

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN ISRAEL AND TURKEY

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This manuscript investigates to what extent civil-military relations in Israel and Turkey, two countries in the Middle East which have democratic systems of governments, evinces characteristics that one comes across in advanced democracies. It shows that in both countries the military plays a relatively influential role, that being more so in Turkey than in Israel. The manuscript concludes that in recent decades the perception of the military concerning the question of whether or not the country faced a grave threat and the civilian government's capability to successfully deal with such a threat, if there was one, played leading roles in shaping the civil-military relations in those two countries.

For several decades now, the military and/or politicians with military backgrounds continued to play a significant role in such non-monarchical Middle Eastern countries as Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Pakistan, Syria, and Turkey as either rulers or as one of the significant players in the polity. On the other hand, in the Middle East, only Israel and, to a great extent, Turkey, have come to have democratic systems of government. The present essay addresses itself to the questions of: (1) In what ways did civil-military relations in Israel and Turkey come close to such relations in liberal-democratic political regimes? (2) What are the similarities and differences between civil-military relations in Israel (c. 1920-2000) and Turkey (1923-1999) and why? (3) What does this comparative study tell us about civil-military relations in general?

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN ISRAEL

The history of Israel has been marked by the pervasiveness of intense conflict. From the beginning of the modern-day Jewish immigration to Palestine, Zionist settlers faced a hostile Arab populace. The 1948 War of Independence added to the pressures by making it clear that the new nation was to be opposed by much more populous neighboring states firmly committed to the elimination of the state as a political and social entity. Thus, for Israelis, armed conflict became the ultimate method of resolving the issue of their state's disputed existence (Horowitz, 1977).

The fact that defense matters had taken on importance in the pre-Independence period led as early as April 1909 to the formation of the *Ha-shomer*, a streamlined and highly trained elite force. Later, as nascent political parties began to move toward a national ideology incorporating all social classes, the defense establishment was forced to change. In 1920, the *Hagana* replaced the *Ha-shomer*; the latter comprised a small regular professional army of commanders and instructors, and backed by trained reserve forces (Goldstein, 1999: 172-78; Luttwak and Horowitz, 1983: 3-6). With the founding of Israel in 1948, the *Hagana* was transformed into the Israel Defense Force (IDF).

A balance was thereby found between the need for a professional military and the goal of nation building. The regular army was provided with a high degree of education and technical knowledge that could be passed on to reservists when the latter were called to duty; that same army also functioned as a means of national cohesion (Cohen, 1997). Such a process began in earnest with the 1948 War of Independence, in which the newly-formed Israeli state faced long-odds against its survival; the war at least temporarily put an end to political conflict (Perlmutter, 1969: 53-4). The unity fostered by the war gave David Ben-Gurion, leader of the Labor Party, opportunity to become both prime minister and minister of defense. Ben-Gurion thought of Israel as "a state with its back to the sea," with the fate of the nation resting on the ability of its army to defend it (Perlmutter, 1969: 58). The nature of Israeli politics was thus irrevocably intertwined with defense matters as well as foreign policy issues. This situation led to the development of a centralized and strong political leadership, and from 1947 through 1963 (except for a fifteen-month retirement in 1953-1955), Ben-Gurion held the portfolios of both prime minister and minister, during which time his views permeated the entirety of the state.

Ben-Gurion had a predilection toward a state that acted as the guardian of the common interest – a view perhaps arrived at by a selective reading of Judaism (Liebman, 1988). Thus Ben-Gurion himself made all political decisions related to the armed forces. He allowed the IDF's chief of staff autonomy on purely military matters other than the logistical support of the forces; the office of directory-general of the ministry of defense carried out the latter task. To both of these posts Ben-Gurion appointed persons who shared his social and political ideology. He also prevented political fragmentation from developing in the armed forces by assuming the power to approve all appointments and promotions from chief of staff down to lieutenant colonel.

Ben-Gurion's personal authority brought about the IDF's respect for civilian supremacy. It also gave rise to the idea of an army in which the ideological and moral values were democratic and egalitarian (Perlmutter, 1969: 56-58), facilitating the development of the IDF as a professional army. At the same time, this trend led to the development of the IDF as a special type of "community" that, in keeping with Ben-Gurion's state philosophy, sought to protect the security interests of the Israeli state (Liebman, 1988:103-4).

