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To cite this article: Uluçakar, Mustafa and Çağlar, Ali, “An Analysis of Two Different Models of Civil-Military Relations: The Case of Turkey”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Volume 14, No. 55, 2017, pp. 41-57.

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An Analysis of Two Different Models of Civil-Military Relations: The Case of Turkey

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes Turkish civil-military relations with the help of two different models of civil-military relations (separation and concordance) in order to bring a new perspective to the analysis of civil-military relations. The article begins with a short review of the theoretical framework of the separation and concordance models, followed by a brief history of four military interventions that occurred in Turkey in 1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997. The article will then analyze Turkish civil-military relations through the separation and concordance models in an attempt to decide which model would be more appropriate to explain the Turkish case. It reaches the conclusion that the concordance model is more appropriate than the separation model to serve that purpose. However, the concordance model has some methodological weaknesses, requiring modification in order to properly analyze the case of Turkey.

Keywords: Civil-Military Relations, Military Guardianship, Separation Model, Concordance Model, Turkish Civil-Military Relations.

İki Farklı Sivil-Asker İlişkileri Modelinin Analizi: Türkiye Örneği

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Türk sivil-asker ilişkilerini iki farklı modelin (ayırma modeli ve mutabakat modeli) yardımıyla incelemeyi ve bu suretle sivil-asker ilişkileri analizine yeni bir perspektif kazandırmayı amaçlamıştır. İlk önce, ayırma ve mutabakat modellerinin kısaca gözden geçirildiği bir teorik çerçeveye yer verilmiştir. İkinci olarak, Türkiye'deki belli başlı dört askeri müdahalenin (1960, 1971, 1980 ve 1997) kısa bir özetinin yer aldığı tarihçe bölümü sunulmuştur. Sonrasında da, Türk sivil-asker ilişkileri, ayırma ve mutabakat modelleri yardımıyla analiz edilmiş ve hangi modelin Türkiye örneğine daha uygun olduğu tartışılmıştır. Yapılan analizde, mutabakat modelinin Türkiye'deki sivil-asker ilişkilerini açıklamak için daha uygun olduğu, ancak Türkiye örneği dikkate alındığında, bazı metodolojik zayıflıklara sahip olduğu ve tadil edilmesi gerektiği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sivil-Asker İlişkileri, Askeri Vesayet, Ayırma Modeli, Mutabakat Modeli, Türk Sivil-Asker İlişkileri.

Introduction

The aim of this article is to analyze Turkish civil-military relations with the help of two different models of civil-military relations (separation and concordance models) by looking at the history of civil-military relations in Turkey in order to bring a new perspective to the analysis of civil-military relations. To achieve this aim, the study begins with a short review of separation and concordance models. This is followed by a brief history of four major military interventions that occurred in Turkey in 1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997.¹ Later, an analysis is made, with the help of theoretical arguments and historical findings, to determine which model is better suited to explain what happened and what will happen in the Turkish case. The main reason for selecting these two models is to compare the “separation model,”² which sets the paradigm and is normally idealized as the best model for democratic civilian control of the armed forces, with a relatively new and highly neglected one, the “concordance model,”³ in the Turkish case. Samuel P. Huntington identifies two ways to subordinate the military to the political rule, both of which involve separation (separate institutional roles for the political institutions and the military institutions): “subjective” or “objective” civilian control. For that reason, Huntingtonian approaches to civilian political control are called the “separation model”. Many scholars such as Moritz Janowitz, Eric Nordlinger, Peter Feaver, Michael Desch, Eliot Cohen and Rebecca L. Schiff have developed other models to explain the essence of civil-military relations but their models -except that of Schiff- did not present a direct, new theoretical challenge to the dominant Huntingtonian paradigms.

The idea of separation was originally developed by Huntington⁴ and is idealized as the standard model, not only for civil-military relations in general, but also for Turkish civil-military relations in particular. Huntingtonian-based approaches have also become the standard in professional and academic discourse. Unlike the idea of separation, a high level of integration between the military and other parts of society, including political institutions, was proposed by Rebecca L. Schiff. Her model relies on a consensus amongst the three social partners (i.e. the military, the political elite, and the citizenry) with respect to four indicators: the social composition of the officer corps, the political decision-making process, the recruitment method, and the military style. She further notes that with respect to these indicators, general agreement amongst the partners diminishes the likelihood of military interventions.⁵

Turkey has experienced several rapid institutional and legal changes⁶ parallel to the European Union (EU) harmonization process, which were aimed at preventing the Turkish Armed Forces from intervening in politics and bringing the Turkish model of civil-military relations into alignment with European standards. All these changes, prescribed by the Huntingtonian notion of separation in order to curb the military interventions, created an understanding that Turkey has most likely progressed

1 Three failed coup attempts on 22 February 1962, 21 May 1963 and 15 July 2016, are not deeply covered within the context of this study.

2 For further information, see Samuel P. Huntington, *Asker ve Devlet*, Ankara, Türk Demokrasi Vakfı Yayınları, 1993, p.80-82.

3 For further information see, Rebecca L. Schiff, “Civil Military Relations Reconsidered: A Theory of Concordance”, *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol.22, No.1, 1995, p.7.

4 His notion of separation is based on the premise that militaries need to remain physically and ideologically separated from political institutions as it occurs in the United States.

5 Rebecca L. Schiff, *The Military and Domestic Politics: A Concordance Theory of Civil-Military Relations*, New York, Routledge, 2009, p.32-34.

