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Civilian Control over the Military: The case of Turkey

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Nour Bilal Omar Humeid

ABSTRACT

With the recent rise in civilian discontent and armed conflicts, military institutions around the world have become more involved and their roles more public. This has highlighted the need for democratic control over the armed forces and has revitalized the study of civil-military relations. The case of Turkey provides ample opportunity to examine the power dynamics between the civilian government and the military as the Turkish armed forces have historically assumed the role of guardians of the state and have played a significant role in the political arena. With the Justice and Development Party coming to power in 2002, this dynamic changed drastically, shifting power from the military back to the civilian authorities. This study examines this power dynamic, highlighting the Justice and Development Party's rise to power and identifies the drivers and factors that allowed the civilian government to establish control over a strong and dominant military.

Keywords: Civil-military, DECAF, AKP, Turkey, JDP, CMR, Democratic Control, civilian control, Turkish military

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between the ruling Justice and Development party (AKP, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) in Turkey and the Turkish military between 2002 and 2017. More specifically, the thesis asks how is it that the ruling AKP – an Islamist party – was able to diminish the military's traditional role as guardians of the secular state, survive multiple coup attempts and bring the military organization under civilian control, effectively curbing a tradition of decades of military tutelage and intervention in the political arena in Turkey. To this end, this paper will examine civil-military relations between a strong and influential military in Turkey and a popular and powerful civilian government and discuss the transformation to this relationship over the past decade. Therefore, the thesis aims to uncover the main factors and drivers behind the changes and reforms that took place and examine them in depth to determine their significance and effect on the civil military relationship in Turkey. The factors will be selected based on the prevalence of evidence in the literature and their impact in achieving civilian control. In addition, key indicators or focus areas will be identified in order to measure the extent of the civilian control achieved over the armed forces. In this introductory chapter, the literature on civil military relations related to this topic is introduced and an appropriate approach or framework is discussed and selected.

Militaries are known to be fundamentally hierarchical and undemocratic institutions, yet they remain significant players even in the most democratic of

nations. Since the end of the second world war, militaries have unseated democratically elected leaders, broken up democratic regimes, and have resisted attempts from elected officials for control and oversight. However, the armed forces are not always democratic regimes' kryptonite, as they have also contributed, whether directly or indirectly, to the fall of dictators and have been a part of many democratic transitions. Nonetheless, the military remains a significant political actor, wielding considerable political influence in 41% of regimes between 1999 and 2012 according to Croissant et al.'s findings (Croissant et al., 2016). Therefore, whether positive or negative, the role of the military in bringing about or quelling change cannot be ignored.

In recent years, and in light of recent events, such as the Arab Spring in particular, the questions pertaining to the military's contestation, intervention in politics and coups have returned to the literature in order to study the military's role in the breakdown of authoritarian regimes, democratic development and their relationship with civilian governments. This is the main focus of civil military relations (CMR) which examines the relationship between an unarmed society and the military body established to protect them. However, since this relationship depends on several factors such as national history, public perception, the role of the military institution in a particular state, and foreign policy, it varies from country to country.

The literature around the issue of security mostly revolves around armed conflict with a specific historical focus. While this has contributed heavily to our understanding of security and civil military relations, the reality of today is that the

armed forces assume a variety of roles that range from peacekeeping to internal security among others. That being said, there is general agreement in the literature that democratic control of the armed forces is a necessary condition for democracy. However, civilian control is still contested in numerous countries, including modern democracies (Bruneau & Cristiana (CRIS) Matei, 2008). This has sometimes resulted in delays or obstacles in democratic consolidation and in some cases even a breakdown of democracy. While civilian control of the armed forces is a necessary condition for democracy, democracy is not a prerequisite for civilian control of the military, nor is it the only obstacle to democratic consolidation (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010). Therefore, in order to study the military and security forces in today's world and to examine the tools and methods states can use to reign in the armed forces, we would have to turn to the discipline of civil-military relations.

The study of civil military relations has historically sought to examine what kind of power the civilian actor has over the military and how can this power be exerted to implement changes for the benefit of the civilians, in addition to examining the internal and external forces that will facilitate or obstruct these changes. Therefore, civil-military cooperation is integral to any state. Civilian governments need the military to defend the state and its territorial integrity, while in return, the military needs the civilian authority to recognize and bolster their own legitimacy. Obviously, the main obstacle to a civilian government in getting its way is of course the military (Sarigil, 2011). The military is usually a large, powerful and very well-organized institution that is armed to the teeth, and therefore unless there is a motivation for change and acceptance by the military, it is extremely

difficult to force change upon it. On the other hand, if acceptance by the military was the only factor, we wouldn't be able to explain numerous events throughout history where the civilian governments got its way regardless of the military's objections (Sarigil, 2011). A significant amount of the literature on civil-military relations also focuses on the issue of control. This is because all nations want to have a strong military to protect the state, but if the military is strong enough to protect the state, it would also be strong enough to take it over; which begs the question, who protects the people from the protectors? This is especially important in countries that are in the process of, or have transitioned from military governments which still enjoy some of the privileges they had while in power (Bruneau & Cristiana (CRIS) Matei, 2008). Therefore, it can be advantageous to analyse civil-military relations in terms of control and authority over institutional control mechanisms, oversight and professional norms. Institutional control mechanisms in this case refer to National Security councils, ministries of defense and parliamentary committees overseeing policy, budgets and officer promotions (Bruneau & Cristiana (CRIS) Matei, 2008). Oversight refers to ensuring that the security forces are actually following and abiding by the guidance and policies they receive from their civilian counterparts. This is not limited to the formal oversight mechanisms in the legislative, judicial and executive branches but also to civil society actors and the media. Finally, professional norms concern the integration and internalization of the previous two mechanisms within the recruitment, training and education of the security institutions in order for them to act in the interest of the civilians (Bruneau & Cristiana (CRIS) Matei, 2008). David Pion-Berlin

on the other hand had an interesting visualization of the CMR relationship which was more closely aligned with the case of Turkey.

David Pion-Berlin in his article *The Study of Civil-Military Relations in New Democracies* describes the complex nature of civil military relations as a set of concentric circles. He envisaged a circle at the centre where military leaders along with defense institutions interact with civilians on a daily basis and form key relationships between political and military elites. Moving away from the centre we find other circles where soldiers and civilians interface such as in congress, parliament or in judiciary courts, where both sides can influence each other (Pion-Berlin D. , 2011). Further out are spheres that represent civil military relations on a macro level. Pion-Berlin defines these as factors that can affect both the civilians and military personnel such as policy, economy, interest groups, labour unions, and political parties that make up the public base which can either weaken the government's support or strengthen it and provide leverage over the military. Finally the outer circles would be the global forces that can influence civil military relations such as regional and global conflicts, democratization efforts, economic liberalism, and emerging norms which according to Bruneau and Trinkunas, 2008, are just some of the factors that have had an effect on interactions between politicians and military personnel (Bruneau & Trinkunas, 2008). Pion-Berlin concludes his description by noting another important factor "Finally, there is the impact of history. Events and arrangements in the past give shape to interactions in the future. Regime practices, constitutions and other legal instruments, along with elite pacts between generals and politicians often set into motion trends that are difficult to upend. Early choices become institutionalized in the form of

organizations, power-sharing agreements, and prerogatives." (Pion-Berlin D. , 2011). While this approach paints a more accurate picture of the civil military relationship in Turkey, it is still insufficient in explaining the transformation that took place on its own.

Another method used to study civil military relations is the structure versus agency approach. Some scholars have emphasized structural explanations over agency, since structural explanations focus more on the forces behind a certain decision. For example, Przeworski et al., 1996 used the structural approach for a large N study that found that when the GDP of a country reaches a certain level, they become immune to military coups (Pion-Berlin D. , 2011). Although Przeworski's study provides interesting information, the problem with structural explanations is their lack of flexibility (Przeworski, 1996). This is because as mentioned above, the relationship between the civilian and military actors is usually fluid, changing with political tides, elections and other economic and external factors and it is therefore difficult to use structural approaches to make causal associations especially in a frequently changing environment (Pion-Berlin D. , 2011).

On the other hand, there are those that have seen results through an agency approach which looks for motivations behind a certain choice such as Wendy Hunter's study in 1997. Hunter's study of Brazil revealed that politicians were more likely to engage or challenge the armed forces by diverting funds from defense, which does not have any political value for them, into other programs that would be politically beneficial when they were up for re-election or are trying to

survive their time in office (Hunter, 1997). Her study found that both civilian and military behaviours were motivated by self-interest and therefore, when individual preferences are identified and ordered in a certain political environment, decision makers would take the same actions for the same situation and are therefore interchangeable (Hunter, 1997).

As an example of the complex relationship between structure and agency, Pion-Berlin (1994) studied the military and human rights in two authoritarian regimes in Latin America; Chile and Uruguay (Pion-Berlin D., 1994). Pion-Berlin chose these countries because of their numerous human rights violations and the fact that they were undergoing transitions. He first notes that the transition in Uruguay was a negotiated transition, with neither the civilian nor the military side having the upper hand. The Chilean transition however was imposed by the military, specifically by General Augusto Pinochet, which gave a huge advantage to the military institution.

Based on this, the author's prediction was that Uruguay would take a stronger stance on human rights than Chile. However, his prediction proved to be incorrect, as the Chilean president at the time, Patricio Aylwin, took bold steps towards human rights reform in clear defiance of the military while the Uruguayan president caved in to the military's wishes. When neither the transition terms nor the nature of the authoritarian rule was able to explain this outcome, the author turned to the leaders' personalities and their political calculations for an answer. He concluded that the Chilean president was a principled pragmatist that understood power politics, but more importantly, that he also was indebted to the

Socialist members of his party who wanted strong human rights measures. The Uruguayan President on the other hand was more of a pure pragmatist but represented a more conservative party, which did not view human rights issues as urgent matters (Pion-Berlin D. , 1994). Therefore, while the structure approach would've predicted that the structures in Chile would've muffled civilian choices while the Uruguayan structures enabled them, the reality on the ground did not fall within these predictions, leaving agency to fill the gaps (Pion-Berlin D. , 2011). While each approach has its merits, a complex relationship such as that of civil and military relations would need a hybrid of these approaches to study it properly.

Classic civil military studies have mostly regarded civil institutions as the representation of the public or civil sphere, however, the role of citizens in a state cannot be ignored or overshadowed. In the words of Rebecca Schiff writing for the journal of *Armed Forces and Society* “The current civil-military relations literature does not consider the citizenry [people], but instead relies on political institutions as the main “civil” component of analysis. While the relationship of civil institutions to the military is indeed important, it reflects only a partial story of civil-military relations.” (Schiff, 1995). Therefore, public attitudes towards the military and its leaders are important factors and indicators in determining the extent of military influence in a state. In addition to this, we will also need to look at the social, economic and political factors that form the civil military relations in a state.

That being said, looking at civil military relations through a dichotomous lens, placing civil rule and military rule on opposite ends of the spectrum can be

problematic. The problem with this approach is that it groups public and political actors (and elites) into one group on the civilian side that is completely separate from the military (Sarigil, 2011). Given the political systems of today, these approaches seem to be insufficient when studying the complex relationships between the civilian governments and their military counterparts. In fact, Turkey is a prime example of the inefficiency of the dichotomous approach as the military institution is deeply intertwined within the political and public arenas.

