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The Paradox of Turkish Civil Military Relations

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By Richard Lim*

The history of Turkey is one of boundless ambiguities and contradictions. Once the center of the Islamic world, it now craves to be recognized as a secular, Western state. Although it was founded as a free republic, its military has exercised almost-Third World authoritarian power over the civilian leadership. Turkey, geographically, as well as ideologically, has been at the crossroads of the East and the West. Thus, few other countries can claim such a paradoxical mix of republicanism, authoritarianism, Islamism, and secularism.

The contradictions that compose the Turkish state have continued to challenge scholars and defy conventional explanations. In no field of study is this more apparent than in civil-military relations theory. In many ways, civil-military relations strike at the heart of the Turkish paradox. This is because Turkey's military, historically, has played the dominant role in the affairs of government with its unique status as the guardians of the state. For this reason, I have chosen Turkey as a case study with which to apply two relevant theories in civil-military relations.

In the first section, I will provide the context with a brief overview on the history of Turkish civil-military relations. This will involve the history of Turkey and sources of tension between the military and civilian spheres. I will argue that the military possesses a paradoxical role as the authoritarian guardians of a liberal, republican order. In the second section, I will discuss two theories of civil-military relations. First, I will describe Samuel P. Huntington's groundbreaking theory and demonstrate its validity when applied to our case study. Then I will describe James Quinlivan's theory on coup-prevention and, through the same application, describe its inadequacies. In the third section, I will summarize this case study with concluding thoughts.

I. Background: A Brief History of Turkish Civil-Military Relations

Prior to discussing civil-military relations theory, it is important to first define the nature of civil-military relations in Turkey. I will attempt to do so in this section. The state of Turkish civil-military relations poses a unique case

study. Similar to the militaries in other countries, Turkey's has intervened and overthrown the civilian regime multiple times (four in this case) throughout its history.[i] However, what makes Turkey unique is that the military's intervention is not primarily based on pure power politics or military corporate interest. Rather, the military has intervened primarily due to its unique position as the legitimate and widely accepted guardians of the country's revolutionary ideology.[ii] This ideology can be summed up in one word: Kemalism.

Named after Mustafa Kemal (also known as Ataturk), the military leader of the Turkish War of Independence, Kemalism is a conglomeration of modernist values designed to lift Turkey into the 20th century. These values primarily consist of the cherished Western principles of secularism and republicanism, mixed with the authoritarian tendencies of etatism and nationalism.[iii] The combination of contradictory philosophies, between republicanism and authoritarianism and between secularism and a primarily Muslim society, has led to a tug-of-war in which the military has played the central role. The manifestation of these tensions can be scene in the fact that, although the military has intervened four times to topple the government, it always intended and did return power to the civilians.[iv]

The military derived its legitimacy as guardians of Kemalism from two historical circumstances. First, even prior to Kemalism, the military had a primary role in the establishment and preservation of Turkey's predecessor, the Ottoman Empire.[v] A noted scholar has stated that the Ottoman government "had been an Army before it was anything else… in fact, Army and Government were one. War was the external purpose, Government the internal purpose of one institution, composed of one body of men."[vi]

The Ottoman military, or the Yeniceri, as they were known, became accustomed to intervening into the political affairs of the Empire. It has been said that, "the Yeniceris were now engaged in interfering in state affairs or in rebellion and plunder when their demands were not accepted."[vii] Despite the abolition of the Yeniceri in 1826, this tradition continued. The new Ottoman military continued its practice of intervention, this time with the added task of modernizing the empire.[viii]

Indeed, it was the Ottoman military that was the driving force behind the modernist Young Ottoman movement in the 1860s that ultimately led to the proclamation of the first Ottoman Constitution in 1876 and the first Ottoman Parliament in 1877.[ix] Thus, one finds that, even prior to the establishment of the Kemalist state in 1923, Turkish culture was accustomed to hundreds of years of military intervention for the sake of modernization. Indeed, as noted scholar Gerassimos Karabelias writes, "Since the largest part of the Ottoman officer corps had become the nucleus of the Turkish Armed Forces, the tradition, knowledge and experiences from past domestic and external struggle had passed on to the army of the Republic."[x]

Second, Mustafa Kemal's stature as the dominant figure in the establishment of the Turkish state in 1923 and his insistence on maintaining the military's vanguard role in state modernization ensured its legitimacy, to this day, as the guardians of Kemalism. Two scholars have noted, "Ataturk emphasized that the Turkish military was the guardian of the state with its Kemalist tradition."[xi] This effectively gave "the armed forces a preeminent role in society" and the civilian sphere.[xii] While Ataturk was dedicated to the establishment of a modern, western-based republic with a nominal separation between the civilian and military sectors,[xiii] he made certain that most political and state institutions were infiltrated with personnel who had a military background.[xiv] In essence, Ataturk lent his prestige to the military in establishing the officers as the guardians of his legacy.