6 They will be explained in the section related to the historical background of coups in Turkey.

beyond the era of coups and is perceived by some as an EU-backed ‘paradigmatic shift’⁷ to change the traditional role of the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) in domestic and foreign politics. There were eras in the past, however, of similar institutional and legal changes in civil-military relations in Turkey, but these changes did not prevent military interventions. With this in mind, Ersel Aydınlı poses three important questions regarding changes made as bound to the Huntingtonian notion of separation: 1) Have these democratic changes also included an irreversible, structural change for the Turkish military’s political role? 2) Are the Turks re-conceptualizing their special bond with the armed forces? 3) Is the military leadership ready to go along with this paradigm shift?⁸ As indicated by the concerns expressed by him, the Huntingtonian notion of separation will be open to debate in terms of changing the traditional role of the TAF in domestic and foreign politics. It is, therefore, unclear whether the Huntingtonian model of separation will work in the current and/or future phase of the Turkish civil-military relations.

There has been a certain advance in literature related to Turkish civil-military relations. Almost all of the studies, however, seem to be inspired, implicitly or explicitly, by the Huntingtonian paradigms. The Huntingtonian way of thinking has provided an analytical foundation to explain civil-military relations for more than 50 years. On the other hand, Schiff’s model of civil-military relations has been pretty much neglected, especially within the context of Turkish civil-military relations. It seems that the explanations/analyses brought by scholars inspired by Huntingtonian paradigms (such as Janowitz, Nordlinger, Feaver, Desch, and Cohen) either did not work or they were not satisfactory, so there remains a need to find a better tool to explain Turkish civil-military relations. Schiff’s concordance model may be a better tool, not only to explain Turkish civil-military relations, but also to fill the gap in the literature. Therefore, analyzing Turkish civil-military relations with the help of these two different models of civil-military relations (separation and concordance models) may bring a new perspective to the analysis of civil-military relations in Turkey. The following section deals with a short review of theoretical framework of separation and concordance models.

Theoretical Framework: Separation and Concordance Models of Civil–Military Relations

Theories of democratic civil–military relations provide analytical tools that help to understand, to explain, and to make predictions about four interrelated dimensions of civil–military relations. The first dimension is concerned with direct interventions in politics. The second one is about the role and functions of the armed forces in the process of shaping defense policies. The third dimension involves the effect of the armed forces on decisions requiring international and domestic force usage. The fourth one is related to the effects of the armed forces on the mindset and social consciousness of the officer corps through education and culture.⁹

The separation model argues for the separation of the military, both physically and ideologically, from political institutions as it occurs in the United States. The concordance between civil-military elites and the separation of military from the political institutions are the “preconditions” for restricting

7 Ersel Aydınlı, “A Paradigmatic Shift for the Turkish General and an End to the Coup Era in Turkey”, *The Middle East Journal*, Vol.63, No.4, 2009, p.581-596.

8 *Ibid.*, p.581.

9 Mustafa Uluçakar, *Türkiye’de Sivil-Asker İlişkileri ve Ordunun Demokratik Kontrolü*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Hacettepe University, Institute of Social Sciences, Ankara, 2013, p.20.

the military from intervening in the civilian sphere. In other words, domestic military intervention is more likely if civilian institutions are too weak to control the armed forces. According to Huntington, in order to achieve effective civilian control, militaries should be subordinated to the elected political authority and remain physically and ideologically separated from political institutions. Objective and subjective civilian control are the two different ways to subordinate the military to the political rule.¹⁰

In his famous work, *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington asserted that “objective civilian control” is the best model for preventing occurrences of military intervention. Objective control simply means to turn the military into a tool of the state by allowing the military a certain amount of autonomy in exchange for non-intervention in the political arena. Under the premise of objective civilian control, Huntington treated politics and military service as two different and unbounded areas of expertise. According to this reasoning, officers who have received an inadequate education in politics should not involve themselves in this realm. For the same reason, politicians should avoid addressing issues that require military expertise.¹¹ Objective control involves the following: 1) A high level of military professionalism and recognition by military officers of the limits of their professional competence, 2) the effective subordination of the military to the civilian political leaders who make the basic decisions on foreign and military policy, 3) the recognition and acceptance by that leadership of an area of professional competence and autonomy for the military, and 4) the minimization of military intervention in politics and of political intervention by the military as a result.¹² Objective control obviously goes beyond being the crux of the current paradigm developed by Huntington. It is also the cornerstone of Western thinking with regard to reform in the security sector. Subjective civilian control relies on legal or institutional mechanisms to reduce military power. It achieves its goal by civilianizing the military to make it a mirror of the state. In this form of control, the military is directed to conduct a myriad of operations that would normally be civilian responsibilities.

Huntington also takes the notion of military professionalism to be at the heart of the “objective civilian control” of the military. Military professionalism, in his account, provides a proper tool to not only have a strong military, but also to keep it out of political matters, thereby ensuring both civilian control and military effectiveness. According to his line of reasoning, preventing the military from intervening in politics requires professionalism¹³ in the military. Professional supremacy (he calls it “autonomy”) is the best way to secure overall military subordination to civilians. He then argues that through separation, the military is able to have autonomy in military matters while pursuing the political goals set by the political authority and in carrying out their orders. For example, the civilians do not give orders to the military about the amount of the assets and the number of soldiers required in an operation, as military professionals do while the military has no right to question their subordination to the civilians.¹⁴

As Schiff observes, the separation model is dominated by a dichotomous approach that assumes power relations between the military and the political elites. It does not consider the citizenry, but relies instead on political institutions as the main “civil” component of analysis. Although the relationship between

10 Huntington, *Asker ve Devlet*, p.80-82.

11 Ibid., p.83-85.

12 Samuel P. Huntington, “Reforming Civil–Military Relations”, Larry Diamond & Marc F. Plattner (eds.), *Civil–Military Relations and Democracy*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p.3-4.

13 The factors, characterizing military professionalism include a small but effective force posture, qualified training systems, the capability to use high-tech weapon systems and equipment, flexibility, a finely regulated conscription system, good salaries and accommodations.