Therefore, before delving into the Turkish case, we first need to lay down some basic principles. The first is the general agreement by most scholars that the first step for democracies in transition is to revoke military perks and privileges. However, Pion-Berlin argues that the order in which politicians propose reforms is of the utmost importance (Pion-Berlin D. , 2011). This is because the feasibility of a certain option for a politician depends on the balance of different factors at a specific time and the challenge for scholars here is to figure out why a certain strategy has been chosen over others in a particular context. For example, based on the categorization of available strategies to politicians by Trinkunas (2005), which he lists as appeasement, monitoring, divide and conquer, and sanctioning, he found that “generally speaking, weaker strategies (i.e. appeasement) are more often selected when the opportunity structures for politicians are narrower. Conversely, stronger choices (i.e. sanctioning) avail themselves more readily when opportunities are broader.” (Trinkunas, 2005).

In democratic systems, elected leaders are constitutionally in charge of the military, and they, along with the parliament or congress, are responsible for

setting the defense agenda and assigning roles for the military to play towards achieving it. Should leaders fail in subduing the military, the fact remains that they were elected by the people, and therefore are accountable to the voters and not the soldiers, and this failure could lead to their ousting at the next elections (Pion-Berlin D. , 2011). However, especially in the case of Turkey, the involvement of the military through separate agendas and coups for example, disrupt this process before the voters can decide the elected leader's fate at the ballot boxes.

Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu writing for the *Journal of Turkish studies* in 2011, noted that "The main issue then is not a simple maximization of civilian power over the armed forces. The real problem is how to maintain a strong and effective military that poses no threat to the civilian elite." (Karaosmanoğlu, 2011). This can get especially tricky in the case of Turkey because of the history of run-ins between the military and the Justice and Development party, which has been in power for over 17 years, which is discussed in further detail in chapter two. For quite some time however, the relationship between the AKP government and the military institution in Turkey has alternated between two extremes; granting the military full autonomy or trying to sideline them altogether.

For example, when the government had the upper hand in Turkey in the 1950s, they had tried to curb the military's influence and authority altogether, which then led to the military coup in 1960 and resulted in the removal of the then Democratic Party (Demokrat Parti, DP). Following this coup, the military enjoyed greater autonomy and power, at times even leading on both domestic and foreign policy. This continued into the 1980s with another military led coup in 1982 (Heper,

2005). In 1983 however, Turkey elected Prime Minister Turgut Özal from the Motherland party to lead its newly reinstated democratic government. Özal did not want to accommodate the military's omnipresent influence any longer and went face to face with them frequently trying to reverse the status quo, even challenging their candidate for chief of staff and making sure he has the final say on defense and foreign policy issues (Heper, 2005).

Although Özal was successful in keeping military influence out of the political sphere, he also created a lot of tensions and lack of trust between the two institutions who came to consider each other as hostile adversaries. A friendly relationship with the military was restored during Bülent Ecevit, Devlet Bahçeli and Mesut Yılmaz coalition government which ruled from 1999 to 2002 (Heper, 2005). This government was known for implementing structural and economic reforms and initiating a path towards liberalization and democracy with the ultimate goal of becoming a member of the European Union. During this time, the government was careful not to marginalize the military and did not show any hostile intentions towards them, which in turn led to the military voluntarily stepping away from interference in the political sphere (Heper, 2005).

The Turkish civil-military model had historically placed the military institution in the forefront. Ever since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the military had the upper hand within the political system. It has frequently stepped into the political arena, whenever it has deemed it necessary to do so. The Turkish military was seen as a guardian to the Kemalist principles that were championed by Kemal Ataturk in the 1920s and was a respected institution to the

Turkish public. However, recent criticism has highlighted Turkey's lack of political oversight over the military, especially with regards to the limited role the parliament plays in military and defense related decision making (Satana, 2011). Historically, Turkish politicians have yielded to the will of the military and respected their guardianship role. This has changed drastically in the last two decades with reform and demilitarization efforts put forth by the ruling AKP party. The first EU harmonization package was passed in 2001, with eight subsequent packages put forth and passed by the AKP government since then which have helped revive the Europeanization process (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010). While this process has proved successful for the most part, the involvement of the Turkish parliament in oversight and in defense policies is still limited (Satana, 2011).

This had previously allowed the military to frequently check and suppress religious political parties throughout Turkey's history. The Kemalists and the military believed that secularism was an important pillar in achieving modernization and democracy and were keen on seeing that through. This paved the way to numerous run-ins with religious parties including the AKP itself and its predecessors such as the Virtue party. But somehow, through trial and error it seems, the AKP has been able to grow and rise through the ranks, while avoiding being shut down, although not for a lack of trying on the part of the military.

It came as no surprise then, that one of the first moves the AKP took in office was to start the process of reforming the civil-military relations. By doing so, the AKP wanted to publicly pursue the EU accession process through democratization but also wanted to ensure their survival in regards to a military

which the AKP saw as a major threat to realizing their political objectives, mostly owing to the armed forces' history of preventing Islamist parties from coming to power (discussed in chapter three). As a result, starting in 2002, Turkey underwent significant transformations, through a strong program of liberalization extending all the way from law to politics to the economy, which saw the military's guardianship role reduced and their mandate, influence and participation in the Turkish political system shrink.

The failure of the Turkish military in maintaining their guardianship role and what was once a regional role model for a secular state, coupled with the rise and popularity of the Justice and Development Party and their ability to effect change in the Turkish political arena, provides a wealth of knowledge to the study of international affairs on civil-military relations (Bardakçı, 2013). Therefore, to examine this, the first step would be to narrow down the underlying causes that allowed for such significant transformations in a traditionally military dominated setting. After scanning the literature, four main factors have repeatedly emerged as integral to the ability of the AKP in constraining the role of the military in Turkey and these are , “an EU-induced democratization/desecuritization process; the powerful mandate given to the AKP by the electorate; the changing balance of power between the Kemalist camp and supporters of the AKP; and finally the uncovering of the Ergenekon affair and a series of plots against the AKP government, and their influence in delegitimizing the political role of the armed forces.” (Bardakçı, 2013).

For example, Arzu Güler & Cemal Alpgiray Bölücek writing for the journal of *Turkish Studies* in 2016 reviewed parliamentary minutes from the legislative procedures of the Turkish Grand National Assembly and the reasoned decisions of the legislative proposals in order to study the motives behind the reforms that happened in Turkey over the past decade (Güler & Bölücek, 2016). Their research found that accession to the EU and the fulfilment of their requirements was the main motive that led to a number of reforms such as:

- “Altering the NSC composition in favor of civilians in 2001
 - Limiting the NSC’s role to recommendations in 2001
 - Exclusion of military representation in the Council of Higher Education in 2004
 - Increased transparency in auditing state spending by removing the principle of secrecy required by National Defense in 2004
 - Revoking military jurisdiction over civilians in 2009
 - Limiting the jurisdiction of military courts to the military duties of military personnel in 2010
 - Expanding the authority of the Court of Auditors over military expenditures to include special budgets in 2010
 - Establishing the Institution of Ombudsman in 2012”
- (Güler & Bölücek, 2016)

Furthermore, Burak Bilgehan Özpek & Nebahat Tanrıverdi Yaşar writing for the Turkish Studies journal wrote of the AKP’s strategy, “the AKP presented the civilianization process as a struggle between the current system’s losers, which are

deprived of public resources, and the privileged elite whose interests are protected by the military. This explains why the popularity of the AKP gradually increased from 34% to 50% between 2002 and 2011. During this period, the AKP gradually established its authority over the bureaucracy, media, academia, civil society and business circles on behalf of the frustrated people as it consolidated its voter base. While doing so, accession to the EU, democratization and Westernization were used to justify the AKP's hegemony in the domestic realm." (Özpek & Yaşar, 2018).

The EU accession in particular was a long time goal for the Kemalists and therefore for the military institution, which gained momentum after Turkey officially became a candidate for EU membership in 1999. This in turn caused a change in priorities for Turkey, shifting away from security concerns such as the conflicts with the Kurdish PKK group, and therefore lessening the need for military participation in politics. It also created a driving force for the reforms and transformations put forth by the civilian government. For example, in 2003, the traditionally military dominated National Security Council (MGK, Milli Güvenlik Konseyi) was converted into a purely advisory body, and saw more non-military members join its ranks with a civilian being appointed for the first time as secretary-general (Bardakçı, 2013). Such steps allowed the government to pass legislation that effectively strengthened civilian control with little resistance from the army.

However, this could not have been done without the popular support and powerful base enjoyed by the AKP in addition to their parliamentary majority,

which facilitated the passing of this legislation, especially since it was framed as necessary reforms leading to a more democratic Turkish state. As such, the AKP was the first party in Turkish political history that increased its votes while still in power and managed to win three consecutive elections (Bardakçı, 2013). This was in part due to the AKP giving off an image of a moderate party and distancing itself from its Islamic past, which earned it the support of liberal intellectuals. At the same time, their success in managing the economy and providing public services secured and bolstered their legitimacy among the general population.

Furthermore, a clear shift of power was beginning to emerge between the Kemalists and the AKP base shortly after the AKP's election, as pious business owners and powerful community organizations that had previously remained on the side-lines for fear of antagonizing the military became more active and outspoken, providing even more support to the AKP (The AKP in Power, 2008). The AKP had also made sure to appoint party-friendly members to important government and military positions to further cement this power shift. Finally, the history of military intervention and especially the Ergenekon affair; an uncovering of an alleged plot against the government (discussed further in chapter three), in addition to the failed coup attempt in July 2016 served as a catalyst for this transformation and gave the AKP greater legitimacy in their struggle against the military. The coup attempts, in particular, sparked public debate about the military and their role in politics and effectively tipped the scales in the AKP's favor. This has subsequently allowed them to curb the military's independence and end the Kemalist monopoly of the judiciary and other state institutions.

Based on this, and after examining several approaches, the methodology that will be used to address the research questions in this study is based on a descriptive research design mainly comprised of published secondary sources that contribute to the research questions put forth in this study. Additionally, a framework of agency will be applied in order to explain the drive behind the transformation to civil-military relations in Turkey. In this case the factors and drivers identified below will act as the independent variables that will be examined in order to determine their effect on the dependent variable which will be the control over the armed forces.

This thesis examines these factors in depth and attempts to explain how the AKP successfully used these factors to weaken the military and exert their control over them. Specifically, the second chapter examines civil-military control in the literature and identifies the areas that will be used to assess the extent of the control achieved. Chapter three explains the origins and rise of the AKP party to the forefront of Turkish politics, detailing their numerous run-ins with the military and setting the stage for their motivation to take on the military establishment, while the fourth chapter examines the contributing factors mentioned above that contributed to the shift in civil military relations in depth and discusses some of the most significant civil-military reforms propelled by the AKP and their manifestations. Chapter five examines the motives behind the reforms and the liberalization efforts by the AKP, while the final chapter concludes the study and presents the findings and lessons that can be learned from the Turkish case.