Yet Ben-Gurion's approach to civil-military relations did not go unchallenged. During the 1953-1955 period when Ben-Gurion was out of office, Defense Minister Pinhas Lavon resorted to micromanagement that at the time created an estrangement between the ministry of defense and the IDF. The collapse of an Israeli spy ring in Egypt brought this estrangement to a head, as a series of hearings designed to locate responsibility for the collapse of the spy ring led to the trial of Lavon, in which army officers lied under oath and falsified documents directly implicating him in the collapse. As a consequence of the Lavon Affair, a public debate began on the merits and disadvantages of Ben-Gurion's system of political control over military (Perlmutter, 1968a: 423-24).

With the Lavon Affair at hand, the smaller parties in the Knesset too started to charge Ben-Gurion with abusing his powers over the armed forces (Hurewitz, 1963: 89-90). The fact that many officers came from certain social groups traditionally allied with particular political parties (e.g., Eastern European Jews allied with the Labor Party) (Zamir, 1981: 19-20), and equally owing to the prestige rendered to individuals by military service so that parties were inclined to co-opt high-ranking officers "to guarantee public confidence" in the parties (Zamir, 1981: 22), had created a practice whereby government leaders promoted their own party supporters whenever possible (Etzioni-Halevy, 1996). These developments during Ben-Gurion's second term eroded his base of support to the point where he resigned his offices in 1963 (to be succeeded by Levi Eshkol in both) and was subsequently, along with Shimon Peres and General Moshe Dayan, driven from the Labor Party by Eshkol and his supporters in 1965 (Perlmutter, 1968a: 426-27).

Ben-Gurion's exodus from the government effectively ended the period in which both the prime ministry and ministry of defense were consolidated in one individual. As Eshkol lacked Ben-Gurion's charisma, Eshkol in his capacity as defense minister had little control over the *institutional development* (distinct from *political* and *operational* control) of the defense establishment (1963-1967); consequently, his ability to influence its patterns of operation remained limited. Thus, as Eshkol, in his capacity as defense minister, equivocated on the formation of a "national unity emergency government" amidst the IDF's call for general mobilization immediately preceding the Six-Day War of 1967, the Israeli electorate demanded and received the appointment of General Dayan as minister of defense (Perlmutter, 1968b: 606-7).

The separation of the prime ministry and ministry of defense continued through the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Following the military setbacks suffered at that time, the attention turned to the larger question of the relations among prime minister, defense minister, and chief of staff (Lissak, 1983: 7).

In order to make heads or tails of how this issue was resolved, it is again necessary to take up the evolving political dynamics in Israel. In 1977, the Labor Party was defeated for the first time by the right-wing Likud Party of Menachim Begin. Prior to 1977, the formal multi-party political system

established in 1933 had, in effect, been a one-party dominant system (Peri, 1983: 47). In addition to Israel leaving behind the de facto one-party dominant political system, Begin's subsequent move to secure a peace treaty with Egypt (1978-1979) ushered in a new chapter concerning Israel's security situation by replacing the era of total war with one of limited war (Peri, 2000: 189).

These developments had their implications for the political arena as the two major political parties engaged for the first time in a serious debate on the security dilemma confronting Israel (Peri, 2000: 189). Although both sides recognized the need to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, Labor took a decidedly more dovish stance to the issue, going so far as to advocate the need for political consensus on when to resort to force (Inbar and Sandler, 1995: 56), while the right-wing Likud Party called for the resolution of the conflict by a hawkish stance that would guarantee the territorial gains of 1967 (Levy, 1997: 152). As this debate closely affected the military policies while the threat from neighboring countries continued unabated, it made it difficult for the IDF to remain above politics.

In fact, in the post-independence period, the IDF had gradually expanded its influence into areas not explicitly connected to security affairs, coming to play a major role in strategic-planning, including the latter's social and economic aspects (Lissak, 1983: 7). To cite one example, paralleling the view of the IDF as a means of national cohesion, the military came to play a significant role in educating and training drafted soldiers from all walks of life. This process of role expansion accelerated following the IDF's victory in the 1956 Sinai Campaign. At that point, the military elite obligated the politicians to come up with clear *causes belli* for any Israeli-initiated war (Levy, 1997: 119). Similarly, following the 1967 War, the IDF became responsible for setting up and administering services in the Occupied Territories (Peri, 1981). When it redeployed to the Negev from the Sinai following the 1978 Treaty with Egypt, the IDF imposed its own plans for military installations, agricultural settlements, and infrastructure improvements on the civilian planners working on the same issues (Naveh, 1983). Overall, the ability of the IDF to influence government policy has reflected an Israeli acceptance of a civil-military structure that assigned undue influence to the IDF's policy demands relative to those of other branches of government.