14 Huntington, *Asker ve Devlet*, p.83-85.

civil institutions and the military is, indeed, important, “it partially reflects the story of civil–military relations.”¹⁵ In contrast, Schiff’s concordance model suggests a high level of unity “between the military and other parts of society as one of several types of civil-military relationship.”¹⁶ In fact, Huntington also notes, “[t]he standing of the officer corps and their leaders with public opinion and the attitudes of broad section or categorical groups in society toward the military are key elements in determining military influence.”¹⁷

Schiff argues that the separation model might not be the best tool for explaining civil–military relations. From her perspective, there are two fundamental problems with the current model of separation. First, it is based largely on the experiences of the United States, assuming that American institutional separation can be used to prevent military intervention in all countries. However, because of the fact that the American case is derived from particular historical and cultural experiences, it may not actually be applicable to other countries. Second, the separation model advocates the separation of civil-military institutions; nevertheless, such analysis ignores cultural and historical circumstances that may encourage or discourage the institutional separation of civil–military spheres.¹⁸ According to Schiff, “the separation model based on the civil–military and American institutional separation ignores the autonomous, casual role played by the social realm.”¹⁹ She further notes that “[i]f we bring the citizenry into the model, as well as extending the scope of analysis, we simultaneously introduce a normative criterion.”²⁰ The introduction of a third agency, the citizenry, to the analysis thus enriches the view of the problem by advancing the study of democratic civil–military relations beyond the duality of analyzing only the armed forces and the government. Contrary to the separation model, Schiff’s concordance model takes into account “the unique historical and cultural experiences” of other nations that may lead to other types of civil-military relations that differ from the United States’ example and “moves beyond institutional analysis” by directing attention to issues about “a nation’s culture.”²¹ Current international problems also prove that ethnic orientations and issues of multicultural diversity are, in fact, causes of the domestic unrest that is now found throughout the world. A simple review of known civil–military practices also suggests that the separation model may not be the ideal model for other nations to emulate. For example, American and European practices are quite similar with regard to separation, although there are many differences between the militaries on the two continents. The civilian political authority and the military are separated in terms of their professional duties and responsibilities. They are also similar with regard to isolation (i.e. the military must be isolated from political affiliations). In contrast, separation and isolation are less visible in the practices of China and the former USSR. These contexts reveal a tenuous distinction between the civilian and the military, with the party being at the top of the political system, which is similar to the case of Turkey between 1923 and 1950.

In summary, the basic argument of Schiff’s concordance model is that various civil–military relations might exist, as shaped by cultural and historical experiences in the nations they serve.

15 Schiff, *The Military and Domestic Politics*, p.44.

16 *Ibid.*, p.32.

17 Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1994, p.89.

18 Schiff, *Civil–Military Relations Reconsidered*, p.7-8.

19 *Ibid.*, p.13; Zeki Sangil, “Civil–Military Relations beyond Dichotomy: With Special Reference to Turkey”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol.12, No.2, 2011, p.265-78.

20 Narrated from Schiff by Narcis Serra, *Demokratikleşme Sürecinde Ordu: Silahlı Kuvvetlerin Demokratik Reformu Üzerine Düşünceler*, Çev. Şahika Tokel, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2011, p.214-215.

21 Schiff, *Civil–Military Relations Reconsidered*, p.13.

The concordance model mainly focuses on the specific conditions determining the military's role, specifically, in the domestic sphere that includes the government and society. However, it does not disregard the importance of outside threat conditions, in agreement with the current civil-military relations theory. It does not demand a specific form of government, set of institutions, or decision-making process. It usually occurs, however, in the circumstances surrounding active agreement, whether established by legislation, decree, or constitution, or based on longstanding historical and cultural values.

Schiff has studied two different cases to challenge the separation model and demonstrate the significance of her model: Israel and India. Israel, a nation under a high level of external threat conditions, has a virtual absence of civil institutions, yet has never undergone domestic military intervention. Dependent upon its military, India's civil institutions have been declining for several years, yet the armed forces have not intervened. She posits that "these nations reflect the importance of indigenous political institutions and culture as they bear on the military."²²

As explained in the introductory section, the Schiff's model of civil-military relations is not studied as much as the separation model in the literature. It is also pretty much neglected within the context of Turkish civil-military relations and there is a need to analyze Turkish civil-military relations from the perspective of her thoughts to bring a new perspective to the analysis of civil-military relations. Since this article focuses on analyzing Turkish civil-military relations through one of these models, it is necessary to examine the historical background of military interventions in Turkey.

Brief History of Military Interventions in Turkey

While the history of military interventions in Turkey is investigated, the focus is directed to two distinct aspects of those selected military interventions. The first is efforts made by political authority related to control of the TAF. The second is the presence and degree of concordance between civil-military elites and the role of citizenry in shaping the Turkish civil-military relations.

The early Republic period was characterized by civilian supremacy. Zeki Sarıgil defines the period between 1923 and 1950 as having been characterized by the coexistence of civilian control of the armed forces and guardianship. Primarily due to concordance between the Kemalist leadership and the top military leaders, however, the military generally did not act against the preferences of the civilian leadership.²³ The founder of the Republic, Kemal Atatürk, tried to erect various safeguards to prevent serving officers from becoming involved in politics.²⁴ For example, Law 385, which was accepted by the Parliament in December 1923, required military officers to resign from the armed forces before they can be elected to public offices. In the following year, the Chief of Staff's seat in the cabinet was eliminated, and the position was made accountable to the President.²⁵ As Huntington proposes, "[t]he party came out of the womb of the Turkish Army, political generals created a political party, and the political party put an end to political generals."²⁶ Indeed, the military remained largely

22 Quoted from Schiff by Leman Başak Arı, *Civil-Military Relations in Turkey*, Unpublished MA Thesis, Department of Political Science Texas State University, p.22, <https://digital.library.txstate.edu/bitstream/handle/10877/3517/fulltext.pdf>, (Accessed on 1 November 2016).

23 Zeki Sarıgil, "The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent?", *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol.40, No.1, 2014, p.176.