Ataturk himself wrote, "Whenever the Turkish nation has wanted to stride towards the heights, it has always seen its army… as the permanent leader in the forefront of this march… In times to come, also, its heroic sons will march in the vanguard of the sublime ideals of the Turkish nation."[xv] It has been said that Ataturk's decision to designate the military as the

guardians of the republic came from both his personal sentiment as a career officer himself as well the trust he had in the armed forces as the institution best suited to accomplish his blueprint for Turkey's modernization.[xvi]

Thus we find that the Ottoman military's long history of intervention into civilian politics as well as Ataturk's patronage, the dominant figure of modern Turkey, have secured the military's place as the only legitimate guardians of the Kemalist ideology.[xvii] Although these two factors are inseparable, as Ataturk himself had the benefit of centuries of acceptance of military intervention and modernization, one must not underestimate Ataturk's central role in establishing military prestige and legitimacy in modern Turkey. After all, it was Ataturk who, perhaps counter-intuitively, specifically designated the military, and not the civilian elites, as the guardians of Turkey's republican experiment.

It is important to note that the Turkish system of government features a republican structure and is based on Western notions of liberty. Indeed, the first of the Republic's founding texts located sovereignty "without condition or reservation with the nation," indicated that the Turkish people "direct (their) own destiny," and designated the Grand National Assembly (TGNA) as the sole representative of the people and the executor of both legislative and executive power.[xviii] The first Constitution, ratified in 1924, emphasized liberty and equality, the freedoms of thought, speech, association, and of the press.[xix]

In addition, subsequent post-coup constitutions enhanced the government's Republican features. The 1961 Constitution placed legislative power in the hands of the TGNA, which was divided into a bicameral body, adding to the government's checks and balances, as well as institutionalized the existing multiparty system. [xx] It also created an elections oversight board [xxi] and empowered a Constitutional Court with judicial review.[xxii] After the 1980 coup, the 1982 Constitution further upheld liberal republican principles, such as basic freedoms and the rule of law, and re-designated sovereignty within the TGNA.[xxiii]

Despite this democratic structure and the death of its great benefactor, Ataturk, in 1938, the military has successfully maintained its monopoly as the arbiters of the state's adherence to Kemalism. This is no symbolic function. As noted above, the military has intervened to topple the civilian government in 1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997.[xxiv] Indeed, after the first coup, the 1961 Constitution formally institutionalized the influence of the military on civilian affairs. Article 111 of the 1961 Constitution created the National Security Council (MGK), which soon became the dominant body by which the military influenced civilian leadership.[xxv] After the 1980 coup, the 1983 Law on National Security gave the MGK the power to determine "the necessary measures preserving constitutional order, providing for national unity and integrity, orienting the Turkish Nation around the national ideals and values by uniting around Kemalist Thought (and) Ataturk's Principles and Reforms."[xxvi]

Thus, although the military continued to return power to the civilian leadership and reinstitute republican institutions after each successive coup, its power and influence over civilian affairs became more firmly entrenched and institutionalized. As one officer candidate explained, "We are opposed to anybody, no matter whether they are there by the grace of the ballot box or the votes of the National Assembly, who attempts to violate Ataturk's principles. We have a right to act to this end in the interests of our people, and for their protection."[xxvii]

As a result of the military's pervasive influence, the facts reveal that Turkey's republican institutions and ideals conceal its authoritarian realities. Since 1923, Kurds and conservative Muslims have continuously suffered oppression and disenfranchisement.[xxviii] The first twenty-seven years of the Republic saw the domination of one party – the Republican People's Party. [xxix] The Law on the Maintenance of Order of 1925 gave the revolutionary government the power to suppress political dissent.[xxx] Opposition parties, such as the Progressive Republican Party, were banned, and their leaders were

arrested and tried.[xxxi] Statute 5816 is evidence of both the reverence Turks hold for Ataturk as well as the authoritarian nature of the regime, as it prohibits the use of Ataturk's name in vain, punishable by up to three years in prison.[xxxii] After the 1971 coup, various freedoms of expression, conscience, and thought were limited to government-approved forms of political opposition and various parties were continually banned.[xxxiii]

