirectly to the political resurgence of the peasantry and provincial middle class.[227] However, by late 1960s, the rapid industrialization caused a division between the business classes. While the interests of the foreign capital supported big businesses mostly centered in Istanbul, small and medium local firms remained in their provinces. Among these two, leader of AP, Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel gradually took a stance in favor of the big businesses. In response, smaller parties that advocated provincial businesses and some of the peasantry were established. Among these parties the most significant was the pro-Islamist Milli Nizam Partisi-MNP (National Order Party) led by Necmettin Erbakan.[228]

B. Establishment of pro-Islamist Parties (MNP and MSP)

Establishment of pro-Islamist MNP in 1970 was the beginning of a series of religious parties that would have an impact on Turkish political scene. MNP's ideology was mainly based on the importance of morals and virtue. Erbakan criticized Demirel's AP for becoming a puppet of freemasonry and Zionists and

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[226] Sabri Sayarı, "Politization of Islamic Re-traditionalism: Some Preliminary Notes", in **Islam and Politics in the Middle East,** Metin Heper and R. Israeli (eds), St. Martin Press, New York, 1984, p. 125.
[227] Ronnie Margulies and Ergin Yıldızoğlu, "The Political Uses of Islam in Turkey", **Middle East Report,** No.153, July and August 1988, p. 14.
[228] Avner Levy, "The Justice Party, 1961-1980", in **Political Parties and Democracy in Turkey**, M. Heper & J. Landau (eds), Tauris, London, 1996, pp. 553-555; Tank, p.5.

turning its back to Islam.[229]   Besides a pro-Islamist political party, under the liberal atmosphere created by the 1961 Constitution, numerous extreme rightist and leftist parties were established in the country. Emergence of extreme leftist and rightist groups created an explosive situation on the campuses and all over the country. Consequently, this violence led the military to make a coup by memorandum on March 12, 1971.   When the coup administration closed many leftist and rightist parties including MNP, Erbakan as a successor of MNP established *Milli Selamet Partisi*-MSP (National Salvation Party) in 1972.

Emergence of religious MSP in 1970s designated a further legitimatization of the role of religion in politics. MSP which received support from *Nakşibendi* and *Nurcu Tarikats* favored a return to Islamic tradition and closer economic ties with the Islamic world. It opposed Turkey's entry to European Economic Community-EEC, on the grounds that it would further strengthen the big business against the small enterprises. Erbakan considered EEC as the reflection of the crusaders ambitions.[230] MSP by participating some of the coalition governments between 1973 and 1980 developed an effective organizational structure with the support of the small entrepreneurs and artisans in the rural areas of the country. While MSP served in the coalitions[231] as the junior partner of the coalition, it imposed an excessive degree of Islamic influence over public policy. Among these policies were compulsory religious instruction in all primary and middle schools, anti-pornography laws, more religious broadcasts on state radio and television, and a major expansion in the size of the religious bureaucracy.[232]   Increasing extreme rightist and leftists movements caused a total fragmentation and polarization in the society as well as the political parties, which in turn led to political violence. When this violence was coupled with

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[229] M. Hakan Yavuz, "Political Islam and the Welfare Party in Turkey", **Comparative Politics**, Vol.30 No.1, October 1997, p. 66; Margulies and Yıldızoğlu, p. 14.
[230] Fulya Atacan , "Explaining Religious Politics at the Crossroad: AKP-SP", **Turkish Studies**, Vol.6, No. 2, June 2005, p.188.
[231] First coalition government MSP joined was in 1974 with Atatürk's pro-secular CHP. Although their ideologies totally contradicted each other, for the sake of coming to power, they formed a coalition government that did not last long. In Demirel's rightist Milliyetçi Cephe (National Front) governments MSP served twice as one of the junior partners of the coalition.
[232] Zürcher, p.380.

a deteriorating economy, the military intervened into politics one more time on September 12, 1980.

III. POLITICAL ISLAM IN THE AFTERMATH OF 1980 MILITARY COUP

When the military intervened into politics in 1980, it ruled the country for three years until November 1983 elections. During this period, the military administration prohibited all political parties including MSP and banned all political leaders from politics including Erbakan. Actually Erbakan's MSP's call for the reinstitution of *Sharia* in Turkey in its meeting in Konya was one of the last straws that led to 1980 coup d'état. Alongside the rest of the politicians, Erbakan was also arrested and he was accused him for exploiting religion for political purposes by the military court.[233] During this period, ironically, the policies of the military government offered a suitable ground for the development of Islamic movements. Military government favored Turkish- Islamic Synthesis[234] ideology in an attempt to suppress the communist threat. The military regime tried to suppress a potential leftist opposition or pacify the threat of communism by incorporating Islam into the official state discourse. They hoped to achieve political stability and national unity by employing religious sentiment and traditional allegiances.[235]

In the first democratic elections in 1983 in the aftermath of the 1980 coup, Turgut Özal's[236] *Anavatan Partisi*-ANAP, (Motherland Party) which received support from religious sectors of the population was elected. Consequently, during this period many moderate Islamists as well as some fundamentalists joined politics.