24 Sükrü M. Hanioglu, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 2012, p.47.

25 William Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, London and New York, Routledge, 1994, p.72.

26 Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1978, p.258.

reluctant to become involved in political debates, and the first Chief of General Staff (COGS), General Fevzi Çakmak, was loyal to the Turkish government during his long term in office (1921–1944). In 1949, four years after the retirement of General Çakmak, the political authority subordinated the General Staff to the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

In June of 1950, shortly after its victory in the elections, the Democrat Party (DP) leadership forced many generals and colonels in the Turkish Armed Forces (including the Chief of Staff and the commanders of the Air Force and Navy) to retire, as they were suspected of planning to oust the government.²⁷ Later, in July of 1950, generals consulted with İsmet İnönü,²⁸ stating that they were prepared for a coup, if necessary. İnönü rejected this offer and informed the President. Then the government subsequently made changes in the army's chain of command.²⁹ When Turkey joined NATO in 1952, its participation and the associated military assistance that it received from the United States were considered to be important catalysts in terms of preventing domestic military intervention. Until 1957, the citizenry demonstrated widespread support for the government's efforts to subordinate the military to the political authority. Towards the end of the 1960s, conspiratorial groups, which were led by relatively junior military officers, emerged against the DP Government, as illustrated by an alleged coup attempt, known as the "Nine Officers Incident."³⁰ In May of 1960, the National Unity Committee - composed largely of young officers - ousted the DP Government. The high stature of the Turkish Armed Forces and the public trust that it received had eroded significantly throughout the 1950s. It did not regain its traditional stature until the 1960 coup, which recreated the concordance between the military and the political elites. The Turkish Armed Forces dominated the political scene until 1965. The National Unity Committee precluded coup attempts led by Talat Aydemir in February of 1962 and May of 1963 and expelled its 14 members for being inclined to authoritarian rule.³¹

The 1960 military coup marked the beginning of a new era characterized by military supremacy over civilian politics, contributing heavily to the politicization of the Turkish Armed Forces. In contrast to the 1960 coup, which emerged from the bottom up, having been led primarily by mid-ranking and junior officers, the coups of 1971 and 1980 were led by the Turkish General Staff according to a strict chain of command. The 1971 "coup by memorandum" was a last-minute attempt by several high-ranking officers to prevent a group of "radical" officers from gaining political power, thereby maintaining the unity and discipline of the military.³² Economic deterioration and the ineffectiveness of the central government were the most important precipitating factors for the coups in 1971 and 1980. In the 1980 coup, the third one in 20 years, concordance with the existing political leaders was no longer regarded as an essential element.³³ The most prominent difference between the coups of 1971 and 1980 and the coup that took place in 1960 appears to be related to the multitude of

27 Soner Yalçın, "Demokrat Parti'nin 'Balans Ayarı' 6 Haziran 1950 Darbesi", *Hürriyet Gazetesi*, 4 March 2007, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=6056703> (Accessed on 28 October 2016).

28 İsmet İnönü is the second president after Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, his comrade in arms and the head of Republican People's Party (CHP).

29 Hale, *Turkish Politics and the Military*, p.88.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 88-118. A military officer from the group of conspirators involved in the 1960 coup (Samet Kuşçu) informed Prime Minister Menderes about a coup plot in 1958. Based on this information, nine military officers were arrested.

31 Begüm Burak, "Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Ordu-Siyaset İlişkileri", *History Studies*, Vol.3, No.1, 2011, p.45-57.

32 Gerassimos Karabelias, *Civil-Military Relations: A Comparative Analysis of the Role of the Military in the Political Transformation of Post-War Turkey and Greece: 1980-1995*, Report to NATO, 1998, p.23, www.nato.int/acad/fellow/96-98/karabeli.pdf (Accessed on 01 November 2016).

33 Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, London and New York, Routledge, 1993, p.24.

internal regulations that the military adapted between 1960 and 1971, purportedly to distance the officer corps from politics. In the end, however, these regulations merely served to prevent coups from taking place outside the chain of command. After the 1980 intervention, generals of the 1980 coup, though they seem to be strongly secular military officers, embraced the ideology of the “Turkish–Islamic Synthesis.”³⁴

By the mid-1990s, the emerging consensus between the military elites and the civilians began to disintegrate, as the democratic regime seemed unable to cope with separatist terrorism and the rise of political Islam. This eventually led to a “soft” coup d’état in 1997: The February 28 Process. The 1997 coup was interpreted as part of a process of change, which was recognized primarily by the military elites, and not by the politicians. Instead of overthrowing the democratic mechanisms that were in place at that time, the military intervention of 1997 brought them under military tutelage.³⁵

On 27 April 2007, when the ruling party, Justice and Development Party (JDP), nominated Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül as its presidential candidate, the military reacted harshly as it was believed that Gül, whose wife wore a headscarf, had roots in political Islam. In other words, the military perceived his nomination as a serious threat to the secular nature of the Republic, as illustrated by a warning to the government that the office of the Chief of Staff posted on its website.³⁶

On 15-16 July 2016, elements within the Turkish military attempted, but failed, to seize political power from the popularly elected government. Turkish officials linked the coup plot to Fethullah Gülen - a formerly state-employed imam in Turkey who is now a permanent U.S. resident.³⁷

As indicated in previous sections, so many alignments aimed at preventing the TAF from intervening in politics have been made in the civil-military relations history of Turkey. Above all, parallel to the process of harmonization with the EU, drastic institutional and legal reforms have been ratified by the Parliament to bring the Turkish model of civil-military relations into alignment with European standards.³⁸ However, these reforms did not prevent military interventions. This certainly makes the effectiveness of the separation model questionable from the standpoint of irreversibility in the Turkish case. Hence, the following section of the study covers the analyses helping to determine the relevancy of the two models in terms of finding the most appropriate model in which a civilian government may establish control over the interventionist military.