Even into the 1980s and late 1990s, the political system continued to exhibit authoritarian characteristics that were rigged to favor senior military officers.[xxxiv] The 1982 Constitution, while ostensibly permitting the development of political parties, actually restricted the right of parties to advocate policies that "conflict with the indivisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation, human rights, national sovereignty, and the principles of the democratic and secular republic."[xxxv] The military broadly interpreted these statutes in order to suppress political opponents, specifically those advocating Kurdish and Islamic causes.[xxxvi]

Islamism has continuously been a source of tension for the military regime. The 1960, 1971,[xxxvii] and 1997 coups[xxxviii] each involved the military overthrow of the civilian government for fear of excessive Islamic influence. The history of Islam in modern Turkey is complex. In fact, Article 2 of the 1924 Constitution declared Islam to be the religion of the state,[xxxix] but was subsequently dropped in 1928 and replaced with "republicanism, nationalism, populism, etatism, secularism, and revolutionism" as the pillars of Turkey's political system.[xl] It can be inferred from this that Kemalists only intended to appease Muslim conservatives and did not intend for the state to be built on anything less than secular grounds.

Additionally, the military as well as civilian elites have, at times, recognized the positive benefits of Islam and exploited it for their own purposes. Kemal encouraged religious leaders to mobilize the masses against the Ottoman Sultan, while the 1980 coup saw the military encourage the building of mosques and Islamic education in order to counter the rise of leftist/communist influence.[xli] The rise of Islamic influence could be tolerated, and even benefit the state, so long as the military did not perceive a threat to Kemalist philosophy. The government's pragmatic, and at times tolerant, relationship with Islamism has been described as the "double discourse of the Turkish state."[xlii]

Despite this rapprochement, events in the 1990s proved that the military was still willing to employ heavy-handed measures in its role as state guardian. This was demonstrated by the military's crackdown on the Islamic Welfare Party, or Refah, in 1997. Refah had been the unintended beneficiary of the 1980s government-sponsorship of Islamism and quickly exploited Turkey's quasi-democratic institutions in order to promote its vision of an Islamic society.[xliii]

Refah advocated dramatic departures in Turkish domestic and foreign policies. It repudiated Turkey's traditionally Western and American-centered foreign policy, describing the relationship as one of subjugation, in favor of closer ties to Muslim nations.[xliv] Refah sought to reverse years of anti-Kurdish policies in favor of utilizing Islam to encourage solidarity with the Kurds.[xlv] When Refah shocked the world and took power in 1996, these policies came in direct conflict with the military elites. Furthermore, Refah sought to reform and reduce the power of the military and the MGK.[xlvi] Most disconcerting for the military was Refah's claim to be the true guardians of Kemalism, skewing Ataturk's own words in order to portray themselves as the true heirs to the revolution.[xlvii]

Refah's historical creativity proved to be the last straw for the Turkish military. In January 1998, the military took action, banning Refah and its leaders, Necmettin Erbakan and Recep Tayyip Erdogan, from participating in politics.[xlviii] The Ministry of the Interior began investigating and punishing thousands of government officials for Islamic activity and Qur'an schools fell under strict scrutiny by the government.[xlix] Thus, despite years of tolerance for Islamism, the military was still willing to defend its status as guardians of Kemalism with force when necessary.

Only four years later, another Islamic party would take power, this time ushering unprecedented changes to the status of the Turkish military. In November 2002 the Adalet ve Kalkinma (AK) Party gained power and subsequently passed seven comprehensive pieces of legislation and several constitutional amendments that expanded personal freedoms, banned the death penalty, removed restrictions on the development of political parties, and freed numerous political prisoners.[l]

Perhaps most striking has been the AK Party's success at reducing the power of the MGK and, therefore, the military as a whole. Military officials were removed from numerous civilian positions and the number of military officers in the MGK was reduced to one.[li] What is most remarkable is that, by and large, the military accepted these changes. Scholar Steven A. Cook discusses the military's unlikely acquiescence, citing a historically unique set of circumstances centering around Turkey's desire to enter into the European Union and its effect on moderating Islamic parties, and the consistency between the expansion of liberty and the military's historical role as guardians of republicanism.[lii]

The most recent events not withstanding, it is clear that Turkey presents a unique case study for the field of civil-military relations. Here, we find a rare of example of the military specifically designated as the guardians of non-military, republican ideals. As a result, the Turkish military, paradoxically, has not hesitated to use authoritarian means for republican ends, resorting to the use of force internally against all elements that it deems a threat to the nation's principles. Not even Islam, the predominant religion of the people, is immune to military intervention. It is this paradox that defines Turkish civil-military relations. The contradictory role of the military, as well as the important role of Islamism in Turkish society, will form the framework with which we can apply theories of civil-military relations. This we will do in the next section.