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[233] Michael M. Günter, "The Silent Coup: The Secularist-Islamist Struggle in Turkey", **Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies**, Vol. XXI, No.21, Spring 1998, p.2; Zürcher, p. 339.

[234] Turkish-Islamic Synthesis argues that the ancestral Turkish and Islam civilizations have a lot in common such as monotheism, sensitivity for justice, and paying significant attention to moral values and family life. See İlhan Uzgel, "Türk Islam Sentezi" in **Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar**, Baskın Oran (ed), İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, Vol.2, 2002, p. 22.

[235] Yavuz, p. 67-68; By making religion courses compulsory part of the curriculum in all primary and secondary schools, they thought they would protect the young generation from communism, fascism and other anti-systemic ideologies.

[236] Özal himself was a member of Nakshibendi Tarikat. Morover, Özal became candidate from MSP in 1977 elections.

Moreover, Özal's economic liberalization project enabled provincial based economic classes, who were culturally conservative and pious. For the first time, Turkey had Islamist businessmen (Anatolian tigers) and companies.[237] This new conservative wealthy groups started to open up their religious schools, TV and radio stations and publish their own newspapers and magazines. Islamists of 1980s integrated into the system through an expansion of educational opportunities, economic activity, and party politics.

Özal had an important impact on the rise of political Islam during this period. He first, tried to integrate mainstream Islamists into the politics. In 1989 although ANAP government attempted to pass a law that would allow female students wear headscarf in universities, it was rejected by the President and the Constitutional Court.[238] However, in early 1990s, ANAP started to move away from radical Islamists and started to get closer to the liberals. Rise of Islamic militancy within the country and the region forced ANAP to take a more liberal stance in Turkish politics. During this period, rise of Islamic fundamentalism was not only Turkey's problem. Iran Islam Revolution and Soviet intervention in Afghanistan further strengthened Islamic circles in Turkey.[239]

After an eight year of ANAP rule between 1983-1991, in 1991 elections center right *Doğru Yol Partisi* –DYP (True Path Party) and center left *Sosyal Demokratik Halkçı Parti*-SHP (Social Democratic Populist Party) coalition came to power. During this period, rise of political Islam continued to rise, this time under the banner of Refah Partisi-RP (Welfare Party) as the successor of MSP. Socio-economic transformation in the country, disappearance of Leftist agenda from politics and the corruption of other politicians and political parties led people to support RP. As a result of its efficient organization and internal discipline, RP starting with a 4.4 percent vote in 1984, has steadily increased its showing in every

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[237] Hermann, p 267.
[238] Tank, p. 7; Arcayürek, p.291.
[239] Nilüfer Göle, "Secularism and Islamism in Turkey: The Making of Elites and Counter Elites", pp. 53-54.

single election since then and has multiplied its support four times in ten years.[240] In 1994 local elections RP won municipalities in many provinces including İstanbul and Ankara. In December 1995 general elections, RP came as the first party by receiving 21.38 percent of the votes, while ANAP and DYP received 19.65 and 19.19 percent of the votes respectively.

IV. MILITARY'S REACTION TO ISLAMISTS IN POWER: 28 FEBRUARY SOFT COUP

For the first time in the history of the Republic of Turkey, an Islamist party, RP won the majority of the votes and came to power as the senior party of the coalition. RP formed a coalition with DYP in July 1996 under the leadership of Tansu Çiller when the other center right parties (DYP and ANAP) failed to form a coalition.[241] Consequently, Erbakan became the first Islamist prime minister of secular Turkey. At the beginning, Erbakan gave some signs of developing into a pro-system party by abandoning its Islamic economic program and its rhetoric against the West and ratifying a defense agreement with Israel. Moreover, he supported the renewal of Operation Provide Comfort, the US air force base in Southeastern Turkey.[242] However, he attracted the attention of the military by visiting Iran and Libya. He negotiated a $23 billion natural gas contract with Iran which was against the US Iran-Libya Sanctions Act. Erbakan's Libya visit turned into a disaster when unpredictable Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi supported the formation of an independent Kurdistan.[243]

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[240] While the RP received 5 percent of the votes in the interim parliamentary elections in 1986, in the 1987 general elections it received 7.16, in 1989 local elections 9.8, and in 1991 general elections 16.2 percent, and in 1994 local elections 19 percent of the votes.

[241] This coalition could only be realized after Erbakan and Çiller dropped the corruption charges against each other. R. Quinn Mecham, "From the ashes of virtue, a promise of light: the transformation of political Islam in Turkey", **Third World Quarterly**, v.25 n. 2, 2004, pp. 346-347.

[242] Günter, p. 4; Metin Heper and Aylin Güney, "The Military and the Consolidation of Democracy; The Recent Turkish Experience", **Armed Forces & Society**, No. 26, 2000, p.640.

[243] Atay Akdevelioğlu and Ömer Kürkçüoğlu, "1990–2001 Küreselleşme Ekseninde Türkiye; Orta Doğu'yla İlişkiler", **Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar,** Baskın Oran (ed), İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, Vol. 2, 2003, pp. 560- 561.