At the same time, as noted, Israeli civil-military relations have long been marked by the influence of partisan politics into the day-to-day functioning of the military. The practice of appointing officers to the army command who supported the ruling government had started under the British mandate for ensuring government control of the military. A pattern thereby emerged in which successive governments sought to guarantee that those who supported their policies manned the army command. Notably, for example, Ben-Gurion appointed Moshe Dayan as chief of staff (1953-1957) and Shimon Peres as director-general of the ministry of defense (1953-1959), both of whom were

supporters of Labor. Following its 1977 victory at the polls, the Likud too attempted to appoint officers loyal to its political views to top military positions. Yet simply because an entire generation of officers had been brought up in the Ben-Gurion-Dayan Labor mold, the Likud found it difficult to pack top army positions with its own supporters. Notwithstanding its failure to co-opt the military to an extent on par with that of Labor (the last three chiefs of staff appointed while the Likud was in government were not close to the Likud), the Likud, not unlike Labor, was not above introducing party politics into the military, as the attempted political-based appointments demonstrate. The practice lingered on during recent years as well. When the Labor Party returned to power in 1992, its leaders chose two vocal supporters of Labor as chief and deputy chief of staff (Amnon Shahak and Matan Vilnai, respectively), while forcing General Yitzhak Mordechai, a candidate for the post of deputy chief of staff who did not support Labor's policies, into retirement (Etzioni-Halevy, 1996: 6).

Another characteristic of the civil military relations in Israel has been the ease with which former military leaders have found their way into the political arena. Conflict among Israeli political elites gave rise to the so-called "military-political coalitions," with the result that politicians from both parties tended to seek military partners that will support their policies and, at the same time, guaranteed public confidence in the parties. On the whole, civilians continued to maintain control, as it has been the generals who have been co-opted by the civilians and not vice versa (Zamir, 1981: 21-2). However, the control in question could not be complete, for generals-turned-politicians gained access to the planning of government-military strategies. In fact, with the escalation of the Arab-Israeli conflict, former officers even began to occupy critical political posts because of advances in military technology and the consequent dependence on military expertise coupled with the inexperience of Israel's cabinets in military matters (Perlmutter, 1978: 192).

In the post-Ben-Gurion period, the three aspects of Israeli civil-military relations enumerated - the role expansion of the IDF, the influence of partisan politics, and the breakdown in barriers separating political and military spheres - combined to create an ambiguous relationship among the prime minister, minister of defense, and chief of staff. This led to a situation in which the IDF was formally subordinated to the minister of defense, but in fact, often came to have primacy over the ministry of defense. This state of affairs became problematic notably during the Lavon Affair and on the eve of the 1967 war. At such critical times, there developed a conflict between various factions within the Israeli civil-military elite as to which entity was responsible for preparing the nation for war and later for making the key military decisions. The debate reached its apex after the 1973 War, when the Agranat Commission, formed to investigate Israeli failures during the initial stages of the conflict, recommended a clearer delineation of responsibility within the chain of command. The

resulting law, however, was not much clearer than the previous one, still making it possible for the prime minister, minister of defense, and chief of staff to come up with different interpretations as to the division of labor (Lissak, 1983: 5-7).