II. Civil Military Relations Theory

A. Huntington's Theory

The study of civil-military relations can, as scholar Peter Feaver declared, be reduced to a simple question: how do you create a military strong enough to do anything the civilians ask them to do with a military subordinate enough to do only what the civilians authorize them to do? [liii] This is a dilemma that has, in one form or another, been inherent in the development of all states. From ancient times to the modern day, states have grappled with the problem of how to properly empower its military with coercive force for the sake of its defense, and yet prevent that military from turning on the state itself. To put it in the pithiest of phrases, how do you guard the guardians?

The reason I have selected this issue is because I believe that the civil-military dilemma strikes at the heart of the security and self-preservation of the state. States that fail to adequately confront this issue put themselves at risk from both external and internal overthrow. Additionally, the Middle East, throughout the twentieth century, has been fertile ground for violent military coups. From 1949 to 1981, fifty-five coups were attempted in Arab states, half of which resulted in the successful overthrow of the existing regime.[liv] Each coup situation, of course, varies in that the overthrow could have involved either a civilian or military uprising overthrowing either a civilian or military government. Some coups were inspired by ideology, oppression, modernization, or nationalism.

The Turkish case, as stated earlier, is unique in that the Constitution and precedent authorizes such coups as a feature of Turkish politics. The threat of military coup in Turkey, authoritarian as it is, paradoxically serves as a republican check and balance in the same philosophical manner that the American President's veto power serves to check the power of the American Congress. The question, however, remains, who guards the guardians? Can civil-military relations theory help us explain why Turkey has so often fallen victim to coercive military intervention?

Before we seek to answer this question, it is important to delve into the subject of civil-military relations theory further in order to increase our understanding of Turkey's unique situation. The most logical starting point for such a discussion, perhaps, begins with the universally accepted founding father of civil-military relations studies, Samuel P. Huntington. As Feaver writes, Huntington's *The Soldier and the State* "has had the greatest and most lasting influence… that even modern analyses of civil-military relations feel obliged to begin with a reference to Huntington's theory."[lv] Indeed, Huntington's concept of "professionalism" as the basis for the subject set the boundaries within which future scholars would subsequently follow.

In *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington attempts to answer the age-old dilemma of civil-military relations with an ambitiously simple formula. In doing so, Huntington focuses his theoretical framework on finding the optimal relationship between the civilian and military leadership that best leads to complete civilian control. According to Huntington, this is achieved with what he calls objective civilian control.

The key to understanding objective civilian control depends on understanding the military mind. Huntington describes the military mind as essentially conservative, realist, pessimistic, and Hobbesian.[lvi] The military mind, like Hobbes, believes that man is inherently selfish and weak. Thus, the military sees the world as a conflict between competing interests.[lvii] Due to the nasty and brutish nature of this world, the military mind presupposes the permanency of insecurity and the inevitability of war. War, while ostensibly the result of conflicting policies, is more deeply rooted in human nature and man's selfish desires.[lviii]

The military believes that abolishing war is impossible and thus is suspicious of treaties or forms of soft power such as diplomacy and economic trade.[lix] Since hard power is the only effective means of influence in this world, the military mind believes in a maximum commitment of resources towards increasing military strength.[lx] The existence of the state depends upon a national effort in a massive military budget and the building of its armed forces and weaponry.

This same conservatism, however, leads the military to fear war. The same cynicism that favors preparedness for war also leads the military to never feel prepared. Thus, the military mind rarely favors war or military action and opposes reckless, aggressive, belligerent action.[lxi] In part, this may be due to the military's vested interest in preserving itself, as war can damage the armed forces. More broadly, however, this reflects the overall pessimistic nature of the military.

This conservative mindset can create tension with the civilian elites. In liberal democratic states, this tension is at its most salient. Whereas liberalism promotes equality and liberty, the military mind espouses order and hierarchy. Whereas liberalism promotes individualism, the military mind espouses communalism and the strength of the collective.[lxii] Most importantly, the military mind laments the phenomenon of civilian warmongering.[lxiii] Whereas other professions may glorify war, only the military understands and has experienced its realities and horrors.