Concerning domestic politics Erbakan drew the anger of the military and the secular circle by inviting the leaders of religious orders to a dinner party at his prime ministerial residence. Religious leaders attended the dinner in their religious garbs. Accumulation of large amounts of funds in the hands of some Islamic holding companies was also a significant concern for the military. During this period number the number of *İmam Hatip Okulları* (Prayer Leaders and Preachers School) increased tremendously.[244] Furthermore, statements made by some RP members alarmed the military. For example when the secular circles talked about closing junior high schools and making elementary schools eight years, RP deputy Halil İbrahim Çelik stated that if the junior high schools will be closed there would be bloodshed. He continued to explain that this bloodshed would be worse then the one in Algeria and he would be happy to see it. In another occasion, another RP deputy Hasan Huseyin Ceylan stated that if Refah had controlled the military academies, Turkey would have been a much nicer place to live. Moreover, mayor of Rize, Şevki Yılmaz did not attend the ceremonies held in front of the statues of Atatürk on national days.[245]

The last straw for the military was the "Jerusalem Night" organized in February 1997 by the RP controlled Sincan Municipality on the outskirts of Ankara. Iran's ambassador to Turkey who joined this ceremony stated that Iran was supporting the reestablishment of Sharia to Turkey. Four days later, Turkish military tanks roamed the streets of Sincan as a clear reaction of Turkish Armed Forces against Islamists.[246] In response to military's reaction RP youth group staged a play in Ankara which was about a struggle of the Muslims against an anti-religious military in an unknown country. At the end of the play, the performers called the audience as true believers and asked them to gather against a military that was aiming to abolish Quranic principles.[247]

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[244] Heper and Güney, pp. 640-642.
[245] Heper and Güney, p. 641.
[246] Özgür Gökmen, "28 Şubat: Bir "Batılılaşma Restorasyonu" mu?", **Turkology Update Leiden Project Working Papers Archive Department of Turkish Studies,** Universiteit Leiden, March 2002, p. 3.
[247] Öztürk, pp. 101-102.

The military had already started to discuss their concern about political Islam as early as August 1996 in the *Milli Güvenlik Konseyi*-MGK (National Security Council) meeting. They even warned the governing coalition to act cautiously on the issue of political Islam. National Intelligence Organization and General Directorate of Security wrote numerous reports concerning orders and associations that were trying to create "alternative state structures."[248]

A. February 28 Process: Post Modern Coup D'état

At the 28 February 1997 meeting of the MGK, the commanders pointed out that if those who governed the country overlooked the threat to the secularity of the republic and if they continue using religion for political ends, the republic would come apart at its very foundations. At the end of the meetings MGK made eighteen recommendations to the government. These recommendations included ban on pro-Sharia public propaganda in order to prevent the anti-secular acts against the state, tighter restrictions on religious dress in public places, halting the recruitment of Islamists into government jobs and the military, full implementation of the "Uniformity of education" law, including the closure of the Prayer Leader and Preacher Schools, careful observation of the economic activities of Islamic groups and measures to protect Turkey against Iran's dangerous activities.[249] These recommendations put Erbakan in a difficult position between the demands of his constituency and the military.

Eventually Erbakan signed these directives on 5 March 1997 and asked the cabinet to implement them. RP-led government resigned in June 1997. In January 1998, the Constitutional shut down the RP. RP parliamentarians established a new political party called *Fazilet Partisi*-FP (Virtue Party). However, FP preferred to assimilate itself into the political structure to maintain its legal existence and presented itself as a pro-system party. When FP was banned, two new parties were

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[248] Heper and Güney, p. 640.
[249] Gökmen, p. 5; Heper and Güney, p. 645.

established. While the conservative wing of RP and FP took place in Saadet Partisi –
SP (Felicity Party), more moderate and younger cadre took their place in Adalet ve
Kalkınma Partisi-AKP (Justice and Development Party).

V. MODERATE ISLAMISTS IN POWER: AKP GOVERNMENTS

In the aftermath of resignation of RP-DYP government a minority interim
government under the leadership of Bülent Ecevit's DSP –orchestrated by the
Turkish military— ruled the country until 1999 elections.[250] As already stated in the
previous chapters, 1999 general elections introduced the DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition.
In 1999 general elections while DSP received 22.19 percent of the votes MHP
received 17.98 and FP received 15.41 percent of the votes. Despite military's efforts
to ban RP with its 28 February 1997 memorandum, RP's successor FP managed to
come to the parliament as the third largest party in 1999 elections. This was an
important sign of continuation of the support of the people to the Islamist parties.
Political Islam in the country was still on the rise. However when FP was also
accused of using Islam as an instrument of politics,[251] it was banned by the
Constitutional court and as already stated conservative SP and moderate AKP was
established.

DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition period was full of turmoil as a result of a very
severe earthquake Turkey experienced, discussions on harmonization packages to
qualify for EU, and a serious economic crisis that put Turkey under another IMF
standby agreement. All of these developments led Turkey to go through another
general election in November 2002. November 2002 elections for the second time in
the history of the country brought Islamists, however with a moderate-looking
façade, AKP to power.

