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Discord at Home, Discord in the World: Is Turkey, NATO's Eastern Frontier, Sustainably Stable and Peaceful?

Spory vnitřní, spory ve světě: Je stabilita a mír v Turecku jako východní hranice NATO udržitelná?

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Abstract:

The goal of this paper is to determine if it is likely for Turkey to remain a stable country that will avoid serious internal conflicts and violent conflicts abroad. The paper examines long-term cultural and civilizational variables of cosmopolitanism and rationality. It examines indicators that are more immediately associated with the escalation of an internal conflict: violent criminality, youth unemployment rate, income inequality, corruption perception, and political terror. In the end, it examines the level of militarization and the evolution and current state of civil-military relations. It concludes that most of the indicators do not bode well for the stability and democratic consolidation of Turkey. The reason Turkey has not succumbed to political violence and social instability is likely due to its high level of political repression. Given the characteristics of the Turkish society, two basic scenarios for future development are feasible: Turkey can either become much less stable and a victim to social discord with a chance of dangerous escalation; or it will cement its authoritarianism and manage social order by draconian policing, disproportionate "counter-terrorism" laws and disregard for the rule of law. Neither of these scenarios is favourable for its NATO allies, who must engage Turkey and work within the framework of existing alliances and international organizations to mitigate the risks of Turkey either becoming a rogue player or a state embroiled in a civil conflict.

Abstrakt:

Cílem tohoto textu je určit, zda je pravděpodobné, že Turecko zůstane stabilní zemí a vyhne se závažným vnitřním rozporům a násilným konfliktům v zahraničí. Článek zkoumá dlouhodobé kulturní a civilizační proměnné, které hrají roli v rozvoji kosmopolitismu a racionality. Dívá se dále na indikátory, které jsou bezprostředně spjaté s eskalací vnitřních konfliktů: násilný zločin, nezaměstnanost mládeže, příjmová nerovnost, vnímání korupce a politický teror. Nakonec analyzuje míru militarizace, vývoj a současný stav vztahů mezi civilní a vojenskou sférou. Mezi závěry

článku patří, že větší část zkoumaných indikátorů ukazuje na nepříznivé podmínky pro stabilitu a demokratickou konsolidaci v Turecku. Pravděpodobným důvodem, proč Turecko nepodlehlo větší míře politického násilí a společenské nestability, je vysoká míra politického útlaku. Při daných charakteristikách turecké společnosti existují dva základní scénáře možného budoucího vývoje: Turecko se buď stane zemí mnohem nestabilnější a podlehne sociálním nepokojům s možností nebezpečné eskalace, nebo v něm ještě více posílí autoritářství a společenský řád bude zachován pevnou vládou, neproporcionálními „protiteroristickými“ zákony a rozkladem principů právního státu. Žádný z těchto scénářů není příznivý pro turecké spojence v NATO, kteří musí Turecko zapojit do dialogu a pracovat v rámci existujících spojenectví a mezinárodních organizací, aby bylo co nejméně sníženo riziko, že se z Turecka stane nepřátelský hráč na světové scéně nebo stát ponořený do občanského konfliktu.

Keywords: Turkey; Stability; Social Order; Cosmopolitanism; Rationality; Conflict; Militarization; Civil-Military Relations; Democratic Backsliding.

Klíčová slova: Turecko; stabilita; společenský řád; kosmopolitismus; racionalita; konflikt; militarizace; civilně-vojenské vztahy; krize demokracie.

INTRODUCTION

The foreign policy motto of the Turkish Republic, attributed to its founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, is “peace at home, peace in the world”¹. It is telling that in a region that is as volatile as it has been at any point in generations, this motto still applies, but in reverse. The whole region is unstable and stuck in a quagmire of deeply-rooted conflicts. Turkey seems to have mostly abandoned any semblance of value-driven foreign policy, which is now determined almost solely by security considerations² and selective engagement³. Within Turkey, the Kurdish insurgency has returned with a vengeance⁴. This is

1 YONAH, Alexander, Edgar H. BRENNER and Serhat TÛTÛNCÛOĐLU KRAUSE. *Turkey: Terrorism, Civil Rights, and the European Union* [online]. London ; New York: Routledge, 2008, p. xxiv. ISBN 978-0-415-44163-6. Available at: <https://books.google.cz/books?id=MPGLkzwjXJQC>

2 ÇAKMAK, Cenap. Turkish - Syrian relations in the wake of the Syrian conflict : back to securitization? *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* [online]. 2016, 29(2), 686-708. Available at: doi:10/gdh8hs