This tension is also rooted in the difference in the fundamental nature between the military officer and the civilian leader. Huntington spells this out plainly when he states, "The professional man who pursues the values of professional competence and obedience and the political man who pursues power as an end of itself are two distinct types…. The tension between the two, consequently, can never be removed; it can only be ordered so as to make it more or less endurable."[lxiv] Also, as Huntington writes, professionalization of the military means that the statesman and the officer cannot be the same person, due to the specialized nature required for military service.[lxv] According to Huntington, tension between civilian and military elites is inevitable. The question remains, what is the best arrangement that maximizes civilian control?

Now we can discuss what Huntington meant by

objective civilian control. This type of control is achieved when the civilians, in effect, leave the military alone.[lxvi] Although counter-intuitive at first glance (the way to control the military is to not control it?), Huntington explains that the primary objective control mechanism is the "recognition of (an) autonomous military professionalism," or respect for the independent military sphere of action.[lxvii] Whereas the civilian and military sectors remain ideologically at odds with each other, keeping both separate has multiple positive implications. This frees up the military to enhance, what Huntington describes, its professionalism. Rather than be bogged down by ideologies that conflict with its conservative ideology, the military is free to increase its capacity for war fighting. The less a state interferes with the military, the more it can focus on its central mission: the management of violence.[lxviii]

Thus, by keeping military free of civilian intervention and autonomous, Huntington argues, the military is rendered politically neutral and, thus, will focus exclusively on the military professional, and not on political matters. The military will not be tempted by the whims of political power. This results in its voluntary subordination to civilian rule. As Huntington writes, "A highly professional officer corps stands ready to carry out the wishes of any civilian group which secures legitimate authority within the state."[lxix] According to Huntington, if only the civilians would get out of the way, the military will obey them. In other words, the best way to control the military is to not control it. This, in sum, is what Huntington describes as objective civilian control.

Huntington further describes the role of ideology and its implications for objective civilian control. According to Huntington, the equilibrium of objective civilian control is established when the ideology of a society is favorable to the military or, in other words, is conservative. Otherwise, society will object to dedicating its resources to an institution that does not share its values. This will cause the military to trade in some of its professionalism in order to attain power, thereby upsetting the equilibrium of objective civilian control.[lxx] A conservative society would have no ideological barriers in providing the military the autonomy and all the tools that are necessary for its development as a professional force. Liberal, republican society, however, is at odds with the military's claim to a superior level of the state's resources. Liberal society, with its dedication to equality and liberty, objects to the basic philosophy of the military mind: order, hierarchy, communalism.

What results, as Huntington argues, are two situations. When the external threat is low, liberal ideology produces the "extirpation" pattern of civil-military relations: the virtual elimination of military forces. When the external threat is high, liberal ideology produces the "transmutation" pattern, in which the military is refashioned in accordance with liberalism so that the military begins to lose its conservative characteristics.[lxxi]

In doing so, however, the military loses its autonomy and war-fighting capability and, thus, the balance of objective civilian control is broken. The military may even act with force to defend its interests before it is too late and is stripped of its power. Thus, Huntington believes that the ideology of a society is crucial in securing military professionalism and, therefore, establishing objective civilian control. In order to achieve this control, society must adopt the conservative ideology of the military.

I would like to discuss two caveats to Huntington's thesis. First, Huntington's work is inseparable from its immediate political context: the Cold War. It is clear that Huntington was chiefly concerned with the adequacy of the American response to the threat of Soviet Communism.[lxxii] Thus, when Huntington discusses liberalism, he is talking about traditional American values of individualism, equality, and liberty. Huntington's fear was that, while the threat of the Cold War called upon the United States to develop a permanent military institution (Eisenhower's "military industrial complex") to face the Soviet threat, American liberalism would not allow the military the autonomy to professionalize itself. Indeed, Huntington declared that America's embrace of its liberal values is "the gravest domestic threat to American

military security."[lxxiii] Thus, Huntington's work takes place within an American context.

Second, Huntington, like much of civil-military relations, is focused specifically on civil and military elites. Recent theoretical literature that focus on the diversity of interests that exist within an organization are often ignored by civil-military relations, which sees civil and military elites acting as sovereign entities for their own self-interest.