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[250] Capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan during the interim government of Ecevit increased the
political credibility of DSP tremendously and enabled DSP to win the elections of 1999.
[251] First sign of FP's anti-secular behavior took place in the first meeting of Turkish Grand National
Assembly when a female deputy of FP, Merve Kavakçı entered the Turkish Grand National Assembly
wearing her headscarf http://webarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/1999/05/11/115550.asp (11.05.1999).

This research identified AKP as a pro Islamist party although there is a group scholars in Turkey who identified the ruling party as a mainstream rightist party which is trying to bring political liberalization as an attempt to make Turkey a full member of EU. Among these Metin Heper argues that AKP is a conservative-democratic political party and both this party and its leader Erdoğan have been favoring democratic values within the party and the country. Heper even argues that Erdoğan and AKP members support the concept of secular state.[252] Besides, Ergun Özbudun states that the rise of political Islam was transformed into a moderate conservative democratic ideology under AKP leadership.[253] In addition to that Simten Coşar and Aylin Özman stated that "The AKP's disposition vis-à-vis state-centred politics is considered, as is its standpoint with regard to pluralism and democracy."[254] Despite these arguments, the study considers the AKP as a pro Islamic party.

A. A New Phase for the Islamists: AKP's First Term in Power

AKP under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan came first in the 2002 general elections and managed to have 363 of the 541 elected seats of the parliament by winning 34 percent of the votes.[255] AKP with its Islamist roots fundamentally differed from its predecessors, MSP, RP and FP 'in terms of its ideology, its political goals, its market-oriented economic program, and the broader range of the electorate to which it appeals'.[256] Public opinion research into voter behavior showed that AKP did not equate support for Islamism per se. AKP managed to receive votes from all

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[252] Metin Heper, "The Justice and Development Party Government and the Military in Turkey.", **Turkish Studies**, v. 6, no. 2, June 2005, pp. 221-222

[253] Ergun Özbudun, "From Political Islam to Conservative Democracy: The Case of the Justice and Development Party in Turkey.", **South European Society and Politics**, v. 11, n. 3&4 September 2006.

[254] Simten Coşar and Aylin Özman, "Centre-right politics in Turkey after the November 2002 general election: neo-liberalism with a Muslim face," **Contemporary Politics**, Vol. 10, Number 1, March 2004.

[255] "2002 Yılı Genel Seçim Sonuçları", http://tuikrapor.tuik.gov.tr/reports/rwservlet?secimdb2=&report=tablo1.RDF&p_il=0&p_s1=1&p_s2 =2&p_s3=3&p_s4=4&p_s5=5&p_s6=6&p_s7=7&p_s8=8&p_s9=9&p_kod=1&desformat=html&EN VID=secimEnv (11.05.2007).

[256] Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, **The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey**, Rand Corporation, National Defense Research Institute, Santa Monica, CA, 2008, p. ix.

walks of life. It owed its success to its trilateral strategy which successfully met the societal demands of the people. After Erdoğan distanced AKP from an Islamist label and placed it in the center right, the party started appealing to the masses that were fed up corrupt politicians and severe economic problems and high inflation rates.[257] When Erdoğan came to power, in an attempt to strengthen his legitimacy abroad, he visited the United States and some of the Western European countries and ensured them that AKP would be respectful to democracy. In its program AKP claimed that democracy was the only way to resolve Turkey's social and economic problems. AKP leaders argued that the unfair distribution of goods and services and discrimination of religious and ethnic identities caused the social injustice in the country and they were ready to fight with that.[258]

During the period of 2002-2003, AKP focused mainly on urgent economic and foreign policy issues, postponing critical disputes such as headscarf issue to the near future. By following a neo liberal economic policy, AKP tried to reduce public spending, bring national debt under control, and advance the privatization process. By following IMF policies –which were left from the previous government— AKP government achieved a considerable success in economics in a macro level. Consequently, Turkey's economy experienced a considerable growth during AKP's first years in office and the inflation rate dropped below 10 per cent for the first time in decades.[259] Consequently, AKP was considered as the most successful government in Turkey in decades by Economist and the Financial Times.[260]

Suspicious about AKP, secular circles of Turkey including the military and CHP members saw the party as the heir of MSP-RP-FP. They believed that AKP was following a strategy of hiding its real intentions of 'transforming the secular republic

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[257] Zülküf İbrahim, "Seçim Sonuçları ve AK Parti: Bir Analiz Denemesi", 01.08.2007, http://www.cemaat.com/node/5278 (02.01.2008).
[258] Ziya Öniş and E. Fuat Keyman, "Turkey at the Polls; A New Path Emerges", **Journal of Democracy**, Vol. 14, No. 2, April 2003, pp. 98-101; Fulya Atacan, p. 197.
[259] Öniş and Keyman p. 106; Muriel Asseburg, "Moderate Islamists as Reform Actors Conditions and Programmatic Change", **SWP Research Paper,** April 2007, Berlin, p. 24.
[260] See: http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/4f0be652-3a13-11dc-9d73-0000779fd2ac.html?nclick_check=1 for Vincent Boland , "Why investors love Turkey's neo-Islamists", Financial Times, 24 July 2004, (07.03.2008).

to an Islamic state' for the sake of political success. This suspicion towards the governing party kept it from taking serious measures about religious freedoms. Moreover, recent reaction of the military in 1997, kept the AKP members taking dramatic policies concerning Islam. Instead of directly bringing these issues on the agenda, AKP preferred to accelerated EU reforms which they believe that in the long run will help them with their Islamist agenda. In other words, taking Turkey into EU would first help Turkey economically and second will bring individual freedoms particularly religious freedoms to AKP's constituency.