34 Sam Kaplan, “Din-u Devlet All Over Again? The Politics of Military Secularism and Religious Militarism in Turkey Following the 1980 Coup”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 34, No.1, 2002, p.113-127.

35 Begüm Burak, “To Guard Whom and from What?”, *European Journal of Economic and Political Studies*, 2011, p.153.

36 Sargil, *The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent*, p.184.

37 Jim Zanotti, “Turkey: Failed Coup and Implications for U.S. Policy”, *Federation of American Scientist*, CRS INSIGHT, July 19, 2016, p.2, (IN10533), available at: www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/IN10533.pdf, (Accessed on 9 November 2016).

38 Institutional and legal reforms done before 2012 are available at the table in Sargil’s article, “The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent, p.178-180.” In 2012, the national security course given by military officers was removed from the secondary school curriculum. In 2013, Amendments made to the Law on Provincial Administrations, which is used as the legal basis for the use of military force upon request of governors in domestic security incidents, gave civilian authorities a broader oversight of military operations. The Internal Service Law of the Turkish Armed Forces, which broadly defined the duties of the military and contained one article justifying military intervention in politics, was amended. Military service has been redefined and the amendment clarified that members of the TAF are not allowed to engage in domestic security operations, except terror incidents.

Analysis of Turkish Civil-Military Relations through Separation and Concordance Models

In order to find which model is better to explain what has happened in the Turkish history of civil-military relations and what could possibly happen in the future, Turkish civil-military relations are examined through both the separation and concordance models.³⁹

Several specific historical examples demonstrate the inadequacy of the separation model in the Turkish case. For example, the separation model is premised on the fact that militaries need to remain physically and ideologically separated from political institutions, as occurs in the United States. During the time between 1924 and 1960, two prominent leaders (Atatürk and İnönü) were originally generals in the Ottoman Army. They were soldiers dressed in civilian outfits. That is why it is hard to say that the military was separated physically and ideologically from political institutions. As Sarıgil also observes, “the military’s guardianship role was not really actualized; rather, it remained at an ideational level. Therefore, it is fair to label military guardianship during the First Republic as symbolic”⁴⁰ (see also Table 1). Contrary to the arguments of the separation model, the military did not attempt to intervene in politics between 1923 and 1950, although not actually physically and ideologically separated.

The separation model also fails to offer a satisfying explanation for why the DP Government’s efforts for achieving civilian supremacy between 1950 and 1960 could not preclude the 1960 coup. Huntington’s notion of separation, however, suggests that certain legal, structural, and institutional revisions done with the agreement of civil-military elites aimed at curbing guardianship are the most effective tools for effective civilian control. As explained in the history section, the DP Government, by being aware of the fact that lower segments of the military were actively, but covertly, making plans for and organizing a coup at that time, implemented many legal and institutional changes in harmony with the Chief of General Staff between 1950 and 1960. Most of the re-alignments done by the DP were in line with the prescriptions of the separation model and they are accepted as “the precondition” for restricting the military from intervening in the civilian sphere. Nevertheless, neither the changes nor the political-military concordance between the Prime Minister and Chief of General staff was able to prevent the 1960 coup.

Sarıgil defines the military’s guardianship role between 1960 and 2000 as “assertive” and 2001 onward as “post-guardianship”. According to his reasoning, the assertive guardianship of the 20th century does not linger in Turkish politics, although some members of the military maintain a tutelary notion, and it has remained at a rhetorical level from 2001 onwards (see also Table 1). He also observes that developments since the early 2000s, which have relegated the military to a secondary position within the state apparatus, are signs of a shift to a post-guardianship era in the Turkish Republic.⁴¹ As observed by Sarıgil, the political efforts to separate the military from politics resulted in different levels of guardianship in the three different phases of the Turkish civil-military history, although they had been implemented, supposedly, to give the same result: Ending the guardianship.

39 Since the separation model has always been an inspiration for regulating Turkish civil-military relations more than 50 years and has not served to prevent domestic military intervention, the chapter mainly focuses deficiencies of separation model and overwhelming aspects of the concordance model to prove its relevancy.

40 Sarıgil, “The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent”, p.176. Sarıgil named the period between 1924-1960 as the “First Republic”.

41 Ibid., p.185.

In sum, as has already analyzed in the theory section, the separation model assumes civil-military relations as a kind of power relation between the military and the political elites. It then preconditions concordance between the military and the political elites. There has been seeming concordance between the political elites and the top brass of the military, in terms of the application of necessary alignments to curb the military interventions, between 1950-1960 and 2001 onward. Nevertheless, that concordance did not prevent the coups from happening.

Table 1 Evolution of Civil–Military Relations in Turkey.⁴²

Criteria	1923–1959	1960–2000	2001 Onward
Subordination of the military to the elected political authority	Military subordinated to elected political authority	Military not subordinated to elected political authority	Military subordinated to elected political authority
Level of guardianship	Symbolic	Assertive	Post-Guardianship
Level of social partners' concordance on civil–military relations	Absolute concordance between the military and the civilian elites; fully supported by the officer corps; partly supported by the citizenry	Apparent concordance between the military and the civilian elites; supported by neither the officer corps nor the citizenry	Apparent concordance between the military and the civilian elites; support by the officer corps and the citizenry is unknown
Principal/agent relation	Civilians/military	Military/civilians	Civilians/military
Nature of civil–military relations	Based on cultural, historical and moral frameworks	Based on legal or institutional frameworks	Based on legal or institutional frameworks
Civilian control method	Subjective control	Objective control	Unclear

Developments occurring since the early republican times show that the concordance between civil and military elites is not as effective as premised by the separation model, unless supported by the other segments of society. In other words, concordance/discordance among political authorities, the citizenry, and military corps (not the military elites) was effective in both fostering and deterring military interventions. Moreover, historical samples from China and the Soviet Union indicate that the armed forces have never been involved in domestic interventions whilst in a symbiotic relationship with the political structure. One might interpret from the samples mentioned above that, the separation model does not necessarily prevent domestic intervention, and conversely, integration does not necessarily increase the risk of such intervention.⁴³