B. Applying Huntington to Our Case Study

Despite these caveats, I believe that Huntington's work provides a compelling framework with which to apply our case study of Turkey. In doing so, we can test the strengths and weaknesses of Huntington's theory. There are several aspects of Turkish civil-military relations that complicate this application. First, Huntington's assumes that all militaries subscribe to conservative ideology. Huntington himself argues that the distinguishing feature of any profession, including that of the military, is that, regardless of culture or time period, they all share a common skill and ideology. In the case of the military, the common skill is the management of violence and the ideology is conservative. [lxxiv]

Turkey's military ideology is much more complex. As noted earlier, the Turkish military was invested as the chief guardians of the Kemalist ideology. Thus, the military's primary role is to preserve the nation's ideals of "republicanism, nationalism, populism," etc. [lxxv] Thus, the Turkish model presents a departure from Huntington's theory. Unlike Huntington's model, where liberal American values clashed directly with the American military's conservatism, in Turkey the military is actually invested as the chief guardians of the state's liberal ideology. Thus, the founders of Turkey designed for military and societal ideology to be one in the same. In such a situation, we would find no contradiction between the ideologies of both state institutions. The military would presumably be allowed to professionalize, without any unnecessary meddling from the civilian leadership, and the military would easily obtain the resources it needs to meet its perceived threats.

There is, of course, a wrinkle in this idyllic situation. The influence of Islam has had a profound influence Turkish society since the founding era and, as noted above, posed a direct challenge to Turkish values of secularism and republicanism. As we have seen, Islamist influence has come in repeating historical waves, and the military has sometimes utilized religious fervor for its own benefit. Time and again, however, the military has acted, as recently as 1997, to overthrow Islamist-influenced governments when it has perceived religious fervor as a threat to the ideals of the Republic. We have also noted earlier that three of the four coups in Turkish history involved the military's fear of excessive Islamist influence.

This pattern serves to confirm Huntington's thesis, but with slight modifications. Perhaps Huntington was too eager to assume that all militaries share the same characteristics and ideologies. The Turkish military poses a challenge to this thesis, in that it is possible to modify the military's ideology to incorporate the broader values of society. However, when it comes to Huntington's broader thesis, that a clash of ideologies between the military and civilian elites will ultimately lead to the loss of professionalism and, thus, a loss of objective civilian control, it appears that his analysis is astute. Indeed, the three coups in suppression of the rising tide of Islamism is evidence of this.

What are we to make of the recent developments in Turkey? Does the rise of the Islamic AK party and the military's acquiescence to this development as well the reduction of its power pose a challenge to Huntington's thesis? Why has the Turkish military so willingly accepted its own subjugation at the hands of Islamic elites? The answer may lie in the fact that, as noted earlier, the outside influences of the European Union have pushed the Islamic party closer to the center on a number of issues.

Unlike the Refah party, which the military overthrew, AK has re-oriented its foreign policy towards the West, in order to remain consistent with the military's preferred policy.[lxxvi] Additionally, the Islamists have pledged to continue the military's modernization agenda.[lxxvii] These concessions have placated the Turkish military establishment. So long as the military does not feel that Kemalism is threatened, it will continue to permit an Islamist regime. Of course, it remains to be seen whether this situation will continue.

Until then, Huntington's theory remains a valid explanatory framework for Turkish civil-military relations. Although Huntington's premise that all militaries share the same values is questionable, his analysis of competing ideologies between the civilian and military elites remains astute. In that sense, Huntington's theory serves to explain that the class of philosophies between Turkey's military and civilian spheres serves as a driving force in the loss of objective civilian control.

C. Quinlivan's Coup-Prevention Theory

Now that we have validated Huntington's thesis on the role of ideology to explain the frequency of coups in Turkey, I now turn to structural theory to explain why the Turkish civilian elites have failed to prevent military coups. James Quinlivan's work, "Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East," provides us with a framework to analyze our Turkish case study. Quinlivan focuses exclusively on Middle East states that have successfully transitioned from weak to strong civilian control, thereby reducing the internal threat of military coups.

Through his analysis, Quinlivan identifies four structural elements of the political-military relationship that help insulate civilian governments from the threat of military intervention: 1) the exploitation of family, ethnic, and religious loyalties; 2) the creation of parallel militaries that counterbalance the regular military forces; 3) the establishment of security agencies that watch everyone including other security agencies; and 4) the encouragement of expertness in the regular military.[lxxviii] According to Quinlivan's thesis, civilian governments that adequately perform these four tasks will successfully insulate themselves from military coups. Failure to do so could result in the type of coups that occurred in Turkey. Does Quinlivan's analysis apply to our Turkish case study?