Chapter 2

CMR in the Literature

The problem of civilian control of the armed forces is present in most state systems but is especially relevant for new and emerging democracies. This is because in new democracies, especially those that are emerging from authoritarian and/or military regimes, the armed forces would have been deeply intertwined in the political arena and usually wield considerable influence (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010). In addition, it is common for authoritarian leaders to grant benefits and privileges to the military in order to garner their support. This becomes a problem during democratization because democratic governments need to revoke the privileges previously enjoyed by the military and establish their own independent decision-making process which the military leaderships may resist. In addition, because of the military dominance and the novelty of the democratization process to a nation that has not experienced it before, the country's political institutions and civil societies are often not developed or strong enough to give significant support to the new democratic process which make military challenges more likely to occur. This is why it is imperative to have civilian control of the military in order to have democratic transition or consolidation (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010).

Based on this, Croissant *et al* in their article “Beyond the fallacy of coup-ism: conceptualizing civilian control of the military in emerging democracies” identified

five decision making areas through which civilian control over the military can be assessed. These areas are elite recruitment, public policy, internal security, national defense, and military organization (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010). In order for either the military or the civilian government to impose their control over the other, they must have full dominance over these five areas.

Elite recruitment is an area that encompassed the process and criteria for recruiting and legitimizing political office holders. Therefore, whomever has dominance over this process is able to select the kind of people they want in power positions and those who make the decisions (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010). In order to gauge the extent of civilian control over elite recruitment, we must look at the military's ability to influence the rules of competition or its openness and transparency, and the degree of participation or the inclusiveness of the process. For example, if leadership positions are kept exclusively for military personnel, or if they can influence the competition process, then the civilian control over the rules of competition is diluted and the process is no longer open or transparent. In addition, if military personnel are allowed to run for and hold public office, or if the military can influence the processes of forming and dissolving governments then civilians cannot exercise their control over the participation process. An example of this is the military's involvement in toppling governments such as in the Philippines, where the armed forces initiated eight coup attempts after the country transitioned to a democratic system. Similarly, the Thai military toppled the democratically elected Prime Minister in 2006 and have ruled the country ever since. In other words, when decision making positions are reserved

for military personnel, civilian control over elite recruitment is heavily undermined (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010).

The second area is public policy, which refers to the policy making process. This includes the agenda setting, formulation, adoption and implementation of policies. Civilian control over public policy is paramount in order for the civilians to be the sole decision makers when it comes to the content and scope of public policies in addition to their administration and supervision. This is especially important in budgetary decisions, where the military cannot be given priority without considering other government expenditures and where the award process must be open and transparent (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010).

The next focus area is internal security. Internal security includes decisions relating to maintaining law and order of the state and incorporates domestic intelligence, border control and law enforcement. Since internal security is directly related to the protection and stability of the state, it is very important for the civilian government to have control over this area even if the military is utilized in some emergency situations in which they may be needed, such as for terrorism related incidents. Civilian control here would necessitate that the length, range and frequency of any intervention or operation, including the specifics of its implementation, be dictated by the civilians; in addition to setting the goals and measures necessary to maintain internal security independently. However, control over this area can be tricky, especially in new democracies and in states where the instances of internal threats are high, such as in Southeast Asia where the militaries

have widespread control of the security apparatus (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010).

This brings us to national defense. While the previous area was concerned with internal security threats, national defense is focused on external threats and with the territorial integrity of the state. This is quite a complex area because it usually involves the military, especially in the case of deployment of troops or even war, but while the military are particularly concerned with the implementation of action, the civilians must fully control the defense policies that govern the military action including setting budgets and allowing the efficient use of state resources. That being said, the knowledge and expertise of military leaders in defining and setting defense policies is invaluable, however, civilians must maintain the ultimate decision-making authority and oversee the implementation of these policies (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010). This is not an easy area to control in the Turkish case especially with the long standing confrontations and perceived threats by the Kurdish PKK group and the numerous conflicts that emerge in a historically turbulent area such as the Middle East.

The final area for which civilian control can be assessed is military organization. This area incorporates all aspects of the armed forces as an institution, including its size, structure, procurement and manufacturing of military equipment and other resources, education, recruitment and training (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010). Military organization has a sizeable influence on the ability and capacity of the state to respond to external threats and can also influence defense policies, which makes it an important area for civilian authorities

to control. However, the military still needs to have a certain degree of autonomy in its internal affairs because excessive micro-management by the civilian authorities can be problematic and can render the military inefficient. Nonetheless, this autonomy must be granted by the civilians, which should also set boundaries and be the ultimate decision makers for all dimensions of the military institution including the military's internal affairs. That being said, civilian authorities should expect a considerable amount of resistance from the military as militaries around the world have a successful track record in blocking or hindering civilian efforts to restructure or reorganize the military institution. An example of this could be found in Russia, where despite the history of subordination of the military during the reign of civilians during the Soviet Union and modern Russia, reforms to the structure of the armed forces have been continuously mired by the military leadership. Based on the aforementioned focus areas, (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010) argue that "civil-military relations in a given state can be systematically evaluated and changes can be traced overtime. In addition, it offers a stringent analytical framework for cross-national comparisons of civil-military relations in new democracies. Lastly, it provides the theoretical foundation for a nuanced discussion of the implications of weakly institutionalized or absent civilian control". (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010)

Chapter 3

Rise of the AKP

In order to understand the tensions between the military and the AKP, we will first need to examine how the AKP came into power. In this chapter we discuss the origins of the party, detailing the numerous struggles and run-ins with the military institution and the circumstances which allowed the AKP to emerge victorious and push for civil military reforms.

The relationship between the military and Islamist parties was always turbulent in Turkey. In 2002, after several attempts by Islamist parties to rise to power in Turkey were thwarted by the military, the AKP; a party created from the ashes of the failed Virtue Party that was shut down in 2001, successfully rallied the Turkish public and won the elections with 34.3 percent of the vote and almost two-thirds (363) of the assembly seats (Özbudun, 2006). Subsequently the AKP has enjoyed a ruling majority for the past 17 years and was able to incorporate its Islamist origins and ideology against a clear path for globalization and westernization that appealed to the Turkish public across the political spectrum (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010). By doing so, the AKP successfully challenged state secularism that had prevailed for almost a century after being first championed by Ataturk in the 1930s. Building on numerous precedents where military interventions led to the closure and banning of Islamist parties, the AKP successfully navigated extremely murky waters and was able to stay ahead of the military, drawing from

the widespread popular support for change and prosperity promised by the AKP (Özbudun, 2006).

In November of 2002, millions of Turks went to the polls and elected what seemed to be an Islamist party that was very new to the political arena; created just over a year before the elections. This was the Justice and Development party (AKP; Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi). Since then, the AKP introduced major changes backed by a sweeping majority making it the longest ruling party in Turkish democratic history (Özbudun, 2006). But before we can delve into the changes the AKP brought to the Turkish arena, we first need to break down the origins and policies of this party. While the AKP is generally referred to as an Islamist party, it has rejected this label preferring instead to be referred to as a conservative democratic movement. However, it is public knowledge that the AKP rose from the national view movement which was among the first Islamist movements in Turkish politics.

Since the early 20th century Ataturk and subsequent leaders and Turkish governments have worked hard to create a secular state built on a Turkish national identity and intertwined with western ideals and notions of democracy and have been fairly successful at it. So how then did a seemingly Islamist movement rise and remain in power for over 17 years?

As with most political topics, there is no simple answer to that question. Political parties with an Islamic orientation began appearing in Turkish politics in 1970 with the creation of the national view movement (also known as the National

Order party) by a prominent industrialist, Necmettin Erbakan (Özbudun, 2006). However, this party was short-lived as it was shut down a year later by the Turkish constitutional court, citing a threat to the constitutional principle of secularism. Erbakan quickly bounced back and established the National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi— MSP) which also focused on virtue and public morals (Mecham, 2004). This time around Erbakan found considerable success, securing enough seats in the Turkish parliament in 1973 and 1977 to be a part of several coalition governments.

That also proved to be a fleeting success as civil unrest in the late 1970s called for military intervention in 1980 which resulted in the removal of the civilian government from power. The military then took over and stayed in power for three years following the intervention, which gave enough time for a new constitution to be put in place which was written in a way as to remove religious parties such as Erbakan's from the political arena (Hermann, 2003). A civilian government was reinstalled in 1983 and with it Erbakan re-emerged with a new party called the Welfare party. On his third try, Erbakan learned to steer clear of conservative and religious rhetoric and instead geared the party into a more mainstream, anti-system direction. As such, the Welfare party focused on "the importance of social justice, Turkey's exploitation by the West, religious freedom, ethnic tolerance, promotion of private enterprise, creation of an interest-free 'Islamic' economy, an end to state corruption, and denunciations of an 'imperialist Zionist system' that threatened Turkey's national independence" (Mecham, 2004). This brought the welfare party considerable success, not only through the subsequent municipal and

legislative elections but also through an increasing appeal to the public that became more open to their ideas and their Islamic background.

This success spilled over into the 1994 municipal elections where Islamists won control of the two main cities in Turkey (Istanbul and Ankara) in addition to other important municipalities, securing 19% of the vote nationwide (Mecham, 2004). The following year saw the Welfare party attain over 21% of the vote making it the largest political party in the Turkish Grand National Assembly and making Erbakan the first Islamist prime minister in 1996 (Mecham, 2004). However, although Erbakan's party campaigns shifted focus away from his Islamist background, his policies as Prime minister proved otherwise. For starters, Erbakan's first state visits were visits to Iran and Libya in his effort to establish a Muslim economic zone, in addition to inviting leaders of religious brotherhoods to his residence for dinner during Ramadan. Furthermore, although the Islamist Mayors that were victorious in the 1994 municipal elections were providing better municipal services, they also imposed new restrictions on the sale of alcohol, pushed for the creation of new mosques and changed local symbols and landmarks to reflect a more religious tone (Mecham, 2004). In addition, Islamic education and bureaucracy were more commonplace under Erbakan's rule which made the Turkish military establishment even more weary of the Welfare party's intentions as they feared further infiltration of Islamic law into secular state institutions. To top things off, Welfare's secular coalition partner, the true path party which helped secure Erbakan's hold of the government appeared to pursue a different approach than Erbakan, such as promising fiscal austerity while Erbakan increased wages and

agricultural subsidies, making the alliance that kept Erbakan in power, also responsible for starting his downfall (Mecham, 2004).

As corruption scandals involving the True Path Party surfaced at the end of 1996, Erbakan was forced to publicly come to his partner's defense in a clear contradiction to his campaign promises of rooting out corruption which alienated his constituency and sparked anti-corruption movements in civil societies (Mecham, 2004). As a result, the military along with powerful civil societies such as the prominent Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (TÜSİAD), united in opposition against the Welfare party citing corruption, frivolous spending, and Islamic integration into secular institutions. This in turn triggered the Turkish National Security council to pressure Erbakan to mitigate threats to the secular character of the state. Facing increasing opposition, Erbakan had to once again go against another of his campaign promises and signed a military cooperation agreement with Israel dealing another blow to the Welfare party's credibility and causing those that were once allies to criticize the government and withdraw their support (Özbudun, 2006).

However, these attempts by Erbakan to stay in power actually weakened his hold of it and gave enough momentum to his opposition that in February of 1997, the National Security Council issued a set of demands to the Welfare government that would be the final blow towards its demise. "The essence of the National Security Council's demands was the elimination of Islamic influence and sympathizers within the state, including restrictions on religious civil society.