3 DALAY, Galip. Turkey's Post-Arab Spring Foreign Policy [online]. 2016. Available at: <https://www.middleeastobserver.org/2016/11/25/turkeys-post-arab-spring-foreign-policy/>

4 LESSER, Ian. Turkey and the west after the failed coup: Beyond suspicion? *Insight Turkey*. 2016, 18(3), 45-53.

coupled with internal discord, political polarization⁵, significant democratic backsliding and purges of any real, potential, or imagined opposition⁶ and alleged collaborators⁷. The current volatility in the region is multi-causal, but the post-Arab Spring environment of political instability can certainly be credited for it⁸. The civil war in Syria has already claimed countless lives and material damage and it pits world and regional powers in an arena with a disconcertingly significant chance for a wider escalation. Imagining a counterfactual with Turkey in Syria's place is instructive for predicting and preventing such an option. Turkey is, of course, a major power, relatively stable, even though its convergence of interests with the Western powers is possibly at an all-time low⁹. It is an important NATO member with the 2nd largest military force in the alliance. Therefore, the imperative for Turkey to remain a stable and reliable actor is immense. The purpose of this article is to examine certain developments in Turkey that are correlated with an unstable and bellicose society with a potential for escalation.

1 LONG-TERM CULTURAL CONDITIONS FOR SOCIAL STABILITY

We shall first examine the general long-term developments that are deemed to be correlated to peaceful societies. These are adopted from Steven Pinker's concepts he presents in his book *The Better Angels of our Nature*¹⁰. He presents certain features of the human psyche that correlate well with peaceful behaviour, from which we select the measurable ones that play a role in contemporary societies. One of these are developments we can call *cosmopolitanism* - a cosmopolitan individual and society see more value in people other than their tribe, because if their widened *circle of empathy*¹¹. In a cosmopolitan society, the potency and viciousness of nationalism and religious sectarianism is diminished. The second set of trends examined is *rationality*¹², which is intrinsically linked to the level of education and literacy, decrease of superstition, extrajudicial killings, or vigilante justice. It is also inversely correlated with the rates of *criminality*,

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- 5 SELÇUK, Orçun. Strong presidents and weak institutions: populism in Turkey, Venezuela and Ecuador. *Journal of Southeast European & Black Sea Studies* [online]. 2016, 16(4), 571–589. ISSN 14683857. Available at: doi:10/gdh8hg
- 6 GÖLE, Nilüfer. Turkey Is Undergoing A Radical Shift, From Pluralism To Islamic Populism. *NPQ: New Perspectives Quarterly*. 2017, 34(4), pp. 45-49. ISSN 08937850.
- 7 TOPAK, Özgün E. The Making of a Totalitarian Surveillance Machine : Surveillance in Turkey Under AKP Rule. *Surveillance & Society*. 2017, p. 15, 535-542.
- 8 MUFTI, Malik. Turkey's Choice. *Insight Turkey*. 2017, 19(1), pp. 71-87.
- 9 LESSER, Ian. Turkey and the west after the failed coup: Beyond suspicion? *Insight Turkey*. 2016, 18(3), pp. 45-53.
- 10 PINKER, Steven. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: A History of Violence and Humanity*. London: Penguin Books, 2012.
- 11 PINKER, Steven. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: A History of Violence and Humanity*. London: Penguin Books, 2012, pp. 832-833.
- 12 PINKER, Steven. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: A History of Violence and Humanity*. London: Penguin Books, 2012, p. 834.

especially violent criminality. The theoretical underpinning of the connection between *cosmopolitanism* and *rationality*, and propensity for violence is Pinker's modification of the perennial *prisoner's dilemma* called *pacifist's dilemma*. It is a model that shows a theoretical calculation of an individual to determine whether violence is an appropriate means of asserting one's goal. Pinker argues that if this model is not modified by external factors the motivation for violence is by default presumed. Moreover, the victorious party's benefit from the encounter tends to be smaller than the damage dealt to the defeated. In the state of nature, therefore, conflict is all but inevitable and extremely undesirable¹³. Cultures that have higher levels of *cosmopolitanism* or *rationality* tend to avoid such states.