The Exploitation of Special Loyalties

Quinlivan discusses the necessity of building communities of trust and suppressing those groups that cannot be trusted. This determines whether the civilian regime can maintain the security and military units to control the entire population. Quinlivan then offers a wide range of the military personnel per capita needed to secure the population. This ranged anywhere from 2 uniformed police officers per 1,000 of the population (as in the case of the United States) to as many as 12 per 1,000 (as needed in Syria).[lxxix]

As noted earlier, the Turks have continuously implemented policies that have systematically oppressed and disenfranchised both Kurds and conservative Islamists.[lxxx] Additionally, as Cook writes, the military has been careful, through the invoking of its status as guardians of Kemalism, to cultivate a sense of trust with the majority of the Turkish population.[lxxxi] According to scholar Gerassimos Karabelias, the civilian government, on the other hand, has failed to attain this same status.[lxxxii] While the military is seen as the trustees of the nation's highest ideals, politicians are seen as selfish opportunists who "give greater priority in building their own image and increasing their own power, (rather than) concentrating their efforts in finding a solution to the country's major economic, political, and social problems.[lxxxiii]

Additionally, Turkey's military appears to have met Quinlivan's requirement of a high military personnel per capita ratio. Throughout Turkey's history, this parameter has ranged from 8.5 to 14 military personnel per 1,000 Turkish citizens, exceeding Syria's total.[lxxxiv] This, however, is negligible considering that the military held final veto power throughout Turkish history. The elite officers, not the civilians, held the true loyalty of the military and the co-

untry. Thus, one finds that the Turkish civilian regimes have consistently failed to satisfy a crucial element of coup proofing in Quinlivan's criteria.

The Creation of Parallel Militaries

Quinlivan explains that parallel militaries that are bound to the regime by special loyalties and social relations are necessary to counter and deter any disloyal forces and protect the regime. [lxxxv] This is a parallel military that is less a paramilitary force and more akin to a regular army unit, perhaps similar to ground combat forces. Such a force could potentially engage the regular military and would deter coup plotters in any balance-of-power calculation. Quinlivan also discusses that a portion of this parallel military would be dedicated to the physical protection of the ruler from assassination plots. [lxxxvi]

As noted earlier, the MGK is, in effect, the highest military body in the nation.[lxxxvii] Centralized military authority flows from the MGK to the rest of the Turkish armed forces. As such, throughout its history, the civilian government has been unable to create any parallel military to defend itself from the military at-large. In fact, only in 2004 was the power of the MGK reduced with respect to the civilian government. [lxxxviii] Prior to this, the MGK had the full loyalty of the military bureaucracy and apparatus. This is evident by the ease with which the military has conducted four coups, the most recent of which occurred in 1997. Thus, here too Turkey's civilians, historically, have failed to satisfy another one of Quinlivan's crucial criteria.

The Establishment of Security Agencies That Watch Everyone, Including Other Security Agencies

Here, Quinlivan asserts that multiple security services are necessary to hold each other accountable. This will give incentive to the security services to remain active and loyal. [lxxxix] In a sense, this creates competition, in which a security services "market" keeps the services alert and ready to suppress any indication of disloyalty from the population at-large. In such a market, it is the government that is the primary customer. Without this competition, a single security agency would grow disillusioned with the government's heavy-handed policies and would easily be bribed into disloyalty.

From 1926 to 1965, the main intelligence agency in Turkey was the National Security Service.[xc] After 1965, it was renamed the National Intelligence Organization (MİT).[xci] This intelligence service had a military background and was initially staffed by officers.[xcii] This, however, would change. The percentage of military officers in the MİT would decrease from to 35% in 1990 to 4.5% today.[xciii] Civilians have gradually increased its authority over the MİT. In fact, the Service was formally placed under the charge of the civilians in 1992.[xciv]

The MİT, however, is not the only Turkish security service. An overlapping of various counter-terrorism, police, and gendarmerie intelligence units exists in Turkey. [xcv] In fact, historically, there has been a long history of competing intelligence agencies and a failure to share information. According to Ertuğrul Güven, former deputy undersecretary of MİT, "Due to the absence of coordination, Turkish institutions in charge of gathering intelligence are jealous of each other. Thus, they refrain from sharing information that they have been gathering among themselves." [xcvi] Quinlivan is perceptive when he describes the jealousy effect that occurs with multiple competing intelligence agencies.