Concerning EU, AKP government seriously concentrated on its candidacy negotiations. As discussed earlier, significant reforms such as advancing human rights, individual and cultural freedoms, increasing civilian control of the military were implemented to meet EU's demands. AKP government on paper managed to diminish the role of military in politics as part of its Seventh Harmonization Package of August 2003. In 2004, EU eventually decided that Turkey successfully fulfilled the Copenhagen criteria and the accession negotiations could be started in 2005.[261] AKP's success in economy and the EU accession process granted the party an unprecedented political strength vis-à-vis the opposition parties and the secular state elite. Accession to EU process, moreover narrowed the area of maneuver for Kemalist state elite since EU membership represented the ultimate concretization of Atatürk's vision to carry Turkey to the same level with the contemporary civilizations. Military's avoidance of directly opposing the EU reforms that eroded its prerogatives and give broadcasting rights to Kurds were direct results of this concern. Turkish Armed Forces did not want to contradict its historical role as the guardian of Kemalist regime with the accession to EU which realized Turkey's march to modernization.

The extreme policies of AKP during its early period were its infiltration of the Islamists into the civil bureaucracy. To guarantee this infiltration, AKP issued a

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[261]"AB Brüksel Zirvesi-Müzakerelerin Başlama Tarihi 3 Ekim 2005, 16–17.12.2004, http://www.belgenet.com/arsiv/ab/brukselzirve_122004-01.html (12.05.2007).

legislation in March 2003, lowering the mandatory retirement age of public employees from 65 to 61 in March 2003.[262] This law basically aimed in placing nearly two thousand senior state officers with the pro-AKP officials. In its first two years AKP administration appointed a total of 2,173 people to the senior posts of state bureaucracy and laid off 562 former bureaucrats.[263] Infiltration of the Islamist officers to the senior posts brought Islamists agendas into the government offices. [264] In December 2003 Higher Military Council meeting Prime Minister Erdoğan was criticized for following reactionary policies. Generals accused AKP municipalities for encouraging reactionary movements.[265]

Another clear conflict between the AKP government and the secular opposition aroused during the 'penal code' reform process in 2004. AKP's attempt to introduce the 'adultery clause' into the reform package provoked a strong reaction from the secularist opposition, as well as the EU. When AKP administration saw that such legislation could clearly provoke serious political crisis in the country and deteriorate the relations with the EU, they withdrew the related provisions from the penal code reform bill. The government's approach to the graduates of *İmam Hatip Okulları-* İHO (Preacher and Prayer Leader Schools) created another conflict between the government and the secular circles. AKP government attempted pass a bill which made the conditions easier for the students of religious schools to enter university exams.[266] The opposition accused the government for introducing an Islamic agenda into higher education policy. After President Ahmet Necdet Sezer

[262] "61 yaşında emekliliğe ikinci iptal", **Radikal**, 08.10.2003, http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=91398 (20.04.2007).

[263] "AKP Kadrolaşma Rekoru Kırdı", **Birgün**, 18.11.2004, http://www.birgun.net/actuel_2004_index.php?news_code=1100812978&year=2004&month=11&day=18 (18.03.2007).

[264] "AKP'li Belediye Türbanı İş Kıyafeti Yaptı", **Cumhuriyet** http://www.haberbizde.com/detay.asp?hid=6227 (07.10.2006).

[265] "Askerden Hükümete Eleştiri", **Bizim Anadolu**, 15.12.2003, p.3, www.**bizimanadolu**.com/pages/Ara2003/Page03.pdf (17.03.2007).

[266] Necmiye Uçansoy, **"YÖK Yasa Tasarısı Meclis'ten Geçti"**, **Sabah,** 14.05.2007, http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/ozel/yok51/dosya_51.html (20.05.2007).

vetoed the bill, in order to avoid a serious crisis with the opposition secular circles, AKP government shelved the proposal.[267]

The controversy between the seculars and the pro Islamic groups on wearing headscarf in public spaces has been the most important area of dispute since 1980s. The issue has had a symbolic significance for both parties. Although they were in favor of allowing headscarf in public areas, AKP didn't take any considerable step regarding this issue in its first term in office. Secular state elite and the military considered 'headscarf issue' as a threat to secularity principle of the republic. Conversely, AKP opinion leaders believed that wearing headscarf was an individual freedom and should not be seen as an action challenging secularism. They argued that secularism was supposed to be the sum of institutional attitudes and processes ensuring the state's neutrality and it should keep an equidistant position to all religions and worldviews. Therefore, they believed that both Kemalist secularism and Islamism should be replaced by a new definition of secularism.[268]