Cosmopolitanism is a psychological process that, among other things, puts a psychological toll on violence. Turkey is often cited as an example of a cosmopolitan society with a long history thereof. Turkey, an heir of the Ottoman Empire, has a tradition of tolerance of minorities (especially defined religiously), however, it is another question how much these communities really coexist. Indeed, historically there was very little intermingling between the confessional communities. "One may speak of Christian Arabs - but a Christian Turk is an absurdity and a contradiction in terms. Even today [...] a non-Muslim in Turkey may be called a Turkish citizen, but never a Turk."¹⁴ Path dependency strongly impacts the citizenship model of today's Turkey and determines how its citizens and authorities perceive Turkish society. Kemalist nationalism after the establishment of the republic is purely cultural and political, not racist. Anyone can become a Turk, but never a *hyphenated Turk*, subcultures are not protected or even recognized, everybody receives the same rights, but these rights are viewed as citizenship-based and do not touch upon cultural rights¹⁵. "Turkish secularism and nationalism are still haunted by problems of collective identity that emerged as a consequence of the breakdown of the Ottoman Empire. Turkey's reversed history of liberalism and nationalism reinforced collectivist ideas rather than individualism."¹⁶

Turkish national identity model is on one hand exclusionist for non-Muslims, but at the same time assimilationist towards Muslims of a non-Turkish identity¹⁷. There is probably no better example to demonstrate this than the Kurdish question, which, even ignoring its security implications, has deep roots in Turkish self-perception and percep-

¹³ PINKER, Steven. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: A History of Violence and Humanity*. London: Penguin Books, 2012, p. 821.

¹⁴ LEWIS, Bernard. *The emergence of modern Turkey*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 15. ISBN 0195134591.

¹⁵ UĞUR ÇINAR, Meral. *Collective Memory and National Membership: Identity and Citizenship Models in Turkey and Austria* [online]. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, p. 32. ISBN 978-1-137-47366-0. Available at: doi:10.1057/9781137473660

¹⁶ STEUNEBRINK, Gerrit, ed. *Civil society, religion, and the nation: modernization in intercultural context: Russia, Japan, Turkey*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004, p. 171. Studies in intercultural philosophy, 14. ISBN 978-90-420-1665-1.

¹⁷ ANASTASAKIS, Othon, Kalypso NICOLAÏDIS and Kerem ÖKTEM, eds. *In the long shadow of Europe: Greeks and Turks in the era of postnationalism*. Leiden; Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Pub, 2009, p. 127. International relations studies series, v. 3. ISBN 978-90-04-17112-1.

tion of the *other*¹⁸. For demonstration, according to a large-scale 2002 study, as many as 66% of its participants stated that they disagree with permitting Kurdish radio and TV programs to be broadcast. And even a larger majority, about 73%, believed that the Kurdish language should not be given the status of an elective subject in schools¹⁹. Another study, conducted in 2009, shows similar results. 65% of the respondents were opposed to granting constitutional recognition for Kurdish cultural rights and 47% said that such recognition would destroy the unity of the state²⁰. As we see, it is a very delicate matter for the elites to deal with the Kurdish issue due to the public opinions. Securitization of the issue seems to be one of the very few politically viable options to deal with it, which to a large extent explains the recent re-escalation of the Kurdish conflict.

Similarly, people of Greek, Armenian, Jewish and Syriac ethnic identity overwhelmingly cite problems with freedom of expression and over a third report experience with hate speech, death threats, humiliation or defamatory language²¹. Another group that is potentially victimized in Turkey are those of Arabic descent, which is now particularly problematic due to the enormous influx of refugees streaming from the war-torn Syria. A 2015 Pew research discovered that more than two thirds of Turks are uncomfortable with the number of refugees in Turkey²². These observations are also echoed by a fairly recent analysis of Turkish concepts of hospitality and cultural openness, especially in the light of the refugee flow that compiled all available quantitative and qualitative research on the topic. One of its conclusions of interest to us is as follows: "Every time the Turks become suzerain of people believing in a different faith, tolerance is presented as a normal relationship between Turks and the others. Yet the idea of tolerance expresses a relation of superiority: it is benevolence, good will, and is exerted at the discretion of the superior; it does not signify equality and is never a duty. [...] When Turkish respondents refer to traditional cultural values of hospitality and tolerance actually put more focus on the valuable characteristics of the Turks, rather than on the value of the foreigners themselves."²³