However, owing to the dynamic established during the Ben-Gurion era, civil-military relations in Israel continued to be essentially predicated on the idea of civilian dominance; over the decades, the military became accustomed to the dominance of the civilian leadership while the civilian leadership came to look to the military for incisive information about security issues (Ben-Meir, 1995: 173-76). The fact that in Israel the permanent army was not large and military careers were not long also prevented the military from adopting anti-democratic attitudes and norms. Furthermore, the military was *willing* to submit to civilian control, evidenced by the creation in the early 1960s of the "Ministerial Security Committee" that was to have "the right to request [military] information" and to discuss "the direction of all aspects of security affairs" including strategic planning and technological developments (Hurewitz, 1963: 90-1). Although limited in investigative powers insofar as "only those military officers and Defense Ministry officials authorized by the Defense Minister" could be questioned by the committee, the fact that it was composed of the ministers of agriculture, finance, foreign affairs, interior, and labor (all civilians) points to the growing dominance of the civilian over the military and a *de facto* military inclination to let the process continue unabated. A similar attitude was in evidence when the IDF accepted in good faith the proposals of the Agranat Commission and the resultant "Army of 1975" law that obliged military leaders to look to civilian elites for decisions on military policy (Peri, 1981: 310-11). Consequently, when the military's top echelons did not share the political views of the civilian leadership - which was often the case during the Likud governments in 1977-1992 - the military did not display insubordination (Etzioni-Halevy, 1996: 6). Military officers still carried out the orders of civilian political leaders, redeploying, to cite one example, from the Sinai to the Negev after 1978 despite the military's concerns about forcing the IDF into a strategically dangerous environment (Naveh, 1983: 42). Nor has the trend changed in recent years. The IDF accepted budgetary restraints that significantly reduced its share of the GNP by 2000 in comparison to that of 1985; in fact, several high-ranking officers went so far as to use the constraints as impetus to institute military reforms deemed essential to the continued battlefield dominance of the IDF (Cohen, 2002).

In Israel, the civilian is dominant. Yet the military's role expansion coupled with the breakdown in formal boundaries between military and civilian institutions indicates that the military has come to play a significant role in the political life of Israel. Indeed, many of senior officers enter politics and occupy key positions. Some of them become prime and/or defense ministers: Yitzhak Rabin (prime minister, 1974-1977, 1992-1995; defense minister 1984-1990), Moshe Dayan (defense minister, 1967-1974), Ehud Barak (prime minister,

1999-2001), and Ariel Sharon (defense minister, 1981-1983; prime minister, 2001-present). The views of the military continue to be represented both directly and indirectly in Israeli politics. One of the areas the military continues to have considerable influence is the Israeli defense industry. In Israel government owns and operates the defense industry either as "ancillary units" of the Defense Ministry or as public corporations. And the IDF plays a significant role in this government-directed industry because it is the IDF that selects the technologies and industrial items for procurement. Furthermore, retired officers head the bulk of the companies vital to the country's economy and take their place on their boards of directors (Mintz, 1983; 1985a; 1985b). It has been suggested that Israel's being located in a hostile environment forced the construction of "the population into a nation, through the army, for the purpose of war" (Ben-Eliezer, 2001: 143, 146) Thus, in an indirect or direct manner, the military continued to make its views known on matters that properly belong to the political realm. To give one example, in April 2003, in an article he wrote, Maj. Gen. (res.) Ya'akov Amidror and has argued that following the war "Israel's coerced adoption of the road map would severely compromise its achievements to date in its war against terrorism, enabling Arafat and the Palestinians to emerge as the big winners of the war" (because, in his opinion, the Americans might be steered toward the road map in question by the Europeans and the Arabs) (Amidror, 2003: 1-5). Given the state of the second *intifada* and similar security issues relative to Syria, the Israeli military will in all probability continue to exert influence on society and politics though on the whole in a manner that does not too far differ from civil-military relations in the advanced democracies.

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN TURKEY

The Turkish state has not experienced a serious external threat to its existence. Atatürk, founder of the Republic (1923), and his associates chose to set up a secular-democratic republic and decided to separate the military and civilian spheres (Fisher, 1963: 25). A law enacted in 1924 made election to Parliament "incompatible with active military service" (Rustow, 1959: 547). The law spurred the officers supporting the Kemalist reforms to resign their political seats while prompting its opponents to resign their commissions. Since then, service in the senior ranks of the military has not helped to garner votes.

However, a paradox was introduced into the new state when the founders made the military the ultimate guardians of the Republican reforms, particularly secularism, thereby creating a tension in Turkish society by giving the military a legitimate means to circumvent civilian control when it deemed it in the public interest (Tachau and Heper, 1983: 19). This ability was tempered for the first quarter century of the Republic by limiting the efforts devoted to the modernization of the military in the face of pressing needs for social and economic development (Lerner and Robinson, 1960: 27). Moreover, the

presence of two former military leaders as heads of state during this period (Atatürk as president and his close lieutenant İsmet İnönü as prime minister), combined with the key role played by Marshal Fevzi Çakmak – whose personal allegiance to Atatürk went back to the Turkish War of Independence – helped guarantee the military a wide degree of autonomy over its internal activities. Such likewise ensured that the military's interests were well-represented in government circles (Harris, 1965a; Harris, 1965b), made possible through the Supreme Military Council, where top military leaders conveyed to the minister of defense their views concerning problems related to the armed forces (Harris, 1965a: 60). This arrangement precluded their intervention in civilian government.