2007 was a momentous year regarding debates between secularists and Islamists. In April 2007, during the presidential elections, nominee Abdullah Gül's wife's headscarf had created another controversy between secularists and the Islamists.[269] Chief of the General Staff Yaşar Büyükanıt stated that the military hoped to see a president who was obedient to secularism not in only words but also in essence.[270] Moreover, on 27th of April 2007 Turkish Military announced a memorandum warning relevant political circles against the intensification of religious symbols within public spheres. According to the Military, there were significant clues of religious extremism seen on several occasions. Military revealed that it was a party to the secularist Islamist struggle and would act against religious

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[267] "Başbakan'dan son nokta: YÖK yasa taslağı rafa kaldırıldı", 01.06.2004, http://www.memurlar.net/haber/6969/ (15.05.2007).
[268] " 'Devlet Laik Olur, Birey Laik Olmaz' Safsatası", 25.08.2008, http://www.kongar.org/aydinlanma/1998/aydin114.php (29.08.2008).
[269] Michael van der Galiën, "Mrs. Gül and the Headscarf Issue", 25.04.2007, http://mvdg.wordpress.com/2007/04/25/mrs-gul-and-the-headscarf-issue/ (12.04.2008).
[270] Galiën.

extremism when needed.[271] The memorandum addressed directly to many practices and policy implementations of AKP government.[272] The military's disapproval of Gül's candidacy for the Presidency was one of the main causes of the memorandum. One day later, the spokesman of the government Cemil Çiçek declared that in a democratic system the military was subordinate to the civilians. Therefore, Chief of the General Staff and other generals were the subordinate posts which were responsible to Prime Minister. Çiçek implicitly warned military that any action damaging democracy would led to a harsh crisis in Turkey. [273]

In April and June 2007, mass demonstration by secular circles took place in all of the big cities of Turkey. These people were against Gül's presidency. They were scared of non-objectivity of Islamist Gül in the office of the presidency. In response to these demonstrations AKP scheduled the general elections for July 2007 –four months earlier than its original date.[274]

B. A Stronger AKP's Second Term in Power

Once AKP strengthened its legitimacy and power by receiving an overwhelming majority of 46.6 percent of the votes in 2007 general elections[275] and placing its own candidate former Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Gül to the position of presidency, it started generate controversy over the boundaries between secularity and religion in the public sphere. After the election of Abullah Gül as the

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[271] Turkish Armed Forces official declaration, 27.04.2007, http://www.tsk.mil.tr/10_ARSIV/10_1_Basin_Yayin_Faaliyetleri/10_1_Basin_Aciklamalari/2007/BA_08.html (04.05.2008).
[272] Kibaroğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Toward Northern Iraq Still Undecided".
[273] Murat Yetkin, "E-muhtıra erken seçimi gündeme taşıdı", Radikal, 29.04.2007, http://www.sendika.org/yazi.php?yazi_no=11023 (30.05.2008).
[274]"Ankara'da tarihi Cumhuriyet Mitingi", 16.04.2007, http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/news/405418.asp#storyContinues (01.02.2008).
[275] This was the first time in 52 years that Turks have voted an incumbent party back into power with even more support than before. "Ruling Party in Turkey Wins Broad Victory", The New York Times, 23.07.2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/23/world/europe/23turkey.html?_r=1&oref=slogin (12.09.2007).

eleventh President of the Republic by the Parliament, the Chief of General Staff and senior generals did not attend the first official reception of the new president.[276]

The period including the second half of the year 2007 and the beginning of 2008, witnessed several crisis. With a self confidence aroused from their landslide victory in elections, AKP members began to claim that they are eligible to reform the country's constitution. According to the ruling party the constitution, drawn up in the aftermath of a military coup in 1980, included undemocratic provisions and had to be brought into line with EU democratic norms.[277] In order to avoid alienating their pro Islamic constituents, AKP eventually approved the Constitutional amendment that would allow women to wear a headscarf while attending universities in 9th of February 2008.[278] Four-fifths of parliament in February voted in favor of a constitutional amendment that lifted the ban, which was a promise of the AKP to its electorate during its electoral campaigns.[279]

The proposal created a strong reaction from the seculars and the military. Chief of General Staff Yaşar Büyükanıt held a press meeting just after the passage of the law in Turkish parliament and stated that the military's opinion regarding this issue was a well known fact and the military had not changed its opinion during the course of time.[280] Similarly two opposition parties CHP and DSP expressed thaie disapproval. Upon the application of the opposition parties CHP and DSP, the Constitutional Court, annulled this amendment in June 2008 on the grounds that the

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[276]"Komutanlar Mazeret Bildirdiler Köşk'teki Resepsiyona Katılmıyorlar", 04.09.2007, http://www.nethaber.com/Politika/35765/KOMUTANLAR-MAZERET-BILDIRDILER-KOSKTEKI-RESEPSIYONA-KATILMIYORLAR (11.01.2008).

[277] Tabitha Morgan, "TURKEY: Headscarf issue poses new challenges", 21 October 2007, http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20071018120025688 (22.04.2008).