The problem is that, for most of Turkey's history, these overlapping intelligence agencies were not under the Turkish civilian regimes' authority. Until 1992, it could not be said that the civilian government had formal control of the intelligence units. Thus, the civilian regimes in Turkey were not able to meet Quinlivan's criterion. There may be, however, a correlation between the civilianization of the MİT and the gradual reduction of the military's authority with the rise of AK in 2002. Although the military successfully conducted a coup in 1997 after the civilianization of the MİT, it has since refrained. Quinlivan's analysis of the importance of

overlapping agencies may explain partly the military's reluctance to initiate a coup since 1997.

The Encouragement of Expertness in the Regular Army

Finally, Quinlivan asserts that the increase of "expertness" in the military through the creation of military academies will help to deter the military from initiating coup attempts. [xcvii] What Quinlivan means is that the inculcation of professional values will imbue the military with a sense of professionalism that will deter it from undertaking the risks of a coup. This argument harkens back to Huntington's argument for professionalism and the conservative nature of the "military mind."

In one sense, the military was indoctrinated with the idea that it is an institution wholly separate and distinct from the rest of society. "Always bear in mind," said an instructor of the Military Academy to the cadets, "that you are superior to everyone and everything, and that you are trained to have superior knowledge and superior qualities…. As an officer of the Turkish Army, you are different from your friends in the civy street."[xcviii] In this way, the Turkish military academy has bred its officers to believe themselves separate from civilians, conducive to Huntington's idea of "leaving the military alone."

This criterion, however, is difficult to reconcile with the fact that the military has not been inculcated with Huntingtonian notions of professionalism. Huntington believed that "leaving the military alone," would allow it to develop its professionalism in terms of its chief task: the management of violence. [xcix] Military professionalism consists of this task and this task alone. In the case of the Turkey however, we find that the military has been tasked with many duties above and beyond the management of violence. Ataturk assigned the military as the nation's primary agent of modernization. [c]

Given that the Turkish military has been designed to tackle state building, rather than purely focusing on the management of violence, it fails to meet Huntington's criteria for military professionalism. This situation leads to a loss of objective military control, as we determined earlier. Thus, it is difficult to say that Turkey, according to Quinlivan's definition, developed a sense of "expertness" in its military. Therefore, this variable is inapplicable for our Turkish case study. This is not to say that Quinlivan's analysis regarding "expertness" is faulty. It suffices to say that Quinlivan's study perhaps should be expanded to include analysis of militaries with a lower degree of "expertness".

D. Coup-Prevention: Theory vs. Reality

Quinlivan's analysis provides a good starting point for analyzing the factors that have contributed to the four coups in Turkish history. He essentially provides four independent variables: special loyalties, parallel militaries, overlapping security agencies, and military "expertness." Our dependent variable is the frequency of coups. These variables are insightful and it appears that the Turkish civilian regimes' failures to secure any of these four variables played a key role in preventing the four coups that have taken place since 1923.

At the same time, we must recognize the limitations of our case study. First, given the unique status of the Turkish military as the de facto guardians of the state, it was never really possible for the civilian elites to secure any of Quinlivan's criteria. Additionally, it is difficult to confirm Quinlivan's theory because his hypothetical scenario only applies for states that have secured his criteria and, thus, have prevented coups. His thesis does not speak to situations where none of the criteria have been secured. In other words, Quinlivan is saying that if a state accomplishes all four, there will be no coup. He is not saying that if a state does not accomplish all four there will be a coup. Thus, Quinlivan provides an effective framework to explain Turkey's coup-prone history, but remains inconclusive. Further study is necessary to expand Quinlivan's thesis to those states that have not met his criteria.

III. Conclusion

When viewing the contradictions within the Turkish state, one finds two primary sources of in-

herent tension. First, the military, the most anti-democratic and coercive institution of the state, is paradoxically tasked with the duty of defending the nation's highest republican ideals. Second, the nation that formerly served as the center of the Muslim world has since attempted to reconcile its Islamic heritage with its desire to become a Western, modern state. Utilizing Huntington's theory, we find that so long as these two paradoxes continue, of military authoritarianism vs. modern republicanism, and of secularism vs. Islamism, Turkey will continue to find objective civilian control elusive.

Notes

* Richard Lim is a Graduate of Syracuse University - the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs' Public Administration program.

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