In 1945, President İsmet İnönü made a calculated decision to further apply Atatürk's reformist principles and started a multi-party politics. On the other hand, following Turkey's entrance to the NATO alliance in 1952, a new period of modernization began during which the military subscribed to the model of "rational democracy" and expected politicians to promote the common good at the virtual expense of particularistic interests. Consequently, each time the military came to the conclusion that civilian political rulers were unable to deal with the crises facing Turkey, the military intervened in order to save "democracy from itself."

Thus, the coup on 27 May 1960 followed a period of civil unrest that came after a government crackdown on civil liberties, upsurge in religious fanaticism, and civil manipulation of the armed forces by the Democratic Party (Harris, 1965b: 170-5). The intervention aimed at preventing the re-emergence of an authoritarian partisan regime by drawing up a new constitution (1961) that, among other things, created a second house of parliament to limit the government's range of action and institutionalized access to the topmost political authority by the military by forming a National Security Council (NSC) (Tachau and Heper, 1983: 22-3). The "coup by communiqué" of 12 March 1971 in turn came in the wake of armed Left-Right clashes and efforts to mobilize ethnic and sectarian groups. At this point in time, the military became concerned not only with the potential for political Islam but also ethnic separatism. It focused on returning order to society and amended the 1961 Constitution, restricting the basic rights and liberties (Nye, 1977). Finally, the coup of 12 September 1980 was the consequence of the failure of the civilian government to respond to the dramatic rise in political, ethnic, and religious violence resulting from the polarization of Turkish society. Whereas the reforms of 1960-1961 and 1971-1973 served to correct the problems then at hand so as to avoid the need for future interventions, the 1980-1983 restructuring aimed to correct the most glaring problems the military officers saw as inherent in the very structure of Turkish politics in order to promote the future health of the Turkish Republic. Among other things, the president of the republic and the NSC were given additional powers, the number of terms the same person could serve as

chairperson of a political party was limited, and the election law was amended with the aim of keeping marginal parties out of Parliament (Heper and Evin, 1994).

What is notable about Turkish politics since 1983 is the extent to which civilian governments have acted to forestall and avoid the pitfalls, which might have prompted a return to direct military rule. During the 1983-1989 periods, Prime Minister Turgut Özal acted in a careful manner vis-à-vis the military and, at the same time, gradually asserted the powers of the civilian government. From 1989 until 1993, despite the potential for conflict between President Özal and Prime Minister Demirel, stemming from the fact that they did not look eye to eye, they found a way to mutually coexist, as both were aware that a failure of the government to function as a political entity would bring about another military intervention (Karabelias, 1999).

This trend was further evidenced by the events of 1997. When, on 28 June 1996, the religiously oriented Welfare Party under Necmettin Erbakan formed a coalition with the True Path Party under Tansu Çiller, with Erbakan as prime minister, the secular establishment in Turkey was greatly alarmed. Soon perceiving an "increasing trend toward Islam," the military sought to bring the matter to the attention of the NSC chaired by President Süleyman Demirel (in office since Özal's death in 1993). Demirel on the one hand asked the government to act prudently on the issue of Islam and he on the other advised the military to act with restraint. When the government ignored such warnings, the NSC recommended to the government several measures against political Islam. At the NSC meeting of 28 February 1997, Demirel managed to soften the original draft recommendations in order to make them more palatable to Prime Minister Erbakan and his party, and yet still the Erbakan government was unwilling to enact the recommendations in question into law. Consequently, the military, instead of taking power into its own hands, orchestrated popular pressure upon the government. Erbakan felt obliged to resign; his government was replaced in June 1997 by a coalition government comprising three secularly oriented political parties (two from the right and one from the left of the political spectrum) (Heper and Güney, 2000).