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- ¹⁸ UĞUR ÇINAR, Meral. *Collective Memory and National Membership: Identity and Citizenship Models in Turkey and Austria* [online]. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 34-35. ISBN 978-1-137-47366-0. Available at: doi:10.1057/9781137473660
- ¹⁹ NECAT, Erder. *Türkiye'de Siyasi Partilerin Yandaş/Seçmen Profili* [online]. İstanbul: Tüses, 2002, pp. 99-100 [accessed. 2018-05-17]. Available at: http://www.tuses.org.tr/yayin_goster.php?Guid=43e904fa-6bec-11e7-aece-54b29146220c
- ²⁰ BÜLENT ARAS, AYDIN, ERTAN, BÖLME, İHSAN, DALMIŞ, İBRAHİM, ENSAROĞLU, YILMAZ, ETE, HATEM, KÜÇÜKCAN, TALIP, ÖZHAN, TAHA and YAYMAN, HÜSEYİN. *Türkiye'nin Kürt sorunu algısı*. Ankara: Seta, 2009, pp. 97-104. ISBN 978-605-4023-05-9.
- ²¹ *Sosyal Medya ve Azınlıklar Araştırması* [online]. B.m.: Konda. 2015. Available at: http://survey.konda.com.tr/rapor/Sosyal_Medya_ve_Azinliklar_Rapor.pdf
- ²² POUSSHTER, Jacob. Deep Divisions in Turkey as Election Nears. *Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project* [online]. 15. October 2015 [accessed. 2018-05-17]. Available at: <http://www.pewglobal.org/2015/10/15/deep-divisions-in-turkey-as-election-nears/>
- ²³ TOLAY, Juliette. Deconstructing Turkish Public Attitudes towards Refugees: Empowering Rights over Politicization and Self-gratification. *USAK Yearbook of Politics and International Relations*. 2014, p. 6.

The above findings clearly indicate appreciable shortcomings in the area of substantive cosmopolitanism in Turkey, which bodes ill for sustainable social peace in a country where ethnic and cultural homogeneity is not feasible.

Let us move on to assessing the level of *rationality*, which Pinker cites as another necessary condition for a peaceful environment. While there are many aspects of rationality that may be analysed in any given society, we will focus solely on the more rigorously measurable ones. For reasons all but obvious, the primary way to impart reason to population is education. In this area, the general trend has been positive. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, the net schooling ratio ("defined as the ratio between the number of pupils and the size of the population of the theoretical age cohort for the relevant level of education"²⁴) for primary education rose from 84.74% in the school year 1997/1998 to 96.3% in 2011/2012 (although there were several dips in the progress). In relative terms, the numbers for secondary education were even more impressive, rising from 37.87% to 67.37% in the same timeframe²⁵. A 2013 study examined by quantitative and statistical methods the relationship between education and criminality. It found that as much as 61% of examined crimes are perpetrated by primary school graduates - on the opposite side, university graduates were responsible for only 3.4% of them²⁶. The Turkish context is no exception to the rule of the thumb that higher education is inversely correlated to lower crime rates.

Although the trend in school enrolment is largely positive for the children of Turkish citizens, there are concerns about children who came into Turkey as refugees - or are born there as such. According to a Human Rights Watch report based on a research conducted in summer 2015, out of 620,000 Syrian school-aged children who entered Turkey as refugees in the last four years, less than one third attends school - there are, therefore, 415,000 children of Syrian origin residing in Turkey with no education - a situation caused by legal impediments, linguistic and cultural barriers, underfunding, or understaffing²⁷. The report makes the obvious point: "If a child doesn't go to school, it will create big problems in the future—they will end up on the streets, or go back to Syria to die fighting, or be radicalized into extremists, or die in the ocean trying to reach Europe."²⁸ There is little hope for a peaceful, non-violent, reason- and education-driven life for people who do not get even the basic education and this is a challenge for Turkey in any case - if these children linger in Turkey, a lost generation will have been brought up there; if they return to Syria, Turkey will have to deal with an uneducated population

²⁴ KOUIJ, Yasemin. *European Higher Education Policy and the Social Dimension: A Comparative Study of the Bologna Process*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, p. 213. ISBN 978-1-137-47314-1.

²⁵ *Eğitim İstatistikleri - Education Statistics* [online]. B.m.: Turkish Statistical Institute. 2013 [accessed 2018-05-05]. Available at: http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PrelstatistikTablo.do?istab_id=1606

²⁶ TEKELI, Seda and Güler GÜNSOY. The Relation between Education and Economic Crime: An Assessment for Turkey. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* [online]. 2013, 106, 3012-3025. ISSN 18770428. Available at: doi:10/gdh8hn

²⁷ GEE, Stephanie. "When I picture my future, I see nothing": barriers to education for Syrian refugee children in Turkey. B.m.: Human Rights Watch, 2015, pp. 7-8. ISBN 978-1-62313-293-4.

²⁸ GEE, Stephanie. "When I picture my future, I see nothing": barriers to education for Syrian refugee children in Turkey. B.m.: Human Rights Watch, 2015. ISBN 978-1-62313-293-4.

in its neighbourhood and it will be perpetually endangered by extremism and spill-over effects of potential future troubles in its vicinity.