[278]Fred Stopsky, "Turkish Headscarf Issue Continues Dividing Nation", 18.01.2008, http://theimpudentobserver.com/gender-issues/turkish-headscarf-issue-continues-dividing-nation (12.06.2008).

[279] "Turkish court annuls headscarf law in blow to government", **Turkish Press**, 06.05.2008, http://www.turkishpress.com/news.asp?id=235294 (18.07.2008).

[280] "Büyükanıt Türban için ne dedi?", 30.01.2008, http://www.internethaber.com/news_detail.php?id=125714 (10.03.2008).

proposal was not in conformity with the principle of secularism.[281] TSK, the staunch defender of the secular system fully supported the court's decision.

On 15th of March 2008, the chief prosecutor of Turkey Abdurrahman Yalçınkaya declared an indictment of AKP for allegedly violating the Constitution's secularism principle. According to Yalçınkaya, AKP has become a hotbed of anti-secular activities. There were newspaper articles indicating that the indictment was triggered by AKP's decision to remove constitutional provisions prohibiting the entrance of people to Universities with headscarves.[282] Yalçınkaya's indictment was comprised of 17 folders.[283] It included the ban on AKP and a five-year ban from politics of 71 senior AKP members, including Prime Minister Erdoğan and President Abdullah Gül. Yalçınkaya argued that the political Islam represented by the AKP government had an intention to change the secular political system into a Islamist system. AKP considered the indictment as more of a political move rather than a judicial one.[284] According to the defense document issued by AKP had always been in favor of Atatürk's reforms as could be seen in its efforts to make Turkey a full member of EU.[285]

By July 2008, Constitutional Court declared that AKP was not closed, but half of the state funds allocated to AKP were halted.[286] Nevertheless the majority of the Court's judges voted in favor of AKP's closure. While 6 of the judges voted in favor of the closure, 4 of them proposed that party's revenue from treasury should be

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[281] "Turkish court annuls headscarf law in blow to government"

[282] Sana Abdallah, "Turkey Headscarf Issue Tied Up by Politics", 11.06.2008, http://www.metimes.com/International/2008/06/11/turkey_headscarf_issue_tied_up_by_politics/6669/ (18.07.2008).

[283] "Yargıtay Başsavcısı, iktidardaki parti KAPATILSIN istiyor: Bu parti, laikliğe karşı eylemlerin odağı olmuştur", 15.03.2008, http://www.nethaber.com/Politika/58103/Yargitay-Bassavcisi-iktidardaki-parti-KAPATILSIN (11.06.2008).

[284] See http://www.akparti.org.tr/iddianame_cevap_en.pdf for AKP's defense statement.

[285] To the Presidency of the Constitutional Court, 30.04.2008, http://www.akparti.org.tr/iddianame_cevap_en.pdf (25.05.2008).

[286] "AKP Kapatılmadı", 30.07.2008, http://www.haberturk.com/haber.asp?id=88745&cat=110&dt=2008/07/30 (05.08.2008).

cut off.[287] Although the party was not closed, nearly all of the members accepted the claims of the indictment mentioning the AKP's anti secularist policies.

VI. OVERVIEW

In spite of the tremendous secularization reforms of Atatürk, Islam always remained as a value system embedded in the social life of the people. As soon as political liberalization started during the multi-party system, Islam came back to the political scene. Moreover, Islamist oriented parties which took part in coalition governments were established in 1970s. In the aftermath of the 1980 military intervention, interestingly enough Atatürk's military made use of Islam as a unifying element against the Communist threat. Islamists parties came back to the political scene in the aftermath of the 1980 coup and formed coalition governments. Once they tried to exercise an excessive degree of Islamic influence over public policy, they were warned by the military to behave secularly.

According to Nilüfer Göle, Islamic revival was actually the search of the Muslims for the self-identity, who were excluded from public sphere as a result of "cultural shift" initiated by the state elite during the Republican era.[288] Consequently as a result of the political and economic liberalizations in 1980s, these groups joined the economic life which in turn gave them the power to join the political life. These groups got even stronger under the leadership of AKP governments. Once AKP managed to get one out of two votes in 2007 July elections, the party brought its real agenda from the backburner to the from by challenging the secular establishment with issues such as the headscarf and religious schools. Consequently, political Islam is escalating in a fast pace and opening the room for the guardians of the secularity principle, the military to intervene.

[287] "AKP Kapatılmadı".
[288] Nilüfer Göle, "Authoritarian Secularism and Islamist Politics: The Case of Turkey," in **Civil Society in the Middle East**, v.2, ed. A. R. Norton, E.J. Brill, 1996, pp. 221-26.