It is patent that in the period under investigation (1923-1999), Turkish politics have evolved in spurts. The initial period (1923-1960) evinced single-party politics and then multi-party politics, the latter having difficulties in developing into a liberal-democratic state. The era from 1960 to 1999, in which the military interventions took place, was characterized by the inability of civilian governments to resolve the major problems facing Turkey and also several military interventions unsuccessful in imposing lasting solutions.

Yet stemming from the final direct intervention of 1980-1983, Turkish politics have come to greatly stabilize amidst recognition by many civilian leaders that it is in their self-interest to cooperate in any means possible to forestall another military intervention. This paralleled a growing reluctance on

the part of the military to take power into its own hands, and was replaced by an increased tendency to work within democratic institutions. The dissolution of the political parties in 1980 has fostered a communal interest among political leaders in maintaining civilian government in power even when some political leaders themselves were hostile to one another (i.e., Özal vs. Demirel, Yılmaz vs. Çiller). The military-led collapse of the religiously-oriented government in 1997 did not contradict this trend, for the military did not circumvented official channels in its actions; the positive role played by President Demirel as a civilian leader was significant; and the ready formation of another ruling coalition following the collapse of the Refah-True Path Party coalition pointed to a growing ability of political leaders from parties holding disparate views to cooperate.

All along, the military perceived democracy as an *end* rather than a *means*. Whenever it intervened directly or indirectly, officers blamed politicians but not *democracy* itself. Consequently, the first three military interventions (1960-1960, 1971-1973, and 1980-1983) were guardian type – military clearing the political mess and then returning to their barracks – while the last intervention (1997) was of the displacement type – military replacing one civilian government by another. Significantly, the military interventions were never of the ruler type – military trying to stay in power as long as possible. Officers always acted as protectors of a secular-democratic state governed by sensible and competent politicians. To the extent to which the governments in their view were interested in and capable of upholding such a state, officers preferred to stay on the sidelines. As noted, Turgut Özal was increasingly able and willing to subordinate military to civilian when he was first Prime Minister (1983-1989) and then President (1989-1993). Initially, this involved defying the measures put in place by the military in 1980-1983 to control extremists on the right and left (Karabelias, 1999: 137), followed by an attempt to take matters into his own hands in the area of internal security, and later by interference in the internal functioning of military. This included the appointment as chief of staff a general (Necip Torumtay) who was not the military's choice for that post (Heper and Güney, 1996). Although the military did not agree with all the policies of the civilian leadership under Özal, still the military remained within their barracks. This was because Özal acted in a respectful manner to the ideal of secular-democratic state and pursued quite successful economic policies. Under the circumstances, the military had no grounds for intervention. At the end of the 1990s, as far as the military was concerned, the acid test of the success of the civilian governments was their ability to successfully tackle the twin problems of political Islam and Kurdish separatism (Sakallıoğlu, 2001: 2).

From the earlier periods onwards, one also came across the institutionalization of the boundaries separating the civilian and military spheres. The separation began with the passage of the aforementioned law banning military officers from holding both active-duty commissions as well as seats in

Parliament (1924). A facilitating factor here was the presence of the Supreme Military Council that, as noted, allowed military views to be formally communicated to the civilian government. The preference of Atatürk and İnönü to administer the country as civilian rulers rather than as former military generals, i.e., not capitalizing on their former service to the country as officers, likewise assisted in solidifying the separation in question. Still another factor here was the increased disinclination of former officers to enter into politics. Although the ratio of former army officers in Parliament was about one-sixth in 1920 and about one-eighth in 1943, it went down to one-twentieth after the Democratic Party's landslide of 1950 (Rustow, 1959: 549-50). Officers also tried to keep their distance from politicians, particularly during intense political strife. It is telling that, amongst the causes precipitating the 1960 intervention, two of the most significant for the military were the use by the government of the army to suppress opposition and student protest, and Prime Minister Adnan Menderes' practice of basing promotions on personal loyalty to his party (Brown, 1989: 388; Rustow, 1964: 369-70). As a result, one witnessed following the 1960 coup, the military's creation of the NSC so as to provide the military with a formal and rigidly defined access to the halls of civilian government. Formed under the chairmanship of the President of the Republic, it provided a forum where military and civilian leaders could exchange views on "all matters touching on the security of the state;" this was seen as another guarantee against the politicization of the military (Brown, 1989: 389).