The connection between crime and rationality comes together in examining the answer to the question of economic rationality of Turkey. A 2015 study looked at the crime data aggregated to sub-regional levels during the period of 2008 to 2010 as collected by the Turkish Statistical Institute and measured against the key variable of deterrence (with control variables such as poverty level, education, population density or unemployment)²⁹. It concludes that propensity to commit criminal activities appears to be positively related to the risk of deterrence, in other words that crime in Turkey is not driven by rationality. Not dissimilarly to European contexts, factors of urbanization, high proportions of young people and high unemployment rates are correlated with criminality.³⁰ In this area, Turkey is not appreciably deviant from comparable countries.

Having examined the specifics of the nature of criminality in Turkey and its potential mitigation by rationality, it is now necessary to link the findings to demonstrable statistics on crime, putting an emphasis on violent criminality. In 2014 the Turkish Ministry of Justice disclosed information on the growth of crime rate in Turkey and even provided a historical trend that may be extrapolated. The number of arrested convicts as of this 2014 report for the given year was 152,335, whereas two decades before it was 38,931 persons. That is a fourfold increase. Even during the military *coup d'état* period in early 1980s the yearly number of convicts was only 80,000. Population growth, which would partly explain the growth in absolute numbers, did not account for the rise: population of Turkey increased by 26% between 1994 and 2014, which does not correspond to the 400% rise in criminality; the relative crime rate is therefore also on a sharp rise³¹. Crime rates of juveniles are also on a steady climb in Turkey and between 2010 and 2014 youth criminality as measured by the number of juveniles received into security units because of an offense rose by 40% (from 83,393 individuals to 117,486)³². According to the National Statistical Office at the United Nations, the homicide rate has decreased more than twofold between 1994 and 2012³³, however violent criminality short of homicide has grown significantly in the same timeframe³⁴.

²⁹ LAURIDSEN, Jorgen, Fatma ZEREN and Ayse ARI. Is Crime in Turkey Economically Rational? *Estudios de Economía Aplicada* [online]. 2015, 33–1 [accessed. 2018-04-21]. ISSN 1556-5068. Available at: doi:10/gdh8gt

³⁰ LAURIDSEN, Jorgen, Fatma ZEREN and Ayse ARI. Is Crime in Turkey Economically Rational? *Estudios de Economía Aplicada* [online]. 2015, 33–1 [accessed. 2018-04-21]. ISSN 1556-5068. Available at: doi:10/gdh8gt

³¹ Turkish crime rate increases 400 percent in 20 years. *Today's Zaman* [online]. 20. October 2014 [accessed. 2015-01-12]. Available at: http://www.todayszaman.com/national_turkish-crime-rate-increases-400-percent-in-20-years_362172.html

³² *Güvenlik birimine suça sürüklenme ile gelen veya getirilen çocuk sayısı - Number of juveniles received into security units because of offence* [online]. B.m.: Turkish Statistical Institute. 2012 [accessed. 2018-05-05]. Available at: http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PrelstatistikTablo.do?istab_id=1623

³³ Homicide (Victims of Crime) in Turkey. *HelgiLibrary* [online]. 2012 [accessed. 2018-05-17]. Available at: <http://www.helgilibrary.com/indicators/homicide-victims-of-crime/turkey>

³⁴ Number of Total Violent Crimes in Turkey. *HelgiLibrary* [online]. 2012 [accessed. 2018-05-17]. Available at: <http://www.helgilibrary.com/indicators/number-of-total-violent-crimes/turkey>

Since other kinds of criminality do not show such an extreme bias towards male victims and they are growing, the overall trend in murders is unfavourable to females. According to the advocacy group *We Will Stop Women Murders*, for example, in 2014 alone there were 287 cases of Turkish women being murdered by their ex-spouses³⁵. Unfortunately, Turkey does not publish any official statistics on femicide. Fairly recent data were disclosed by Justice Minister Sadullah Ergin in 2011 as a response to a parliamentary inquiry and it revealed an extremely negative trend. Between 2002 and 2009, the murder rate of women climbed by a staggering 1400%: “Eighty-three women were murdered in 2003, 164 in 2004, 317 in 2005, 663 in 2006, 1,011 in 2007, 806 in 2008 and 953 during the first seven months of 2009, the last date for which data was available”³⁶. Femicide is likely to be perpetrated at homes and by male relatives who cannot cope with their partners’ or female relatives’ modern lifestyles, independence or separation. This assertion could be challenged by claims that modernity in urban centres has little to do with patriarchy and superstitious cultural attitudes in less developed regions which are less penetrated by modernity, but the geographic breakdown of the murders contradicts this. A substantial portion of the murders took place in coastal areas and modern urban centres such as Istanbul or Izmir, which are characterized by more modern lifestyles³⁷.