Demands included the closure of hundreds of religious schools, tight controls over religious brotherhoods, and restrictions on Islamic dress” (Mecham, 2004).

Erbakan soon found himself between a rock and a hard place as agreeing to those demands would surely alienate any public support he had left, but refusing them would surely lead to his ousting by the National Security Council and the military. Erbakan ultimately bowed to the pressure and signed the council’s demands thinking he can hold off on implementing them. However, his belief was mistaken and continued threats by the military in addition to increased mobilization by the civil society and media forced his resignation in June 1997 and his replacement with the Motherland Party (ANAP) which was determined to implement the Security Council’s recommendations (Mecham, 2004). Erbakan’s problems didn’t stop there, as legal action was taken against him and the Welfare party for violating the secular principles of the constitution caused the closure of the Welfare party in January 1998 and the banning from political leadership for a period of five years imposed on him and five other Welfare Party deputies. After Erbakan’s resignation, it became clear that the closure of the Welfare party by the constitutional court was imminent and so preparations were made to transition the remaining constituency to a new party (Özbudun, 2006).

This transition gave birth to the Virtue Party that was established in December of 1997 by Islamist Erbakan loyalists. As soon as the Welfare party was officially closed the following month, all Welfare MPs moved to the new Virtue Party. This move gave the Virtue Party the largest share of seats in parliament. A power struggle ensued over the leadership of the Virtue Party as Erbakan’s political

banning prevented him from assuming leadership (Mecham, 2004). Erbakan pushed for loyalist to assume control while young reformists within the party sought new leadership in the hopes of establishing a better democracy within the party.

Erdogan's name was thrown in the hat after a successful term as Mayor of Istanbul but his nomination was complicated after legal action was taken against him in December 1997 as he was accused of inciting religious hatred after reading lines from a nationalist Turkish poet at a political rally saying "Minarets are our bayonets, domes are our helmets, mosques are our barracks, believers are our soldiers" (Mecham, 2004). In April 1998 the state court found Erdogan guilty, removing him from his post as Mayor of Istanbul in addition to having him serve a short prison sentence.

This significantly weakened the reformists' position and they were later forced to accept a long-time ally of Erbakan, Recai Kutan as the party leader. Although Kutan was an Erbakan loyalist and represented the old ideology of the Welfare party, he was seen as more moderate and projected a more politically sensitive image than Erbakan did, publically stressing that the Virtue Party was not just a new name for the Welfare Party but was a completely new party with a democratic agenda (Özbudun, 2006).

This was significant for two reasons. First, it was important to distinguish the new party from the old Welfare since otherwise this would also make the Virtue party illegal. Second, this marked an important shift in strategy used to redefine the party's message and correct previous mistakes that led to the

Welfare's closure. An important shift was changing their old claim of Turkey not being religious enough to it not being democratic enough. Both claims were aimed at attacking and delegitimizing the state and secular institutions but the aim here was to attract a larger portion of the public, namely secular democrats, to join their cause while staying away from direct religious confrontation. During its short life, the Virtue party kept focused on messages of democracy, human rights and the expansion of political liberties. For Kutan, pushing for more religious and political freedom was a means to provide the party with more room to maneuver and grow with the secular restrictions of the state (Mecham, 2004). However, for the young reformists in the party, this was a means to have more democracy within the party, which they saw as a necessary shift that would guarantee the party's survival.

Although the rebranding of the Virtue Party saw some success within the Turkish public, the military and judicial arms of the Turkish state were not fooled and they discarded these efforts and continued to consider the Virtue Party as a religious and dissident party. They even went further and issued multiple warnings to the Turkish public in the lead up to the 1999 elections cautioning against the dangers of Islamic politics in an obvious attempt to dissuade them from voting for the Virtue Party. However, this wasn't the Virtue's biggest problem. Disagreements and splits within the party itself threatened its very survival with Erbakan loyalists going against a younger generation of reformists, influenced by Erdogan and Abdullah Güл, who felt that Erbakan's influence was stifling party democracy. This internal strife caused such chaos that Erbakan loyalists tried to postpone the elections, fearing a defeat in the polls while at the same time buying some time to lift Erbakan's ban in an effort to bring him back to lead the party through the

elections. Nevertheless, although the elections took place as scheduled, the Virtue party had reached the end of the road. In 2001, citing the ruling used to shut down the welfare party as a precedent, the Virtue party was in turn deemed illegal and consequently shut down, reiterating the message that the idea of an all-out Islamic party in Turkey was not feasible (Mecham, 2004).

Faced with constitutional banning for over three decades, political parties with an Islamic agenda were forced to change and adapt constantly in order to figure out a formula that had just the right balance of Islamic ideology and westernization to survive the Turkish elections and the secular state institutions. Ihsan Dagi, a professor of international relations at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey, and the editor-in-chief of the quarterly *Insight Turkey* explained this process clearly, saying “With the threat of constitutional banning hanging over their heads for decades, Turkish Islamist movements had to learn to operate in a restricted political environment. The threat of closure complicated attempts to identify and analyze Islamist political parties because they could not call themselves as such” (Dagi, 2008).

The practice of *takiyye* which refers to concealing the true identity and ideas of an Islamic agenda in order to escape constitutional prosecution, was deployed at the expense of clarity of political argumentation. As a result, political parties with Islamic tendencies communicated their views to the public through symbolic words and actions, claiming to represent the “national view” and criticizing Westernization as a betrayal of “traditional national and spiritual values.” “The goal was to build an Islamic identity without openly violating the

constitutional principle of secularism.” (Dagi, 2008). Building on this, the expiry of the virtue party initiated another split within its members which cleared the way for the then charismatic Mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, to form a new more moderate party. As such, the AKP was established with Erdogan and many previous members of the Virtue party, while the traditionalists from the virtue party formed their own wing under the name of the Felicity party (Mecham, 2004).

While the newly formed AKP included many of the original members and ideas of the Virtue Party, they left behind the focus on pro-Islamic ideology and policies. Instead, the new leadership of the AKP drew on ideas from the Democratic Party of the 1950s, the Justice Party of the 1960s, and the Motherland Party of the 1980s, all major center-right parties (Mecham, 2004). From that the AKP focused on central themes such as democracy, national will, people power, and economic development in addition to a focus on accession to the European Union, a long perceived “Christian club”. (Dagi, 2008). But although the AKP was new and unfamiliar territory, the faces of the party were not. Prominent among those faces was Erdogan. Many have attributed the success of the AKP, at least in part, to Erdogan; previously known to the Turkish public as the Islamist Mayor of Istanbul. Erdogan was famous for his run-ins with the law for accusations of provoking religious hatred and trying to alter the secular nature of the Turkish state (Mecham, 2004). During his time as Mayor, Erdogan learned that “public service provision easily trumped ideology. Local voters want efficient road and sewer repair and trash collection, not utopian endeavors to transform society” and based on that, he championed the idea of a social Islam rather than political Islam (Dagi, 2008).

To that end, and in order to accommodate European values of democracy and human rights, Erdogan developed his favorite motto: “service to people is service to God” thereby not totally excluding Islamist ideologies but rather wrapping them up with a social cover to ensure their widespread acceptance and adoption (Dagi, 2008). These changes gave the AKP major public support which translated into a landslide success in the 2002 elections. The AKP did not only win the elections, it saw a success rate that no party had seen in 15 years, granting them a big majority in the Turkish Grand National Assembly with only minor competition from Ataturk’s own Republican People’s Party (CHP), with the rest of the seats held by independent candidates. Interestingly, none of the other major Turkish parties (DSP, ANAP, and MHP) won any seats in that election, leaving the AKP’s power largely unchecked in an unprecedented upheaval of Turkish politics. To put that into perspective, no Islamist party has ever gotten close to getting 34% of the vote in Turkey with their most recent attempt in the 1999 elections gathering less than half that (15.4%) (Mecham, 2004).

This shift in strategy was successful not only with the Turkish public, but also with the international community, and particularly with the European Union who admitted that Erdogan’s reforms had helped Turkey meet the Copenhagen political criteria by legislating reforms that improve democratic participation, freedom of speech and civilian control of the military, which led to the EU resuming talks on Turkey’s membership to the union in 2005 (Dagi, 2008). The EU talks in addition to the AKP’s engagement with the global economy and the growth it saw because of that, show that the AKP is pursuing a path to globalization, not Islamization. The significance of both is that if successful, these paths would lead

Turkey, a predominately Islamic nation, to officially being part of the western bloc and ending centuries of a perception of Islamic bitterness towards the west.

Learning from previous mistakes and faced with certain rejection as a traditional Islamic party, the AKP transformed into a sophisticated, progressive and moderate movement, reframing their religious preferences to appeal to a large portion of the Turkish public. Moreover, the AKP's initial success came at a time where the Turkish public was primed for change, having been widely dissatisfied with the performance of previous government and the state of the economy. The years leading up to the 2002 election saw widespread unemployment and rapid inflation causing economic strain on the Turkish consumer (Dagi, 2008). In addition, "Public perceptions of parliamentary deadlock, embedded inequitable patronage networks, and desperate personalized political battles among incumbents provided strong incentives to vote for change. These perceptions, coupled with the AKP's formidable grassroots organizational strength and the continued public legal persecution of the party's populist leader made it appear the most promising of the potential agents of change." (Mecham, 2004)

However, as the brief history outlined in the sections above shows, the success that the AKP enjoyed came about as a result of a series of parties and through years of mistakes and learning. The AKP that won the 2002 elections was a strategic response to a history of limitations and checks laid on by the military, the judicial branch and the Turkish public towards their predecessors' experimentation and attempts at gaining power. The invaluable knowledge gained from previous

failures combined with an improved ability to maneuver through legal constraints and appeal to the masses were key factors into delivering the AKP's sweeping win. The split of the virtue party into the AKP and Felicity allows us to draw on comparisons between the two and helps us better identify what the AKP did right and what the Felicity party did wrong.

For starters, in terms of each party's logo, the Felicity stuck to the tradition of using variations of the crescent moon (considered a symbol for Islam) that was previously used by the welfare and virtue parties, while the AKP moved away from traditions and created a simple logo of a shining light bulb with the slogan "continual light" (Mecham, 2004). Furthermore, the AKP, drawing on the successes of the welfare party, was built in a populist style, with a focus on municipalities and neighborhoods, allowing it to gather widespread support as a party for the ordinary Turkish citizen who was trying to make it in the modern world. Erdogan himself indicated that the party would be a bridge between traditional and modern Turkey, describing himself as a moderate or a "man of the middle path". The party supported a market-based economy and vowed increased efforts to join the European Union. It promised to respect religious beliefs and promote moral values and to resolve the issue surrounding the headscarf restrictions (Mecham, 2004).

In summary, the AKP was portrayed as the warrior that would fight the injustice and inequity intensified by the widespread corruption within the Turkish system. Felicity on the other hand, remained true to their messages of religious and social change, using anti-western and anti-establishment rhetoric while also opposing structural reforms supported by Kemal Dervis, the then popular Minister

of Economy (Caliskan, 2017). This, in addition to a series of strategic decisions regarding message and image, really set the two parties apart. The AKP tried to appeal more to the secular minded center right by proving it was committed to religious moderation through wisely steering clear of references in its political rhetoric that would portray it as a religious party in court, while continuing to speak out on a range of issues, such as actively pushing and advocating for Turkey to be part of the European Union while running an active campaign supporting the Palestinian cause.