Turkish civil-military relations are highly multidimensional and this fact makes them difficult to understand. It is necessary to have a deep insight into the complex relationships between the military, politicians and society that underpin the endurance of militarism and authoritarianism. Furthermore, many of the obstacles that hinder Turkish civil–military relations at a democratic level are similar to the ones in Europe or the US. Thus, this makes the citizenry more likely to be involved in civil-military relations. Separation theory is, institutionally and culturally, a bit outside of a domestic context and does not adequately explain the Turkish case, since it focuses on institutional and dichotomous civil–military relations, grounded in the post–World War II US experience. By contrast, concordance theory views the relationship between military and society from both the

42 Ibid., p.185; for a similar tabulation, see Sarıgil, “The Turkish Military: Principal or Agent”, p.185.

43 Aydın, *A Paradigmatic Shift*, p.581-596.

cultural and institutional perspectives so as to embrace those indigenous qualities that may encourage or discourage domestic military interventions. Even the post-World War II US experience can also be explained by concordance theory because there was strong agreement among the political elites, the military, and the citizenry that institutional and cultural separation regarded as the best.⁴⁴

The separation model foresees that military professionalism helps to diminish the risk of intervention. The professional qualifications of the Turkish Armed Forces are amongst the best in both the Middle East and in NATO.⁴⁵ This did not prevent the TAF, however, from intervening in politics in the past. Thus, one can reasonably argue that contrary to Huntington's prescription, professionalism might actually have enhanced the ability of the Turkish Armed Forces to intervene in politics.⁴⁶ According to Gregory Wick, Turkey's participation in NATO and the military assistance it has received from the United States over the course of almost 60 years are key factors that have contributed to the modernization and professionalization of its military structure. The Turkish officer corps has developed into a highly professional body with a high degree of autonomy, most likely through military education. Huntington's model treats military education as a process that requires special expertise. The model also suggests that it would be adequate to grant institutional authority to the armed forces, in terms of regulating military education and training. According to him, professionalism and military education, which are inevitable, constitute the most prominent organizational specifications of modern armies. Contrary to Huntington's proposition, Wick argues that although "maximizing military professionalism leads to objective civilian control of the military, the Turkish officer corps has not been under civilian control and has continued to play a major role in domestic politics."⁴⁷

The separation model, which excludes the citizenry, the main civil component of the relation, obscures the historical blocks, collaborations, and alliances beyond military interventions in Turkey. The military intervention history of the Turkish Armed Forces demonstrates how the military has dominated and intervened in the political system in each case with considerable help from civilian elites and garnered the support of the citizens who elect the civilian authorities. In other words, a block, including military elites and the citizenry -in some cases, even a few parts of civilian elites- also played a role in nearly every intervention. Writing on the proceedings of the 1980 coup, Ahmet Nesin states, "[i]n my opinion all citizens voting (with the rate of 92%) in favor of the Constitution prepared by the Military Regime should be prosecuted."⁴⁸ In other words, he tries to say that a considerable amount of the citizenry voluntarily collaborated with the pro-coup mindset and supported almost all military interventions.

Turkish civil-military relations appear to differ somewhat from the other examples, quite likely because of the encircling effect of the citizenry and its societal relations with the military. Given the

44 Rebecca L. Schiff, "Concordance Theory in Pakistan: Response to Zulfikar Ali", *Armed Forces & Society*, 2016, Vol.42 No.1, p.226-234.

45 For further information see, <http://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing-middle-east.asp> and; <http://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing-nato-members.asp>.

46 For further study, see also Gregory J Wick, *Professionalism in the Turkish Military: Help or Hindrance to Civilian Control*, MA Thesis, Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, USA, 2000, p.3-4.

47 Though assertion made by Gregory Wick seems acceptable for the time being, the form of Turkish civil-military relations, including the concept of professionalism is indisputably changing, particularly in response to the impetus especially provided by the EU harmonization process. Thus, the past interventions might not gloss the role of military professionalism in decreasing the military's political influence in the long term. See also, Wick, *Professionalism in the Turkish Military*, p.v-4.

48 Ahmet Nesin, "12 Eylül Davasında Önce Halk Yargılanmalı", *Gaziantep Haber*, 11 Nisan 2012.

discussion of past coups in Turkey, citizens have a history of pragmatic and/or symbiotic relations with the military, which contrasts with their fragile relations with the elected civilian authorities. Metaphorically, citizens can be seen as approaching the civilian political authority like a student driver. Only in the case when they see a bumpy road or dangerous curves ahead, do they tend to seek help from a more experienced driver: the military, the founder of the nation and its most trusted institution. A non-ignorable proportion of Turkish citizens did seek out the military and would not lose their confidence in the military even if it attempted a coup, despite a solid core of current citizen resistance (around 80%) to military intervention.⁴⁹ Currently these dynamics are changing, however, in light of historical examples; the military seems to be able to regain its status (as the most trusted institution in Turkey) in the midterm period.