When we reduce violence to the ultimate act of depriving one of their right to life, then the trend is positive - we could potentially link it to the ratio of educated population, economic growth, or the increasing rule of law. However, the increasing rate of physical violence of other forms contradicts this, coupled with troubling trends in femicide. Therefore, the forces of *cosmopolitanism* have not been present in Turkey sufficiently enough to offset criminality, violent behaviour, and danger to the more vulnerable members of the society.

2 POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS FOR CONFLICT ENVIRONMENT

Let us further examine several select conditions that can be considered detrimental to a sustainably peaceful society, starting with economic indicators. *Youth unemployment* is linked by multiple studies to unrest, political and economic instability, and con-

³⁵ SVIRSKY, Meira. Turkey: Epidemic of Murders of Women Seeking Divorce. *Clarion Project* [online]. 24. November 2014 [accessed. 2018-05-17]. Available at: <https://clarionproject.org/turkey-epidemic-murders-women-seeking-divorce-49/>

³⁶ Murder a fact of life for women in Turkey. *Hürriyet Daily News* [online]. 20. February 2011. Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20120121230015/http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=women-murder-victims-increase-snowballing-in-turkey-2011-02-20>

³⁷ Kadın Cinayetleri. *Kadın Cinayetleri* [online]. 2018 [accessed. 2018-05-17]. Available at: <http://kadincinayetleri.org/>

flict³⁸. The youth unemployment rate is the number of unemployed 15-24-year-olds expressed as a percentage of the youth labour force. International Labour Organization collates all available data on youth unemployment for a precise estimate as well as future projections. According to its index, as of 2016, Turkey's youth unemployment rate was 19.5%, which is the highest one since this particular index has been compiled; and is projected to reach rates over 20 percentage points in the following years³⁹. That is considered above reasonably desirable rates⁴⁰ and above the world average of 13%. It is, in fact, comparable to Syria's rate of 20.1% as of 2010, before the devastating civil war broke out. The rates for pre-Arab Spring Egypt or Tunisia were higher still (at 28.8% and 29.5% respectively), however, and the rate of Turkey is not significantly different from the average of Europe and Central Asia. That being said, youth unemployment is a challenge for Turkey that must be addressed to avoid economic and social instability.

The measure of *income inequality* is also linked by ample research to "to regional, ethnic, and class discrepancies that engendered crises"⁴¹. The GINI coefficient measures the inequality among values of a frequency distribution (for example, levels of income). A GINI coefficient of 0 expresses perfect equality and one of 100 expresses maximum inequality. Let us look at the GINI coefficient for disposable (post-tax) income for Turkey. As of 2016, Turkey's had a GINI coefficient by disposable income of 39.7. A value exceeding 33 is considered concerning⁴². The silver lining, however, is that the trend in Turkey can be cautiously proclaimed positive. Fifteen years prior, in 2001, Turkey's GINI was 45 and there has been a slow and steady dwindling of the number⁴³. Let us look at

38 AZENG, Therese F. and Thierry U. YOGO. Youth Unemployment and Political Instability in Selected Developing Countries. *African Development Bank Group Working Paper No. 171* [online]. 2013. Available at: https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Working_Paper_171_-_Youth_Unemployment_and_Political_Instability_in_Selected_Developing_Countries.pdf

39 *Unemployment rate by sex and age -- ILO modelled estimates, Nov. 2017 (%)* [online]. B.m.: International Labour Organization. 2017 [accessed. 2018-05-18]. Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/ilostat-home/home>

40 AZENG, Therese F. and Thierry U. YOGO. Youth Unemployment and Political Instability in Selected Developing Countries. *African Development Bank Group Working Paper No. 171* [online]. 2013. Available at: https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Working_Paper_171_-_Youth_Unemployment_and_Political_Instability_in_Selected_Developing_Countries.pdf

41 NAFZIGER, E. Wayne and Juha AUVINEN. Economic Development, Inequality, War, and State Violence. *World Development* [online]. 2002, 30(2), 153–163. Available at: doi:10/bwg542

42 ULTSCH, Alfred and Jörn LÖTSCH. A data science based standardized Gini index as a Lorenz dominance preserving measure of the inequality of distributions. *PLoS ONE* [online]. 2017, 12(8) [accessed. 2018-05-18]. ISSN 1932-6203. Available at: doi:10/gbrqjx"plainCitation": "ULTSCH, Alfred and Jörn LÖTSCH. A data science based standardized Gini index as a Lorenz dominance preserving measure of the inequality of distributions. PLoS ONE [online]. 2017, 12(8