The AKP also gathered support through the inclusion of a diverse group of allies, such as women deputies, none of whom wore headscarves, and politicians from several right wing parties such as the True Path Party, the National Action Party and the Motherland Party which shows the extent of its reach and influence, but also shows their efforts in unifying the center right. R. Quinn Mecham, writing for *Third World Quarterly* summarized the AKP's motivation best by saying "...the party was motivated by democratic incentives, recognizing that the majority of Turks had consistently voted for centrist parties. AKP leaders recognized that, if they could strike the fine balance between behaving like a religious protest party and brandishing secular credentials, their potential constituency greatly expanded. In the end, this strategy proved successful on both counts. The AK Party's moderation was a direct response both to horizontal constraints and democratic incentives in a moderately religious society" (Mecham, 2004).

A significant portion of those constraints came from Turkey's judicial branch, as Erdogan has several lawsuits filed against him prior to the 2002

elections. Most notable, the Turkish state prosecutor had filed a lawsuit against Erdogan in the Constitutional court to force Erdogan out of the list of founding members of the AKP and to prevent him from running for parliament. In addition, Erdogan faced another significant lawsuit alleging that he misappropriated public funds as mayor of Istanbul (Mecham, 2004). These resulted in his stepping down as a founding member of the AKP but that did not stop him from leading it.

Another major source of problems for the AKP came from the Felicity party, where many members saw Erdogan's break from the party equivalent to treason. Although the Felicity party still retained some of the progressive members of the Virtue party, its leadership stuck to its religiously conservative rhetoric, feeling like they carried the true banner of societal and religious change, increasing their anti-western and anti-establishment views. Feeling betrayed, the Felicity party caused as much trouble as they could for the AKP, voting down reforms in parliament that would've removed Erdogan's ban from politics and working hard to turn voters away from the AKP by attacking Erdogan's competence to lead the nation (Mecham, 2004).

However, Felicity's efforts caused no lasting damage to the AKP who had already garnered massive public support and were extremely cautious during the 2002 campaign. As a result, after successfully entering the Turkish parliament, the AKP nominated Abdullah Gül, one of the more liberal members of the party, for the position of prime minister as Erdogan's political ban was still in effect. Erdogan's patience later paid off, as he took the role of prime minister in 2003 after parliament passed reforms effectively lifting his ban from politics.

As such, although the AKP struggled to position itself as a viable candidate in the 2002 elections, they were able to avoid being shut down by the military and remained true to their vision and strategy. It could even be argued that the attempts to limit their political participation by the military have forced the AKP to plan their accession to power more meticulously and have set the stage for their subsequent confrontation with the military. Threatened with their very survival, the AKP was intent on limiting the power and influence of the military in the political sphere and provided them with a strong motivation to do so.

Chapter 4

Drivers of CMR reform in Turkey

As we saw in the previous chapters, the military had been very involved in the Turkish political arena, exerting their power when necessary to uphold secularism in the Turkish state. A major underlying factor which contributed to their consistent success was the high esteem in which they were held by the Turkish public. Of course, this trust had been fairly earned through the military's demonstrated track record of always returning power to a civilian government following a military intervention; a testament that the best interest of the public was always the priority.

This in turn created little demand for change in the status quo. A turning point was therefore when the AKP strategically targeted the root cause for public complacency; by shifting the narrative and shaping public opinion towards reigning in the military under civilian control. This chapter discusses the various strategies and factors that the AKP used to push their reforms through while maintaining public support, and delves into the reforms themselves to highlight the main changes that they brought about.

The AKP didn't waste any time in getting to work on changing the laws that allowed the military so much influence in political affairs. After their electoral win in 2002, they advocated for a series of reforms and law packages that would limit the military's power under the guise of democratic reforms that would aid Turkey's

case for EU accession but was at the same time a move that would ensure their survival as a party with Islamic origins and minimize any interference from the military.

In fact, there were four main factors that the AKP used for their advantage in pushing for the significant shift in civil military relations in Turkey. The first factor, and arguably the most significant, is the EU accession process. It was not until after the Helsinki summit in 1999 when Turkey became a candidate for EU membership that the issues of de-securitization and democratization came to the forefront and started gaining momentum (Bardakçı, 2013).

Although the European Union (EU) generally doesn't interfere in its members' defense structures, it does require that candidates (and members) exert a certain political control over the armed forces in order to ensure sustainability of democracy and rule of law. The three general criteria that the EU established revolve around the integration of the military within the civilian society, ensuring that constitutionally established authorities are supported by democratic legitimacy and finally the transparency and information available to the public through legislative oversight of military expenditures (Güler & Bölükçük, 2016). A major issue that was in conflict with the EU system was the structure of the Turkish Ministry of National Defense.

This is because in Turkey, both the Minister of National Defense and the office of the General Staff report directly to the Prime Minister effectively keeping the office of the General staff separate from the Ministry of National Defense which has no control over them. This has been an issue often flagged by the EU as

problematic because it effectively keeps the General Staff out of the civilian hierachal structure and limits the extent of oversight that can be applied on the military (Satana, 2011).

This structure was a result of changes implemented following the military coups of 1960, 1971 and 1980 where the military argued that previous governments (during 1950-1960) had attempted to use the army as a political tool through the Ministry of National Defense, and thus they presented the detachment from the ministry as a necessary move to ensure transparency and autonomy (Satana, 2011).

That being said, the accession talks were a realization of a long time goal for Turkey in their path to modernization and the realization of Ataturk's vision of westernization of which the military was very committed. Therefore there was little resistance on the part of the military on reforms that aided the accession process. In fact, the military was so cooperative that Foreign Minister at the time, Abdullah Güл publically acknowledged and thanked the military institution, stating "The TAF (Turkish Armed Forces) made valuable contributions to our EU objectives and reforms. They would have been much more difficult to carry out without the support of the military. The TAF well appreciate what Turkey's interests are. They have a long-term strategic vision."(Radikal, 2006).

Interestingly however, Abdullah Güл faced resistance from the military when he was nominated by the AKP for President in the presidential elections of 2007. This is because the military viewed him as an Islamist and AKP loyalists that would assist the AKP in advancing a non-secular agenda (Bardakçı, 2013). Although the

military had been relatively quiet to this point, their opposition to this nomination forced them to break their silence. Consequently, a memorandum was issued on the website of the Turkish General Staff in April 2007 stating: "It is observed that some circles who have been carrying out endless efforts to disturb fundamental values of the Republic of Turkey, especially secularism, have escalated their efforts recently.... An important portion of these activities was carried out with the permission and the knowledge of administrative authorities, who were supposed to intervene and prevent such incidents, a fact which intensifies the gravity of the matter" (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010).

However, as the days of unquestionable military supremacy and interference were long gone, the memorandum was met with criticism and backlash both from the EU and the AKP government (Heper, 2005). In fact, Cemil Çiçek, the Minister of Justice and government spokesperson, released a statement in response to the memorandum highlighting how inappropriate the military's interference is in a democracy stating "The General Staff is an establishment under the Prime Minister's Office. It would be inconceivable if the general staff in a democracy upholding the rule of law made a statement critical of the government about any issue. The General Staff is an establishment which is subject to the orders from the government and whose responsibilities are defined in the Constitution and laws. According to the Constitution, the Chief of the General Staff reports to the Prime Minister as part of his duties and responsibilities." (Milliyet, 2007). Even business circles, media outlets and civil society organizations who also strongly opposed Gü'l's nomination for President sided with the AKP government

against the military's interference in the elections and agreed that the military should remain out of this debate (Mecham, 2004).

This confrontation led to a noticeable change or shift in power dynamics between the civilian government and the military, displaying the low tolerance the government had in regards to military interference while also showing the public's support for civilian supremacy over the military's traditional guardianship role (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010). The fight for Gül's presidency continued however, with further opposition from the Republican People's Party and the majority of MPs in Parliament in which Gül failed to achieve a two thirds majority during two separate votes, the latest taking place on May 6, 2007.

However, during the general elections that took place on July 22, 2007 the AKP was still able to secure a major win. In fact, they were able to increase their national vote percentage from 34.3 to 46.7 percent. Following this win, a third round of voting took place in August 2007 which only required Gül to obtain a simple majority thanks to constitutional amendments to the technicalities of the presidential elections that were passed by parliament. With a more dominant AKP presence in parliament, and an easier requirement of a simple majority, Gül won this election and was immediately sworn in to office, in a process many described as a "low-key affair", pointing to the extent the AKP was willing to go to get their candidate into office (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010).

The AKP pushed even further, softening some security concerns such as the Kurdish issue in order to minimize the matters that the military played a significant role in. The AKP was quick in using this shift in priorities to their advantage, passing

numerous harmonization packages (nine by 2010) to push reforms that would aid them in the EU accession process. Most notable of these packages was the “seventh harmonization package” which aimed at conforming to EU requirements through reducing the functions and duties of several state institutions starting with the MGK (Milli Güvenlik Konseyi) or the National Security Council which was of particular concern to the EU and a major obstacle in the accession process (Dagi, 2008).

The NSC was set-up following the military intervention in 1960 with a mandate of using the expertise of the committee members (which consisted of the President, Prime Minister, a few other Ministers, the Chief of General Staff and military commanders) to provide assistance to the government when formulating national security policies. However, the NSC saw its powers expand following each subsequent military-led coup. After the 1971 intervention, the NSC was authorized with providing broad policy recommendations to the government, and the new constitution after the 1980 coup gave NSC recommendations priority consideration by the Council of Ministers (Bilgiç, 2009) and created Article 19 of Law 2945 regarding the NSC which stated that “the ministries, public institutions and organizations and private legal persons shall submit regularly, or when requested, non-classified and classified information and documents needed by the Secretary General of the NSC” (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010).

Thus, the NSC became a military dominated council of high ranking military officials that oversaw the execution of the national security policy of the Turkish state and therefore became one of the main obstacles towards EU accession. The

NSC had previously had unrestricted access to all civil institutions and the delegation on behalf of the prime minister and president to follow up and implement the NSC's recommendations. The council's reach encompassed a broad range of issues such as school curriculums, closure and broadcast schedules of TV stations, and setting the agendas and determining the intent of capital punishment and anti-terrorism laws, among others (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010).

However, after the seventh harmonization package was passed, the NSC was reduced to an advisory body with their decisions being no more than unenforceable recommendations. In addition, the new package increased the presence of civilian members in the council, including allowing the appointment of a civilian secretary general instead of a four-star general, limiting the council's meetings to one meeting every two months, revoking their access to civil institutions and removing their executive and monitoring functions (Bilgiç, 2009). Because of these amendments, the MGK was no longer able to initiate national security investigations without first obtaining authorization from civilian authorities and special funds that were previously allocated to the council were shifted to the exclusive control of the office of the Prime Minister. Furthermore, the council's powers in requesting that institutions provide confidential and non-confidential information and documents was revoked, along with all confidentiality clauses covering MGK members (Bilgiç, 2009).