In practice, the perceptions and political reflexes of citizens related to the Turkish civil–military relations, including the most recent ones, indicate that the citizenry is and should remain an indispensable part of the matter. Therefore, the addition of the citizenry to the model may provide a better tool for understanding the case as well as predicting solutions for stable civil–military relations. Another convincing aspect of the concordance model is its core argument, which states that domestic intervention is less likely if the military, the political elites, and the society achieve concordance along with the certain indicators.⁵⁰ According to Nilüfer Narlı, the unstable nature of Turkish civil-military relations stems from the fact that there is a fragile concordance among three segments of Turkish society on certain indicators. In other words, partnership among military, political elites and the citizenry has been fragile due to the citizenry perception -as the guard of the national unity and secular democracy- related to the Turkish military's position.⁵¹

Compulsory conscription, which is related to Schiff's third indicator (recruitment method), has been one of the instruments used by the military to shape the citizenry perception of the military's function in politics.⁵² A brief review on the countries that apply compulsory military service shows that there is a strong relationship between compulsory conscription system and strength of the militarist discourse in that society.⁵³ In the Turkish case, serving in the military is perceived not only as a duty of citizenship, but also as a cultural necessity of being a "real man". Symbols constitute an integral part in the identity of individuals.⁵⁴

The self-perceptions of the military and the way in which the military is perceived within society, which seems to be similar to Schiff's fourth indicator (military style), appear to be the most prominent variables distinguishing Turkish civil–military relations from other such relations. Military style (slogans, marches, anthems, etc.) as the inner practices of military service indoctrinate the citizenry. Militarist discourse can be observed in military practices as well as in the Turkish education system.

49 For further study see also, MetroPOLL, *Türkiye'de Darbeler ve Darbe Yargılamaları*, 2012, www.metropoll.com.tr/arastirmalar/siyasi-arastirma-9/1716 (Accessed on 26 October 2016).

50 Schiff, *The Military and Domestic Politics*, p.43.

51 Nilüfer Narlı, "Civil-Military Relations in Turkey", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.1, No.1, 2000, p.107-127.

52 Ayşe G. Altınay, *The Myth of Military-Nation*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, p.87-89. According to Janowitz, the modern definition of citizenship has been based on "participation in armed conflicts" after the creation of compulsory conscription system. For further study, see also Morris Janowitz, "Military Institutions and Citizenship in Western Societies", *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol.2, No.2, 1976, p.185-204.

53 Karen A. Cerulo, "Symbols and the World System: National Anthems and Flags", *Sociological Forum*, Vol.8, No.2, 1993, p.243-271. Narrated by Burak T. Halistoprak, *Construction of Civil-Military Relations in Turkey*, Unpublished MA Thesis, Department of International Relations, Bilkent University, 2011, p.93.

54 Such as "Every Turk is born as a soldier.", "Martyrs are immortal, and our land is indivisible.", etc. Halistoprak, *Construction of Civil-Military Relations*, p.95.

Schiff's second indicator, namely, "the political decision-making process" is an important one in the Turkish case, as observed by Narlı: "The military built what A. Robin Luckham defines as a 'covert guardianship model' that permitted it to use various forms of intervention, ranging from a coup to controlling and influencing civilian political process through informal mechanisms."⁵⁵ This observation rightly calls attention to the necessity of transparency in Turkish civil–military relations. It would necessitate conducting descriptive studies that could provide insight into the obscure parts of the picture, including decision-making processes, defense planning and budgeting, and the cooperative aspects of the military (all of which can be used as indirect tools for intervention). Schiff states "[w]hat is critical is that agreement be reached by the three partners over the political process that best meets the requirements of the armed forces."⁵⁶ It seems that Schiff sees this indicator from the perspective of preventing military intervention by meeting whatever the military wants to have – budgets, size, conscription model, armaments/equipment, force structure, etc. Nevertheless, they are the issues decided by closed cabinets, special committees, and political elites, with the participation of military officers in the Turkish case. The citizenry is almost completely out of this process. Furthermore, it is even harder to say that Parliament is active enough in performing its oversight duty to supervise the question of defense planning and expenditures. Moreover, there is still a common prejudice that neither the governing body nor the judiciary is authorized to supervise the soldiers in that respect. The citizenry, as the taxpayers, should be persuaded on the point that to which external or internal threat conditions nation requires. In other words, the idea should be to reach agreement among the three partners over the process that best meets the requirements of the nation.⁵⁷

As is well known, the term "civil" refers both to the political and the civil state apparatus or bureaucracy in both European societies and the United States. In the case of Turkey, the civil state bureaucracy identifies itself as a distinct tool from the political institutions and it is in general loyal to the eternity of the state. Hence, in Turkish civil-military history, almost all state apparatus - except in the case of the 15 July 2016 failed coup attempt- have reacted together with the military. The main aim of democratic civil regulations for achieving democratic oversight is to subordinate the military to the political authority. Concordance between the civil and the military elites backed by citizenry, as in the early Republic and the aftermath of the failed coup attempt, is the best historically proven tool in the Turkish case in that respect.

The civil-military relations of Turkey can be better understood with the help of the theory of concordance, which seeks the remedy to the conceptual inadequacies of the prevailing theory, which are depicted in this section. In contrast to the theory of separation, which emphasizes the separation of civil and military institutions, the theory of concordance encourages cooperation and involvement among the military, the political institutions and the society. In other words, concordance does not assume that separate civil and military spheres are required to prevent domestic military interventions. Rather, a military intervention may be avoided if the military cooperates with the political elites and citizenry.⁵⁸ To sum up, concordance, in its Turkish context, should take place in the context of active

55 Nilüfer Narlı, "Concordance and Discordance in Turkish Civil–Military Relations." *Turkish Studies*, Vol.12, No.2, 2011, p.215-225; and "Changes in the Turkish Security Culture and in the Civil–Military Relations", *Western Balkans Security Observer*, 2009, p.56-83.

56 Schiff, *Civil Military Relations*, p.15.

57 Mustafa Uluçakar, "The Role of the Turkish Parliament in Sending Troops Abroad", Mert Kayhan and Merijn Hartog (eds.), *Promoting Good Governance in the Security Sector: Principles and Challenges*, CESS Publication, 2013, p.31-32.

58 Rebecca L. Schiff, "Civil-Military Relations Reconsidered: A Theory of Concordance", *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol.22, No.1, Fall 1995, p.11.

agreement amongst civil-military elites and the citizenry based on longstanding historical and cultural values rather than legal and institutional regulations established by legislation, decree, or constitution.