43 SOLT, Frederick. *The Standardized World Income Inequality Database (6.2, March 2018)*. 23. March 2018the SWIID is better suited to broadly cross-national research on income inequality than previously available sources: it offers coverage double that of the next largest income inequality dataset, and its record of comparability is three to eight times better than those of alternate datasets. In any papers or publications that use the SWIID, authors are asked to cite the article of record for the data set and give the version number as follows: Solt, Frederick. 2016. "The Standardized World Income Inequality Database." *Social Science Quarterly* 97(5

the GINI coefficient for other countries in Turkey's vicinity. The last data point for Syria before the civil war was 38.2 in 2007. Greece's was 33.5 in 2015. Pre-Arab Spring Tunisia had a GINI of 34.5 in 2010, and Iran in 2014 was at 37.2. Turkey's standing among its neighbours is therefore a cause for concern, only mitigated by a steady if modest positive trend.

In the case of Turkey, however, even more so than economic factors, political factors will play a dominant role in the potential for instability. First, there is the issue of *corruption* and *corruption perception*⁴⁴. Corruption is a perilous concept to measure, however when we talk about how it affects politics and the society at large, we mainly talk about how seriously the constituents perceive the problem of corruption - the Corruption Perception Index first developed in 1995 by Transparency International is a very useful way to look at corruption in a useful light (purely objective measurement of corruption is all but impossible⁴⁵ in any case). The index uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean. For 2017, two thirds of observed countries had a score below the 50 mid-point, averaging at 43. Turkey scored at 40, which is below the aforementioned average and has been on a steady decline - down from 50 in 2013, the year marked by the Gezi Park protests that were heralded as a wave of hope for the dissent but ultimately ended up cementing the existing power hierarchy⁴⁶. A like-for-like comparison with pre-Arab Spring MENA states is not quite possible as the index's measurement was altered in 2012. The earliest usable score for Syria is thus from 2012 and it scored 26. However, we must remember this is already after the civil war had begun and Syria has since been near the very bottom of the ranking. Tunisia scored above 2017's Turkey in 2012 (41), as well as in 2017 (42) and Turkey also ranks below Morocco or Greece. However, as of 2017, the perception of corruption of Turkey is still less dire than that in regional players such as Egypt (32), Iran (30) or Lebanon (28). Let us remember, however, that it took Turkey only four years to drop from 50 to 40. It is therefore not inconceivable for it to drop to the levels around 30 before a similar amount of time passes.

A link between corruption and political terror has been well established in general as in the Turkey's case⁴⁷. Political terror is the situation where political power is abused to the point of physical violence - *political terror*⁴⁸. The dataset we will therefore utilize

44 URRÁ, Francisco-Javier and Edmund A WALSH. *Assessing Corruption: An analytical review of Corruption measurement and its problems: Perception, Error and Utility*. 2007.

45 URRÁ, Francisco-Javier and Edmund A WALSH. *Assessing Corruption: An analytical review of Corruption measurement and its problems: Perception, Error and Utility*. 2007.

46 ÖZEN, Hayriye. *An Unfinished Grassroots Populism: The Gezi Park Protests in Turkey and Their Aftermath*. *South European Society & Politics* [online]. 2015, 20(4), pp. 533-552. ISSN 13608746. Available at: doi:10/gdh8f4

47 SÖYLER, Mehtap. *The Turkish deep state: State consolidation, civil-military relations and democracy* [online]. 2015, p. 136. ISBN 978-1-317-66879-4. Available at: doi:10.4324/9781315769226

48 WOOD, Reed M and Mark GIBNEY. *The Political Terror Scale (PTS): A Re-introduction and a Comparison to CIRI*. *Human Rights Quarterly* [online]. 2010. Available at: doi:10/bzftb5a surprising number of questions remain regarding the origins of the scale, the coding scheme it employs, and its conceptualization of "state terror." This research note attempts to clarify these issues. We also take this opportunity to compare the PTS with the Cingranelli and Richards Human Rights Data Project (CIRI)

for this phenomenon is the Political Terror Scale (PTS), which accounts for violations of basic human rights to the physical integrity of the person by agents of the state within the territorial boundaries of the given state. It sources data from reports by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the US Department of State. The third one has the most rounded-out and complete data and therefore we will look at this particular index. The scale goes from 1 (the most secure rule of law) to 5 (no limits whatsoever to the leaders' pursuit of power). As of 2016, Turkey has been assigned the mark of 5⁴⁹, which reflects, among other things, the severe and indiscriminate purges following the 2016 coup d'état attempt⁵⁰. The PTS's lack of granularity effectively puts Turkey in the same category with the most repressive regimes in existence. However, this lack of granularity is instructive, as it helps reveal such a comparison. Turkey has not scored values below 3 since 1979, i.e., before the 1980 military coup which established a rather illiberal constitution and cemented the decisive power of the military over civilian leadership for decades to come⁵¹. This configuration of power would only change during the Justice and Development Party rule, however, not in the direction of democratization and decrease in political terror but to the contrary.