CONCLUSION

This thesis tries to find an answer to the continuing dominant role of Turkish military in politics in the current era in spite of the constitutional amendments made to diminish its function in politics. Starting with the amendments introduced by a constitutional reform package in 2001, Turkish governments had taken a series of reforms such as increasing the number of civilian members of the MGK and transforming its executive role to a more advisory one. Moreover, with the seventh harmonization package in 2003, further reforms regarding civil-military relations were implemented by the Turkish government. These changes included the abolishing of the extensive executive and supervisory power of MGK Secretary General, inhibiting the unlimited access of the MGK to civilian agencies, decreasing the frequency of the MGK meetings, opening the position of MGK General Secretary to the civilians, permitting the parliament to revise the budget of the military. In spite of these dramatic reforms that aimed to diminish the influential role of the Turkish Armed Forces in politics, military continued to have a dominant impact in Turkish political life. In an attempt to answer find the reasons for this question, this thesis argues that the most important reason for this continuance in the role of military in politics is the 'rise of internal threats,' the rise of political Islam and Kurdish nationalism. While the rise of political Islam threatens the secularity principle of Kemalist reforms, the rise of Kurdish nationalism endangers the territorial integrity of the country. The research argues that while these two threats exist in an increasing pace, the constitutional amendments which are designed to qualify Turkey as an EU member, will not reach their aim. As long as both of these threats exist, Turkish military will continue to intervene into politics. Therefore, the amendments made in the constitutions will remain on paper and will not be observed in practice.

Both of these threats are very strong and moreover, keep escalating in an increasing pace. Kurdish problem whose roots go back to the end of the Ottoman Empire and the early years of the republic has been shaping Turkish politics since mid-1980s. Staring as a Marxist organization, PKK turned into a separatist terrorist organization and in attempt to carve a separate homeland for Kurds, it killed more

than 40,000 people. In spite of different methods Turkish government tried to deal with the issue both peacefully and militaristically, the Kurdish question remained unsolved and still creating violence in the country. Currently, the threat in an increasing pace is attacking innocent civilians in the big cities and soldiers in the border regions. In this context, Turkish military has no choice but to fight with this threat. Consequently, military's struggle with the PKK terror gives the armed forces the space to interfere into politics. Similarly, political Islam in the sense of Islamist fundamentalism has been shaping Turkish political agenda. Turkish reforms that aimed at modernizing the country with westernization policies overlooked the value system of Islam that was embedded in the society. With the expansion of political and economic liberalization, these people who felt themselves alienated from the system managed to integrate themselves back to the mainstream society with their economic power. Eventually this economic power was transformed into political power and these groups started to follow their pro-Islamist policies in Turkish politics. In spite of military's efforts to ban pro-religious political parties, these groups recently found their voice in the moderate-looking AKP. AKP managed to come to power with 34 and 46 percent of the votes in 2002 and 2007 elections respectively, as a dominant party in the parliament. Therefore, it started to follow policies that were considered as anti-secular by the military and the secular circles. Consequently, political Islam is on the rise and the Turkish military as the guardians of secularity is on alert.

The majority of the civil-military relations literature in order to explain the powerful role of military in politics has concentrated on the military and sometimes civilian-centric analysis for decades. However, recently, scholars in an attempt to explain the dominant role of the military in politics started to concentrate on other variables such as 'internal threats.' Among these scholars, Michael Desch in his book *Civilian Control of the Military the Changing Security Environment* analyzed the level of internal and external threats and their relation with civilian control of the military. According to his argument high internal threat environment (coupled with low threat environment) brings a high intervention of military in politics. Although the current external threat environment of Turkey is moderate rather than low, this

research applied Desch's framework to the current Turkish civil-military relations. Similarly in Turkish civil-military relations literature to, after scholars concentrated on the characteristics of the military and the descriptive studies of military coups, recently, some of them also started concentrating on the threat environment. They argued that military's role in Turkish politics will; remain influential as long as the rise of Kurdish nationalism and political Islam continue.

After analyzing the theoretical framework of civil-military relations by concentrating on the "internal threat" variable in the first chapter, the second chapter of the thesis analyzed the historical background of the dominant role of the Turkish military in politics. This chapter briefly examined the historical background of Turkish military's dominant role in politics during the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey by concentrating on military interventions including two direct interventions of 1960, 1980 and two indirect interventions of 1971 and 1998. The chapter also analyzed the Kemalist principles in order to explain the sensitivities in the country and the causes of threats.

The third chapter examined Turkey's accession process to EU by first concentrating on the progress reports and then on constitutional amendments introduced by harmonization packages. After a summary of the history of the Turkish-EU relations, the chapter focused on the constitutional amendments introduced by the Turkish governments. The chapter mainly concentrated on the reforms concerning civil-military relations and then discussed whether these changes are practiced or stayed on paper.

After analyzing constitutional amendments that reduced the role of military in politics, in attempt to explain these reforms did not work and why military still remained powerful in politics, Chapter 4 and 5 analyzed the increasing pace of internal threats. Both chapters first gave a historical background (roots) of the threats and explained their evolution throughout the Republic of Turkey, by concentrating on how military regimes dealt with them. Both chapters in their last section in an attempt to prove their increasing pace gave descriptive details about the latest developments.

After demonstrating the tremendous increase in both internal threats the thesis is concluded in this chapter with its classic argument that as long as Turkey will be threatened with PKK terror and Islamist fundamentalism, Turkish Armed Forces will remain in politics as powerful as ever.

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