In light of all these analyses, it is consequently possible to say that although the concordance model seems to be more appropriate than the separation model to explain the civil-military relations in Turkey, it still has some methodological weaknesses that require modification. The greatest problem of the concordance model stems from its methodology. For example, it tends to treat the partners as blocks. In practice, there are no neatly divisible entities, such as the military, the political elites, and the citizenry.⁵⁹ There have always been internal divergences preventing them from being treated as blocks. From the perspective of Turkish civil-military relations, there has always been a bizarre mixture of those entities. For instance, most research focusing on the democratic control of the Turkish military takes the officer corps to be a fixed variable, which shows politically monolithic characters due to its strong obedience patterns created by military education, although the Turkish military may reflect almost all political divergences going on society.

The same could be said for the indicators too. The first three of which (i.e. the social composition of the officer corps, the political decision-making process, and the method of recruiting military personnel) appear to be borrowed from the separation model of civil-military relations, despite their wider, historical, and social implications. Although at first glance, the fourth indicator (military style) appears to resemble Huntington's notion of "military fusion" (e.g. the fusion of U.S. military and political cultures), it is different. Military style refers to a complex mix of characteristics of the armed forces, their perception by citizens, and the guiding beliefs by which they are driven. The list of indicators may change depending on the historical and cultural determinants. Unlike Schiff's narrowed list, indicators of concordance need to be wider and more specific. For example, in the Turkish case, there are some specific issues which demand concordance between partners such as internal security affairs or the terrorist acts of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Multinational military missions that are likely to occur in Turkey's peripheral regions and massive protests that could potentially generate a more pronounced role for the military in society should also be listed in the list of indicators in the case of Turkey. Hence, regarding the indicators, Schiff also argues that "the structure and form of these four indicators, which are found in all militaries, are different depending upon the particular political structure and culture of each nation."⁶⁰ In fact, as she states, "three of the indicators — officer corps composition, political decision-making, and recruitment method — have been identified by leading scholars of civil-military relations as key determinants of military function and role in most societies."⁶¹ The fourth one, military style, is probably the most distinguishable one in terms of explaining the Turkish case.

Another problem from a social scientific perspective concerns how to measure the degree of agreement over this indicator of concordance.⁶² Sarigil arrives at a similar conclusion based on empirical findings: "concordance theory tends to treat the military, the political elite, and the citizenry as homogenous, monolithic entities. The findings, however, indicate that this assumption should be modified and concordance model should take into account possible discordance within those realms."⁶³

59 John M Andersen, *Civil-Military Relations and Concordance Theory: A Case Study of Argentina*, Unpublished MA Thesis, Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, USA, 1998, p.30.

60 Ibid., p.231.

61 Ibid.

62 Andersen, *Civil-Military Relations and Concordance Theory*, p.73.

63 Zeki Sarigil, "Public Opinion and Attitude toward the Military and Democratic Consolidation in Turkey", *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol.41, No.2, 2013, p.286, <http://yoksis.bilkent.edu.tr/pdf/files/10.1177-0095327X1304573.pdf> (Accessed on 29 November 2016).

Conclusion

In Turkey, the form of civil–military relations is indisputably changing, particularly in response to the impetus provided by the EU harmonization process. The findings of this study also indicate shifts in specific notions that characterize the Turkish military and civil–military relations. Examples include changes in the central role of homage, junior–senior relations, and forms of obedience. Specifications such as taking and preserving the initiative, boosting morale, being equipped with abilities that new challenges require, and developing interoperability and cohesion are gradually gaining ground. Other possibilities include the formulation of new regulations on conscription or the military education system and conscientious objection. Such revisions would create new sets of values and rituals for the military, depending upon changes in the composition of troops and training systems. Such changes could thus affect, and probably change, the nature of democratic control. Nevertheless, it is still unclear whether the present form of civilian control would work in times of political turmoil, which makes the involvement of the military necessary to repress mass civilian protests. In such cases, it is also unclear whether the armed forces would stay confined to their barracks, refusing to obey the call of the political authorities (thus violating the principle of civilian control from the perspective of the primary paradigm), or whether they would intervene (thus trampling on human rights, as well as their own credibility). In such contingencies, there will be an inevitable need for concordance among the three partners.

It is difficult to deny the importance of institutional and legal regulations, which are primarily accepted as integral parts of the separation model, but are not excluded by the concordance model. Cultural patterns being developed, however, which are necessary to ensure the digestion of the values and benefits of democracy, are equally important. Unlike the separation model, the concordance model highlights dialogue, accommodation, and shared values or objectives among the military, the political elites and society. In this sense, Schiff’s model offers a way that helps the nation move progress beyond the civil–military dichotomy. Moreover, the changing character of risks and challenges, especially the changing posture of internal risks and challenges, is likely to change the traditional way of conducting military missions. This introduces additional dimensions to the issue of civil–military relations issue. In such cases, possible paradoxes between sovereignty and democratization will become prominent, again requiring concordance among the three parties involved in civil–military relations.

As stated earlier, the main objective of this study is to determine the proper explanatory model for Turkish civil-military relations, which will also serve as a toolbox to predict the necessary precautions to curb the multiple military interventions in Turkey. The primary conclusion of this article is that the concordance model has a stronger power, compared to the separation model, in terms of analyzing and explaining what has been going on in Turkish civil-military relations due to its two overwhelming aspects. The first aspect is the inclusion of the citizenry; the second one is its focus on cultural and historical experiences. It has, however, certain methodological weaknesses in the case of Turkey. In that respect, testing Schiff’s new and very much neglected theory by highlighting its methodological difficulties in light of Turkish historical and cultural experiences may serve for future studies on civil-military relations.

As Schiff implicitly argues, each nation must develop its own model for achieving democratic control over its armed forces. In the case of Turkey, the separation model has provided an analytical foundation for more than fifty years. A modified version of the concordance model is likely to offer the best starting point to address civil-military “problematique” that may arise in response to transitions from authoritarian rule to a more democratic one.

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