This also spilled over to other institutions as reforms in 2003 and in 2004 withdrew the authorization of the NSC and the General staff to appoint members to state institutions such as the Board of Inspection of Cinema, Video and Musical

works (Sinema, Video ve Muzik Eserleri Denetleme Kurulu), the Prime Ministerial Board for the protection of Minors, the Supreme Communication Board and others relating to education and broadcasting (Bilgiç, 2009). In addition to revoking the power to appoint members to these positions, military representatives were also removed from key positions on the Radio and Television Supreme council and the council of Higher education (Günlük-Şenesen & Kırık, 2016).

Moreover, the AKP addressed another major criticism from the EU concerning parliamentary oversight over military expenditures. This was done in 2003 by granting the Court of Auditors the authority to audit the financial accounts, expenditures, transactions and properties owned by the Turkish Armed Forces. However, the TAF quickly objected and was able to secure an exemption to exclude properties that were deemed classified from being audited (Mecham, 2004). This in addition to the exclusion of separate funds such as the Defense Industry Support Fund which was used for major arms purchases, resulted in little change in parliamentary oversight. In 2004 however, the authority of the court of auditors was expanded to include classified and confidential military owned properties. Although these laws were passed, their implementation stalled to as late as August 2008 since the Parliament did not issue the implementing regulations for the aforementioned amendments (Bilgiç, 2009).

These reforms were quite significant as they not only brought the financial aspects of the TAF under parliamentary control, but also effectively reduced whatever control or oversight the military had over civil institutions, most notably on education and media; two of the most important information pathways for the

public in which the military had long held considerable influence in (Bardakçı, 2013). Furthermore, civil organizations and representatives of big business such as the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (TUSIAD, Turkiye Sanayici ve İ'sadamları Derneği); organizations that have had previous run ins with the military because of their Islamic background, became steadily more involved in the accession process and advocated for rights of minorities, ending the conflict with Cyprus and an overall decreased role for the military in politics. This process of democratization/ desecuritization also spilled over into foreign policy which like domestic politics, was considered a national security issue and was thus dominated by the military (Bardakçı, 2013). As a result, Turkey had acted as a coercive power in the region and had developed tense relationships with its neighboring countries, which almost led to a war with Syria in 1998 for custody of then PKK leader Abdullah O'calan.

However, Turkish foreign policy made a sharp turn after 1999 choosing to focus more on an economically centered approach using soft power and diplomacy, taking after the EU's good neighborliness policy and reducing the need for military intervention and influence. This created a gap in the policy making process which was readily filled by interest groups and civil organizations such as the "Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (MUSIAD, Mustakil Sanayici ve İ'sadamları Derneği), the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (TUSIAD, Turkiye Sanayicive İ'sadamları Derneği), the Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges (TOBB, Turkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birligi), the Turkish Exporters' Assembly (TIM, Turkiye İ'hracatcilar Meclisi) and the small and medium-sized export-oriented firms (Anatolian tigers)" which used their ties with

the AKP to have a say in the decision making process (Kirişci, 2012). As a result of this and of renewed ties with its neighbors, Turkey's trade within the region grew from 9.6 billion USD in 1995 to 67.7 billion USD in 2007 (Bardakçı, 2013).

The second factor that contributed to the transformation of civil military relations in Turkey was the political unity that the AKP was able to muster through the November 2002 and subsequent elections. The AKP was handed a powerful mandate by the Turkish public which significantly helped them rally support to exercise their power and authority over the military both on domestic and foreign affairs. This allowed the AKP to win three consecutive elections and became the only party in Turkish history to grow its share of votes while in power (Demir & Bingöl, 2018). Learning from its past run-ins with the military, the AKP positioned itself from the get-go as a moderate democratic party, distancing itself from its Islamic past. This coupled with their push for EU friendly policies and the economic growth seen under their leadership allowed the AKP to keep and grow its base and even earned them support from across the political spectrum including from liberal intellectuals.

Thus, when the military challenged the AKP in 2007 through the Constitutional court by cancelling the planned elections by Abdullah Gül's parliament, the AKP was unfazed. Instead, the AKP defied the court's warnings and held early elections on July 22nd, 2007 which resulted in an increase in their share of votes and ultimately to the election of Abdullah Gül as president (Bardakçı, 2013).

This in turn leads us to the third factor which allowed the AKP dominion over the military which was the shift in the balance of power from the Kemalists to the pro-AKP elements. Although the AKP enjoyed widespread support from across the spectrum, the bourgeoisie (commonly referred to as the Anatolian tigers) came to the forefront and played a significant role in providing the AKP with a solid socio-economic base. Some of these businessmen, especially religious business owners that had faced some kind of suppression by the military were aggressively supporting the AKP both politically and financially, with some of them even becoming deputies in the party in both the 2002 and 2007 elections (Bardakçı, 2013).

This transformation was further bolstered by the emergence and growth of the middle class in Turkey in the 2000s, which called for political liberation and democratization, providing even more power and legitimacy to the AKP in their face off with the military. Furthermore, media outlets with Islamic ties expanded under the AKP and became increasingly influential and central to the AKP's power, disseminating pro-AKP messages and exposing wrongdoings by the military (Bardakçı, 2013).

In 2003, the Savings Deposit Insurance fund (TMSF, Tasarruf Mevduatı Sigorta Fonu), a state owned institution concerned with fund management and insurance in the Turkish banking system, seized the indebted Uzan media group followed by the ATV-Sabah media group in 2007 and later sold them to pro-AKP Islamic media organizations. By 2009, Islamic organizations owned "19 daily newspapers, 120 magazines, 51 radio stations and 20 television channels"

(Bardakçı, 2013). In addition, higher education, a once stronghold of the Kemalist camp had also undergone changes aimed at washing down the Kemalists' influence. Military representatives were removed from the council of higher education as part of the 2003 "seventh harmonization package" and replaced by civilian AKP supporters which paved the way for the creation of many new universities, both in the public and private sectors, by the Islamic bourgeoisie. This further decreased the military's influence in the dissemination and control of the information that is passed on to the public.

Although the first three factors discussed above provided the AKP with the support and tools they needed to exert civil control over the military, the final factor, the Ergenekon investigations and other coup attempts, served as a catalyst in converting the civil-military relations in Turkey into a more democratic and EU approved model. The Ergenekon terrorist organization, which had links with the military, had been discovered in 2007, after 27 hand grenades were found in a house in a district in Istanbul. As a result, numerous coordinated raids were conducted and dozens of people, including journalists, academics, businessmen and active and retired military officers were arrested. After the investigation was conducted, an indictment was issued charging the Ergenekon organization with attempting to "overthrow the government of the Turkish Republic through the use of violence and coercion" (Bardakçı, 2013).

The indictment also linked the organization to terrorist acts that were conducted in 2006 against the Turkish Council of State and the offices of Cumhuriyet, a secular newspaper, in an attempt to discredit the AKP and Islamist

groups. In addition, a second indictment that was filed in March 2009 argued that there were four different plans for coup attempts between 2002 and 2004 by top military officials including retired commanders to overthrow the AKP government (Bardakçı, 2013). The police also uncovered a further plot in 2009 after the discovery of a compact disc (CD) in the office of a retired army Major that contained details of the “Operation Cage Action plan (Kafes Operasyonu Eylem Planı)” (Bardakçı, 2013). According to the investigation, this plan covered details of assassinations that were planned against non-Muslim minorities with the ultimate goal of blaming these assassinations on the AKP government in order to increase pressure on them both domestically and internationally. To further cement these charges, anti-tank weapons, bullets and hand grenades were uncovered in April 2009 in an area of Istanbul that were linked to the military through a report by the state-owned weapons manufacturer (MKE) that claimed these munitions were registered to the Turkish Armed forces (Bardakçı, 2013).

The release of this information to the public created widespread debate over the role of the military and significantly shifted power in favor of the civilian government, forcing the military to be on the defensive. A Turkish general, General Basbug tried to improve the army's image, albeit with little success, assuring people that the final decision on any military action rests with the civilian government, stressing the military's respect for democracy and the rule of law (Özbudun, 2006). Moreover, the failed coup attempt in July of 2016 presented the AKP with yet another opportunity to consolidate their power. Following the coup attempt, the AKP declared a state of emergency that gave the government a vast amount of power, and resulted in thousands of academics, judges, civil servants,

and public prosecutors that were critical of the government to be arrested and/or lose their jobs without legal proceedings. In addition, civil society institutions, media, and publishing outlets that were linked to Gülen, left-wing or Kurdish circles were shut down (Bardakçı, 2013).

Since the Turkish military had previously derived most of its power and influence directly from the public, the change in attitude following the Ergenekon and coup investigations significantly damaged their legitimacy. In fact, a poll conducted in January 2010 by A&G, a research firm based in Istanbul, showed a fall of public trust in the military from 90 percent in 2008 to 63.4 percent in 2010 (Gür, 2010).

In addition, the AKP's efforts to push the military out of the political sphere also encompassed foreign policy decisions. This can explain the AKP's decision not to initiate an incursion into Northern Iraq in 2007 as this could increase the military's involvement and allow them to strengthen their position and increase their influence in political decisions. This strategy proved so useful that the AKP kept using the notion of a security threat to consolidate power even with the military being side-lined .

In light of all these developments, the AKP overhauled the legal system, introducing massive changes that not only limited the autonomy of the armed forces, but also diminished their monopoly over several state institutions including the Supreme military council, the higher judiciary, education and media. This subsequently paved the way to the arrest of General Basbug himself along with a number of officers, in relation to the establishment of websites by the General

Staff to spread propaganda against the AKP. The general was later imprisoned under charges of belonging to the Ergenekon terrorist organization, making him the first Chief of Staff in Turkish history to be arrested (Bardakçı, 2013).

Based on this, we find overwhelming evidence in the literature to support the drivers for reform discussed in this chapter. The most significant of which was the EU accession factor that effectively underlined the need for democratic control of the armed forces and provided a common ground from which both the military and the civilian government were able to negotiate and pass several harmonization packages aimed at complying with EU requirements under the 1993 Copenhagen summit criteria. While the military could be seen as cooperative during this process, public opinion and support for autonomous civilian governance was a significant driver of their cooperation. Opposing these reforms can be interpreted by the public as the military putting its own interests of self-preservation above those of the state and as an obstacle in the path towards a democratic and liberal Turkey, which would also clash with Ataturk's vision for westernization.

Finally, disrupting direct lines of communication between the public and the military by removing representatives from broadcasting councils for example, left little recourse for the armed forces to defend their actions and explain their positions to the public. This allowed the AKP to control the flow of information and helped them garner public support for constitutional amendments.

Chapter 5

The AKP's motivations for reform

The factors discussed above had allowed the AKP unprecedented dominance over the military in Turkey, and while the legitimacy of the AKP's actions was drawn from the public, the manifestation of this legitimacy and the steps taken against the military were solely decided by the party and often resulted in consolidation of power for the AKP rather than public interest. This chapter examines some examples of the reforms the AKP put forth that seem motivated by self-interest and political consolidation more than an effort from democratization and democratic control over the armed forces, although it could be argued that the latter was a byproduct nonetheless.