At the end of the 1990s, civil-military relations in Turkey were marked by increased civilian supremacy, where the military was first among equals in terms of how its views were weighed and considered by civilian actors. The military was willing to accept civilian supremacy provided the civilian leadership did not disregard the military's policy recommendations through the NSC, which were made only if the latter perceived a serious threat to their ideal of a secular-democratic state run by sensible and competent politicians. In their turn, civilian politicians did act in an increasingly sensible and competent manner, as a consequence of which civilian supremacy was on the rise.

It is patent that at the end of the twentieth century civil-military relations in Turkey display some resemblance to those in the advanced democracies. Yet, the fact that Turkey experienced four military interventions (three direct and one indirect) and, all along, the military felt it could use a veto power whenever it came to the conclusion that the civilians were unable to successfully grapple with the internal as well as external threats Turkey faced, rendered the Turkish case significantly different from the civil-military relations in advanced democracies. However, on the basis of an important recent development in Turkey it is possible to suggest that those relations in that country have begun to take a turn toward the ones in advanced democracies. Chief of Staff Hilmi Özkök has rhetorically asked whether military interventions in the past have been successful and then indicated that they had not been,

because following each intervention Turkish politics before long reverted back to its traditional pattern. He then significantly pointed out that, "officers should have greater confidence in the commonsense of the people" (Heper, 2005a) [read, "representative institutions"]. True to his word, when, on the eve of the Iraq War, he was asked whether a second front should be opened on the north too, he pointed out that there are two aspects to that question – political and military – and he dwelled only on the military aspect of the issue (Heper, 2005b). It is true that such statements in themselves may not be guarantees for the military's not lifting a finger even if Turkey faces a grave threat and the military would not be sure about the civilians' capability to effectively deal with it. However, this novel discourse on the part of the military coupled with the fact that Turkey obtained from the European Union a date for the start of accession negotiations for that country's full membership in the Union (December 17, 2004), one essential condition of which is unquestioned civilian supremacy vis-à-vis the military, could be the early signs of the start of a transition in Turkey from a polity where from time to time the military intervenes in politics to one where the military stays on the sidelines under all kinds of circumstances, while sharing its views with governments and not in public and doing that only on strictly military issues.

COMPARISON AND DISCUSSION

The militaries of Turkey and Israel both played key roles in the founding of their respective states, with the armed forces evicting foreign forces so that the states in question could be established. In Turkey, what followed immediately was a military-led modernization while in Israel the military served as a means of nation-building and external defense. These tasks transformed both militaries into symbols of national pride and unity. In each case, the prestige accrued to the military initially provided a means to greater power for the military. Particularly in Israel, many prominent former generals entered politics by capitalizing upon their successful military careers. In Turkey, essentially Atatürk was viewed as warrior-savior of the country and used this to enter the political sphere.

However, in both countries founding leaders tried to depoliticize the armed forces. Atatürk emphasized that the Turkish military was the guardian of the state with its Kemalist tradition and hence above politics. Ben Gurion, in contrast, stressed the subordination of the military to the civilian leadership and prohibited the activity of political parties within the IDF.

In the process, the military in Turkey became a last resort in defense of the secular Republic, thereby acting as a buffer between the civilian and military functions. Turkish officers subscribed to "rational democracy" and as such remained above partisan politics, which they disdained; they sought to ensure Turkish democracy and stability. In Israel, due to lingering political threats, the

boundaries between military and civilian affairs remained permeable, with officers being *politicized* and politicians to some extent *stategicized*, because of their close working relations with commissioned or retired officers.

It is not, therefore, surprising that in Turkey prime minister, minister of defense, and chief of staff came to have quite distinct spheres of responsibility and a formally well-defined relationship. *Apolitical* chief of staff on the one hand and *political* prime minister and defense minister on the other did not necessarily have similar views. On the whole, the former conveyed to the latter two civilian politicians the military's nonpartisan views via the Supreme Military Council/NSC on both the military and "security related" non-military issues. At certain times, the absence of ideological confluence and the presence of distrust led to tense relations; in extreme cases the military intervened in politics. After all, the military perceived itself as the *supervisor of*, rather than a subordinate *actor in* politics. The military maintained a neutral attitude toward different political parties except the Marxist, ultra-nationalist, and Islamic. In recent decades, the military became less of a *supervisor* and more of an *actor*. Here, the shift in the discourse of the military concerning the civil-military relations in Turkey and that country's having obtained a date from the EU for the start of accession negotiations seemed to have had important impacts. In Israel, the relations among prime minister, minister of defense, and chief of staff were not clearly delineated. However, this did not create major problems because those occupying the three offices had similar political views. Due to this state of affairs, when the prime minister and minister of defense tended to usurp defense functions (because of Israel's security dilemma) this did not lead to excessive tensions in the upper echelons of the state.