For example, as part of the increasing civilian involvement and oversight, the AKP pressed their new powers in the Supreme Military Council (YAS) which met annually to decide on promotions and discharges for the armed forces. In the YAS August 2010 meeting which was attended by Erdogan and President Gül, General Hasan Igsiz, the Commander of the First Army of Turkey was denied a promotion to Commander of the Land Forces through a veto by Erdogan and Gül which kept the position open as no new candidate was proposed by the General Staff. This effectively meant that the Land Forces Commander at the time, General Isik Kosaner which General Igsiz was supposed to replace, could not be promoted to Chief of Staff (Caliskan, 2017).

In order to increase pressure, the AKP also blocked the promotions of 11 other generals, which forced General Basbug to propose a new name instead of General Igziz as commander of the Land Forces which allowed the AKP to then elevate their candidate, General Necdet Ozel to the post of Chief of staff. This marked a significant reduction in the military's autonomy in shaping itself as the last time civilians had been able to block a general's appointment was back in 1987 under Prime Minister Turgut Ozal (Bardakçı, 2013).

Furthermore, the AKP made their presence felt in the development of the new National Security Policy Document of 2010 (MGSB, Milli Guvenlik Siyaset Belgesi) which basically outlines the major internal and external threats to the state of Turkey. While this document was previously developed by the military, increasing civilian influence resulted in the removal of "religious reactionism" as a domestic threat to the state and no longer citing Turkey's regional neighbors as external threats (Bardakçı, 2013).

The AKP also set their sights on the Internal Service Code of the Turkish Armed Forces, specifically on article 35 of the code which defined the military's duties towards the state as "The duty of the TAF is to protect and watch over the Turkish motherland and the Turkish Republic as delineated by the Constitution". Article 35 was amended in order to constrict the duties of the TAF as "defending Turkish soil against threats and dangers from abroad, empowering the military force to ensure deterrence, performing missions abroad given by Parliament and helping to maintain international peace." (Bardakçı, 2013).

Thus these changes restricted the role of the military to the defense of the state from external threats and removed any justification for interference with domestic issues and politics. In preparation for additional and significant changes to the constitution, the AKP held a referendum on September 12, 2010, in which they garnered the support of 58 percent of the electorate that allowed for constitutional amendments not only to civil-military relations but also to the higher judiciary. For example, the AKP amended article 125 of the constitution in order to give the right to appeal to dozens of military personnel who were dismissed each year for involvement in Islamist activities, but also targeted provisional article 15, which protects members of the National Security Council from facing trial, abolishing it altogether. Since this article was created following the military coup in 1980, its abolition paved the way to the trials of the leaders of the military coups in 1980 and 1997, for Kenan Evren and General Cevik Bir respectively (Turunc, 2007). Furthermore, Article 145 was also amended to limit the military courts to military offenses, while civilian courts became responsible for crimes against state security and the constitution, which include crimes such as coups. The AKP also went after Article 144 and Article 159 which dealt with the composition of the “Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK, Hakimler ve Savcilar Yuksek Kurulu)”, a disciplinary body of the legal system, by increasing its members from seven to 22 with 12 substitutes (previously only five substitutes were assigned) (Bardakçı, 2013).

In addition, the election process for the HSYK was changed, requiring 10 of the 34 members to be elected by the General Assemblies of the Court of Cassation and the Council of State, and the HSYK decisions were opened for judicial review

for the first time. This effectively allowed more involvement in the HSYK by junior judges and prosecutors and allowed the AKP to place more members that were friendly with the party in the HSYK (Bardakçı, 2013).

These changes were followed by a new law that was passed in 2011 that increased membership from 250 to 387 members in the Court of Cassation, and from 95 to 156 members in the council of state. These coupled with the changes to the HSYK basically broke the monopoly on the higher judiciary that was long held by the Kemalist camp. Articles 146- 149 were also amended to increase the members of the constitutional court from 11 to 17, giving parliament the power to assign three members in addition to the 14 usually appointed by the president (Bardakçı, 2013). As discussed in the second chapter the constitutional court played a major role in restricting Islamist parties (including the AKP) and was responsible to the shutdown of several of them, which made these changes even more significant as they made it more difficult for the court to do so in the future. Therefore, as a result of these reforms and the growing involvement in the military personnel's education, promotions, recruitment and judicial review, the AKP's ability to shape military and defense policy considerably increased (Demir & Bingöl, 2018).

Chapter 6

Conclusion

In conclusion, and as discussed in the previous chapters, the rise of the AKP in the face of constant pressure from the military since the 90's was no small feat. Considering the tumultuous relationship between parties with Islamic agendas and the military in the past, it seemed unlikely that the AKP would get very far, or even remain in power for very long. The relationship started out volatile, with the military shutting down the AKP's original party (Virtue Party) and attempting to do the same with the AKP. When they didn't have legal grounds to shut down the AKP, the military turned directly to the public, warning them of the dangers of electing a party with an Islamic background and agenda into government. As the military's efforts were unsuccessful, and the AKP was elected in 2002, military leaders turned to a less confrontational strategy of negotiation and appeasement. Particularly with General Hilmi Özkök's term as Chief of staff from 2002 to 2006, the relationship between the AKP and the military was improved as he tried to work with the AKP rather than against them. Between February 2002 and September 2004, the AKP was able to accomplish the bulk of the reforms they put forward, passing a total of eight constitutional reform packages in a two-year span. This again changed, as Özkök's successor General Yaşar Büyükanıt on the other hand didn't share Özkök's views and clashed with the AKP on several occasions. This significantly slowed down the reform process, which caused the relationship with the AKP to deteriorate once again.

The ups and down of this relationship proved how resilient the AKP were in weathering everything that came at them, passing numerous reforms, surviving political and economic turmoil and even several coup attempts. Based on the literature and the findings of this thesis, the overwhelming evidence shows that the reason the AKP was able to do that was how they used several factors to their advantage such as the EU accession process, a powerful voter base, the shift in power between the Kemalists and the AKP supporters, and the uncovering of the Ergenekon coup plot.

These factors helped the AKP in planning and shaping their entry into the Turkish arena with minimal resistance from the military. In addition, although the economic situation at the time along with the rise of a Turkish middle class definitely provided a boost to the AKP and helped them rise to power, the expertise, determination and charisma of Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his populist approach enabled him and his party to take on the Turkish military head on.

Since they won the elections in 2002, the AKP have managed to pass numerous harmonization packages, diminish the political influence of the army generals, bring in civilians to a military dominated national security council, and pushed legislation that allows civilian courts to review crimes by active soldiers. (Abramowitz & Barkey, 2009). This is significant because it highlights the first of many moves taken by the AKP to remove the military from center stage and to give more room for the government to maneuver without the threat of interference from the military (Mecham, 2004).

Using the growing class separation between the Turkish elites and the public, which the AKP converted into a powerful mandate, coupled with the EU accession process, the shift in power between the Kemalists and the AKP support base, and the exposure of the Ergenekon scheme and subsequent coup plots, the AKP had significantly altered civil military relations in Turkey in their favor. These factors allowed the AKP to penetrate the focus areas identified by Croissant et. al (2010) and establish their dominance over the military institution.

The EU accession was particularly effective because the military are staunch supporters of Mustafa Kemal's vision of modernizing and westernizing Turkey, and they saw accession to the EU as the ultimate goal of his vision. Therefore, the military did not pushback or resist and fight the very reforms that aimed to curb their influence. The AKP knew this, and they made sure to use the EU accession not only to push for democratization, but to also gain leverage over the military institution and to get as many concessions from them as possible. By doing this the AKP was able to pacify the military enough so that they would no longer be in a position to challenge the AKP and their rule. In addition, the AKP used populism to present its case of curbing military influence in Turkish politics, depicting them as supporting elitists, bureaucratic autonomy and media outlets that criticized the government in order to maintain the military's power, effectively implying that this left little power for the Turkish public and the government they elected.

Regimes that use or rely on populist policies and strategies are not new in the study of international affairs. However, what the AKP brought to the table is their ability to mobilize the public through a populist approach, which allowed them to make changes to both foreign and domestic policies without constraints of

domestic institutions and groups. This is a bold move, especially when it occurs in a system which requires regular elections. This is significant because this kind of power and the absence of a system of checks and balances are usually characteristic of non-democratic regimes. Yet, in the way that it has strategically succeeded in positioning itself, the AKP's popularity has not only allowed it to undercut and bypass domestic institutions and reinforce its autonomy, but has also allowed it to reshape its policies while still maintaining public support.

This is evident in the AKP's slow and calculated shift from a pro-democratic agenda with EU accession at its center prior to 2011, to an increasingly Islamist and authoritarian standpoint after 2011; something that not many elected regimes today can endure. (Özpek & Yaşar, 2018)

After delving deeper into the instruments the AKP used to exert their control over the military, we will now examine the extent of that control using the five focus areas identified in chapter two. These areas are "elite recruitment, public policy, internal security, national defense and military organization" (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010).

In terms of elite recruitment, the AKP have clearly inserted themselves into the once military dominated process, namely by making their presence known in the Supreme Military Council (YAS) which was responsible for deciding on officer promotions. Erdogan even used his veto power to block high level promotions such as that of Commander of the First Army of Turkey, General Hasan Igsiz, and installed his preferred candidate General Necdet Ozel as Chief of Staff in a clear move to establish a civilian say in military affairs. Furthermore, legal proceedings and the judiciary issues related to the military were also amended by the AKP.

This was achieved first by outlining an appeal process for dozens of officers who were previously dismissed from service for participating in Islamist activities, and second, through removing protections for members of the National Security Council that protected them from prosecution, a move that brought high level Generals and officers to trial. In addition, article 145 was amended in order to limit the jurisdiction of military courts to military offenses only, transferring the responsibility of trying crimes against state security and against the constitution to civilian courts.

Furthermore, military representatives were removed from serving on various councils in Turkey, such as the Council of Higher Education, Radio and TV broadcasting, Telecommunication and the protection of minors from harmful publications (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010) to ultimately curb military influence in non-military areas especially education and media. In addition to removing military representatives, the NSC's authority to nominate members to these councils was also revoked.

Finally, major changes were introduced to the judiciary, in a move that really cemented the AKP's domination over elite recruitment and left little doubt over who has the final say over the fate of members of the military. One such change was the amendment that was introduced to Article 11 of the law on the establishment and trial procedures of military courts. This amendment removed criminal cases such as "inciting mutiny and disobedience, discouraging civilians from participating in military duty and undermining national resistance", from the

purview of military courts, as long as the perpetrators were civilians (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010).

As such, elite recruitment was the area the AKP dominated the most, and where it was successful in completely shifting the power balance towards the civilian government and significantly restricting the military's involvement in non-military related decisions. That being said, the military was still able to keep a minimum level of influence over elite recruitment through the Supreme Military council. Although the council was stripped from most of its duties and its decisions became subject to judicial review, they remain the authority with regards to retirements and promotions due to lack of tenure (Güler & Bölükçek, 2016).

National defense saw a civilian incursion as well, with the AKP taking back powers long held by the military such as setting agendas and military priorities. In addition, the AKP was successful in bringing the military under the oversight of the Ministry of defense by changing the hierachal structure, addressing a major concern flagged by the EU. Previously, the military had reported directly to the Prime Minister, making it difficult for the ministry of defense to maintain close supervision of their activities.

In terms of public policy, which refers to the process of policy making and agenda setting, the AKP was able to create major ripples and changes to assert their will. Most notable of these changes were related to the National Security council (NSC). The NSC which was charged with providing broad policy recommendations, including on national security, had its whole composition altered. The new NSC included more civilian members and an increase in the

council's overall size so as to dilute the influence of members of the military that sit on the council and to tip the balance back to the government and parliament (Phillips, 2004).

The AKP also made sure to establish its presence in the setting of military policies and agendas with a clear civilian influence. This can be seen through the development of the National Security Policy Document of 2010 (Bardakçı, 2013). This document is traditionally prepared by the military and outlines the internal and external threats to the state. However, this push for adding civilian influence to this process helped establish a consultative process to define military priorities and targets, which focused on issues important to the elected government, and not leaving these important decisions to the sole discretion of the military. Although the example above also reflects changes in the area of internal security, not much more was done to establish civilian dominance in this area, primarily because the government already had a strong hold of the internal security forces. For example, since the beginning of the AKP's efforts for reform, the national police and the intelligence apparatus were in support of reform efforts that they believed will ultimately lead to a better position for EU accession. However, the land army, army intelligence units, and the corps of gendarmes were not fully onboard with these reforms because of the restrictions they impose on the military institution, although they remained cooperative with the process as it was still largely aligned with their vision and with their Kemalist principles (Phillips, 2004).

The final area we need to examine is military organization. As mentioned in chapter one, military organization refers to the military as a whole and as a

institution. Historically this area has been dominated by the military for more than 40 years. In fact, the Turkish military has had financial autonomy and minimal oversight since the 1970s. Following the 1971 coup, the military introduced a constitutional amendment limiting audits of defense expenditures on the basis of confidentiality for national defense reasons.

To ensure their autonomy, the military also amended article 30 after the 1980 coup to exclude auditors from military contracts and purchases made abroad. This changed in 2004 when article 160 which stated that “the procedure for auditing, on behalf of the [TGNA], of State property in possession of the Armed Forces shall be regulated by law in accordance with the principles of secrecy required by National Defense.” was amended again to remove the phrase “in accordance with the principles of secrecy required by National Defense.” (Güler & Bölücek, 2016).

This was followed by law no. 6085 which was approved in 2010, and allowed the court of Auditors access to audit military expenditures. Specifically, article 4/c of the law, which stated that the “[Court of Auditors] audits all public funds, resources and accounts, including special budgets, regardless of whether or not they rank among the public administration budgets.” opened up military assets, tenders and expenditures to audits, just like any other public institution. (Güler & Bölücek, 2016) Although this allowed the AKP to infiltrate the area of military organization, the oversight process, especially with regards to the role of the parliament was still lacking, as it was still not in line with EU regulations which

require parliamentary oversight over military spending. This allowed the military to maintain a certain amount of influence over this area (Güler & Bölücek, 2016).

The Turkish case allows us to draw several important lessons that can provide meaningful contributions to the study of civil military relations. The most significant lesson is the necessity of having a common goal between both the military and their civilian counterparts. Accession to the European Union served this purpose in the case of Turkey as it was a long time goal of the military institution and also a platform that the AKP ran and won on.

Having EU accession as a common goal also allowed the passage of important laws and amendments with little resistance from the military. Given the influence and strength of the Turkish military as an institution, the reforms put forth by the AKP would've been very difficult to pass without the cooperation of the military leaders, especially that these reforms aimed to limit the role and jurisdiction of the military in Turkey.

Another lesson that can be drawn from the Turkish case is the importance of public support and the ability to control the narrative. By removing military representatives from TV and media councils and limiting their involvement in education and the curriculums that are approved for the public, the AKP was able to cut the military's information pathway to the public and take back control of media outlets. This allowed them to control the flow of information and forced the military to resort to the internet to communicate directly with the Turkish people. However, this backfired on the military as the direct communication was seen as interference with civilian affairs which drew a lot of backlash.

An example of this is the memorandum that was issued on the General Staff's website in 2007, in response and opposition to the nomination of Abdullah Gul for president. Although this nomination was opposed by many in Turkey, including the public and the military, the memorandum was seen as blatant interference and the public united against it, along with business circles, media outlets and civil society organizations (Bardakçı, 2013).

Furthermore, as mentioned in chapter one, while there are many approaches to study civil military relations, applying some of these approaches to the Turkish case can be challenging. Perhaps the most fitting in this case would be the agency approach. Agency can be seen playing a role through several instances during the civil-military transition in Turkey, showing how the personality of some leaders can have a big effect on political outcomes. One such instance can be seen when the chief of staff position was held by General Hilmi Özkök from 2002 to 2006. During this time, the Turkish General staff kept a low profile and instead of opposing or refusing to cooperate with the AKP's agenda, Özkök tried to use persuasion and negotiation tactics. Özkök was also opposed to the military leaders being involved and interfering in politics and instead supported the government's goal of EU accession which is why during his leadership, the General Staff largely stayed out of the political scene in Turkey (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010). Özkök's actions were largely motivated by self-interest, as he also wanted Turkey to be part of the EU and he understood that in order for that to materialize, it is beneficial to work alongside the AKP.

In contrast, Özkök's successor Yaşar Büyükanıt who took over from 2006 to 2008, wasn't as open to the AKP's reforms and tried to interfere publicly in the 2007 presidential elections. In addition, General Büyükanıt released public statements defending the military's right to be part of the presidential election discussion stating that "as a citizen and as a member of the armed forces, I hope someone who is loyal to the main principles of the republic and committed to the secular, unitary structure of the state—not just in words, but in essence—will be the president." (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010). Following these statements, a Turkish weekly magazine which had published articles about how some military leaders sought to seize power from the AKP was stormed and shut down in a clear message that articles critical of the military will not be tolerated.

As a result, tensions flared up again between the military and the AKP and reflected negatively on public opinion about military interference. Even protesters that took to the streets to oppose Gü'l's nomination for president showed their discontent for military interference with chants and slogans such as "No Islamic government, but no coup either!" (Toktaş & Kurt, 2010).

Finally, control over the five focus areas identified by Croissant et. al (2010) is imperative in establishing civilian control over the military and offers a comprehensive approach to measuring the extent of that control (Croissant, Kuehn, Chambers, & Wolf, 2010). In Turkey, as mentioned above, the AKP was able to establish and expand their control in every one of the five areas through several reform packages that tipped the power balance back to the civilians after decades of military dominance. It is important here to note that practically, achieving 100%

control over these areas is not feasible because it can be counterintuitive as in order for the military to function properly as an institution, it needs to retain some form of autonomy and control over its internal affairs.

However, despite the numerous changes to the civil-military balance in Turkey, it remains to be noted that the establishment of full civilian control over the military will take a lot more effort if it is to be achieved. Currently, a major obstacle to achieving full control is the fact that the military needs to retain some form of authority over its internal and strategic affairs in order for it to be protected from abuse. For example, lawmakers in Turkey have argued that keeping the decisions pertaining to the promotions and retirements of military personnel under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Military Council helps to prevent the deterioration of military discipline within the armed forces.

A second point that has been brought up pertains to leaving exclusively military-related issues outside the purview of the Ombudsman. The argument here is that purely military issues should be kept within the military so as to avoid political abuse of the armed forces by the Ombudsman who, as a civilian, may not have the necessary capacity or competence to decide on military matters. This also applies to keeping two military judges serving on the constitutional court instead of removing all non-civilians in order to keep some form of military expertise in decision making (Güler & Bölükçek, 2016).

Nevertheless, although the process of democratization was used as the basis of the transformation of civil military relations by the ruling AKP party, it could also be argued that the reforms put forth by the AKP were in fact self-serving

(Diamond, 1997). This can be seen in the AKP's efforts in consolidating power towards the centre, which in this case is their party. We can see this in the AKP's choices for candidates to replace military representatives on decision making councils and even in Abdullah Gul's bid for presidency. In each of these cases, the government made sure to place loyalists in important positions instead of looking for bipartisan candidates that could be better suited for the job. Ziya Öniş in her article entitled "*Monopolising the Centre: The AKP and the Uncertain Path of Turkish Democracy*" examines this issue and concludes that "The presence of an increasingly dominant party system is not the central problem here. Many examples of dominant political parties exist, ranging from the Social Democrats in Sweden to the Liberal Democrats in Japan, without the parties in power for a long time having undermined the foundations of liberal democracy. The problem in the Turkish context concerns the co-existence of an increasingly hegemonic party which by-passes appropriate mechanisms of checks and balances. Both the institutional context and the overriding political culture seem to have contributed to a process whereby political power is increasingly concentrated at the centre, leaving those located in the periphery increasingly marginalised in terms of their voice and effective participation in the political system." (Öniş, 2015)

Yet, the AKP was still successful in bringing foreign policy decisions back to the civilian government with no military influence. More importantly, the reforms put forth by the government allowed them to alter the structure of the military command and control promotions and dismissals from service. In addition, the AKP also altered Article 35 of Service law no. 211 which removed any legal basis that can be used for further military interventions and coups (Demir & Bingöl, 2018). In

fact, having uncontested control over foreign policy and the degree with which the AKP had control over the military has had many implications in the region. The decision taken pertaining to the Turkish incursion in Syria might not have been taken if the AKP were not confident that they had a firm hold on the armed forces for example.

However, although the AKP were successful in enhancing parliamentary powers over military spending for example, no significant changes were made to improve parliamentary oversight especially in terms of defense policy making. Therefore, while there is increased civilian involvement in defense and security policies, the decisions are still made by a committee comprised of the President, Chief of the Turkish Armed Forces, relevant ministers, the head of the National Intelligence Agency and the advisors of the President, with the parliament playing such a small role that they cannot even revise the committee's decisions (Demir & Bingöl, 2018). In order to have effective and democratic control over the armed forces, not only must both the civilians and the military share a common goal but the mindset of the military must change.

Therefore, while the EU factor was imperative, when accession talks cooled down after 2006, tensions and differences in perspective between the military and the AKP resurfaced. In this case, amending pre-existing laws were not enough, because both parties did not see eye to eye and their mindsets remained unchanged. What the Turkish case could've benefited from was a redefining and narrowing down of the role of the military to protect the Turkish state rather than efforts to exclude the military and push them out to the sidelines (Öniş, 2015).

While the evidence presented in this study does show that Turkey was successful in limiting military influence in politics, the question of whether that has made Turkey more democratic is still up for debate. Insel (2006) argued that the demilitarization of the political and social arenas as well as the depolitization of the military are necessary steps for any path towards democratization (Insel, 2006). However, although civilian control is necessary for democratization, it does not guarantee it. In fact, Diamond 1997 argues that “democracies can become more illiberal, abusive, corrupt, exclusive, narrow, unresponsive and unaccountable – i.e., less democratic” even without military interference (Diamond, 1997). Therefore, it would be interesting to further investigate to what extent these characteristics may surface when there is a conscious attempt being made to minimize and delegitimize military interference, such as in the case of Turkey, although this is outside the purview of this study.

That being said, given the past military dominance in Turkey, the reforms undertaken in the last decade marked a significant transformation in civil military relations in Turkey (Sarigil, 2011), although due to the complexity of the relationships between the civilians and the security forces, we need to keep in mind that even in states that have complete civilian dominance, there is no assurance that decision makers will make good choices or execute them in such a way that results in military success (Bruneau & Trinkunas, 2008).

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