On the other hand, while in Turkey the role expansion of the military emerged as basically the military making policy *recommendations* on numerous security-related non-military issues, in Israel the role-expansion of the military included that institution's *active involvement* in the socio-economic development of their country and even the administration of certain territories. The requirements for national security were greater in Israel than Turkey, and the role expansion accordingly went further. Yet, in Turkey "threats to the state" emerged as internal (political Islam and ethnic separatism) while in Israel those threats came from outside. Consequently, in Turkey the military's veto of civil governments' policies remained a possibility and occasionally turned out to be a reality, while in Israel civilian politicians could always say the last word.

In Israel, the control of the civilian over the military officer gradually became more institutionalized while the inclusion of former military officers in government allowed for the reflection of the military's views on government policies. Israel, which never faced a military intervention, was, therefore, not likely to face one in the near future. In Turkey, the civilian and military spheres remained separate; the military frequently but not continuously impinged on government policies and sometimes intervened in politics. However, after a long

history of military interventions, the civilian leadership have gradually come to recognize the importance of assuaging the military's fears (as the guardian of the Republic) and act accordingly. More significantly, recently the military itself began to question the wisdom of military interventions in politics.

In contrast to the differences, there is one area where a similarity has existed between Israel and Turkey; both countries came to have professional armed forces, though that of Israel is technologically more advanced. In the case of Israel, Israelis themselves brought that technology to their present country when they emigrated from various technologically advanced countries and sharpened it because of the constant threat that country continued to face. As noted, the Turkish military was modernized largely following Turkey's joining NATO.

What does this study tell us about civil-military relations in general? S. Huntington's theory of "autonomy leading to professionalism that in turn gives rise to (1) political neutrality on the part of the military and (2) to a more effective military machine" can hardly explain the Turkish and Israeli cases. The Turkish military became professionalized not when the military experienced autonomy, but rather when Turkey joined NATO, which in turn led them to question the civilian leadership. Similarly, the IDF professionalized when it did not have autonomy and, in fact, became politicized when it was a professional army. We also cannot explain the Israeli and Turkish cases in terms of S. E. Finer's theory of "professionalism encouraging militaries to act more decisively and thus even carrying out coups." Despite their increased professionalism, the militaries in both countries, all along in Israel and recently perhaps in Turkey, too, developed a *modus vivendi* with civilian governments (and vice versa). Moreover, M. Janowitz's theory of the "inevitable politicization of the military because of its increasing global reach and external threat" is only partially helpful in the case of Israel and Turkey. In Israel, the military became politicized not because of global reach but owing to, among other things, significant external threats. In Turkey, the military remained non-politicized despite global reach. Theories based on the assumption of "subjective control" exercised by civilian governments can explain only certain periods of civil-military relations in the two countries under consideration – the Ben Gurion years in Israel and the single-party era in Turkey. Recent civil-military relations in Israel can be explained by self-restraint exercised by the officers; this was helped by the facts that former generals occupied critical posts in the state and, more importantly, from the beginning the IDF acknowledged that the last word belonged to politicians and acted accordingly. Recent civil-military relations in Turkey can be explained by a combination of a type of self-restraint exercised by the military, civilians' changing their conduct of politics, and more recently the military following suit as well as the "carrot policy" of some international organizations. In both countries, the military's direct and/or indirect involvement in politics would have been even less if threat levels as perceived

by the military (essentially, internal in Turkey and external in Israel) would go down.

In both Israel and Turkey, at least during recent decades, the militaries' attitudes toward civilian governments and their threat perceptions seemed to have played major roles in the manner in which the civil-military relations in those two countries evolved. The fact that both countries had professional armies did not prevent the military to have an enlarged role in the polity and society. Critical here were not the *means* of control (like military budgets, and the like), but rather the *composition* of the civilian government (Israel) or the *perceived competence* of the civilian government to deal with important problems the country faced and, even more important, the military view on the wisdom of military intervention (Turkey).

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