3 THE MILITARY AND CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

This brings us to the final portion of this text that examines the questions regarding the military and civil-military relations in Turkey. Referring to the Global Militarization Index (a multi-source and multi-indicator index depicting the relative weight and importance of the military apparatus of one state in relation to its society as a whole on a scale ranging from 0 to 1,000), Turkey is the 25th most militarized country in the world as of 2017 (out of 151 observed state entities) with a GMI score of 702.1⁵² (a raise from 2014's 689.1). "Due to its geographic proximity, it is severely affected by the violent conflicts in Syria and Iraq and also actively involved in the events of the wars. Since August 2016, the Turkish military has been officially supporting opposition forces in the struggle against Assad. In Syria, Iraq and in its own country, the military is taking action against the PKK and its associated groups. The attempted coup in July 2016 led to a reduction in armed

49 GIBNEY, Mark, Reed WOOD, Linda CORNETT, Peter HASCHKE, Daniel ARON and Attilio PISANÒ. *The Political Terror Scale (October 2017)* [online]. 2017 [accessed. 2018-05-19]. Available at: <http://www.politicalterroryscale.org/Data/Download.html>

50 DEVI, Sharmila. Government purge continues in Turkey after failed coup. *Lancet (London, England)* [online]. 2016, 388(10060), 2580–2581. Available at: [doi:10/gdh8gp](https://doi.org/10/gdh8gp)

51 ÖZBUDUN, Ergun and Ömer Faruk GENÇKAYA. *Democratization and the Politics of Constitution-making in Turkey*. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2009, pp. 19-26. ISBN 978-963-9776-30-2.

52 MUTSCHLER, Max M. and Susanne HEINKE. *Global Militarization Index 2017* [online]. 2017. Available at: <https://www.bicc.de/publications/publicationpage/publication/global-militarization-index-2017-785/>

forces personnel; however, its long-term effects on the country's degree of militarization are not yet clear."⁵³

Although many long-term questions regarding Turkey's militarization remain to be answered, one thing is clear. The last decade has seen a sharp turn in civil-military relations in Turkey - the military has largely ceded its power over politics⁵⁴ to the civilian government enjoying a relatively large popularity, gained at the expense of the military⁵⁵. The unsuccessful coup d'état in July 2016 was in all likelihood perpetrated by non-hierarchical Gülenist elements within the military⁵⁶ and although the main military hierarchy was not deemed directly responsible, it went through a major defanging process by the political elite. Through a series of reforms of the National Security Council, the military is now largely controlled by civilian officials,⁵⁷ which was not the case in the decades prior to the Justice and Development Party era.

However, "civilian control of the military is not always democratic control. The military was under civilian control in both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union"⁵⁸. Indeed, the democratic backsliding we have been witness to, especially since 2013, shows that "achieving democratic civil-military relations would require a balance of power between civilians and the military: While the military must relinquish its role as the country's guardians, civilians must work to regain the trust of military officers"⁵⁹. This trust was first severely breached by the Ergenekon and Balyoz investigations that originated in 2007 (and have been since discredited). The process was initially hailed as a step towards the normalization and democratization of Turkish civil-military relations⁶⁰. Further internal developments, such as massive post-coup-attempt purges, a permanent state of emergency and constitutional revisions narrowly passed in 2017⁶¹, have definitely cemented the balance in favour of civilian control, albeit democratic only in form. The military in Turkey has traditionally been almost identified with the state since the Ottoman

53 MUTSCHLER, Max M. and Susanne HEINKE. *Global Militarization Index 2017* [online]. 2017. Available at: <https://www.bicc.de/publications/publicationpage/publication/global-militarization-index-2017-785/>

54 GÜRSOY Y., Yaprak. Turkish public opinion on the coup allegations: Implications for democratization. *Political Science Quarterly* [online]. 2015, 130(1), 103–132. Available at: doi:10/gdh8hv

55 CILLILER, Yavuz. Popular Determinant on Civil-Military Relations in Turkey. *Arab Studies Quarterly* [online]. 2016, 38(2), p. 500. Available at: doi:10/gdh8g4

56 WALDMAN, Simon and Emre ÇALIŞKAN. *The "New Turkey" and Its Discontents*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2017, p. 45. ISBN 978-0-19-066837-2.

57 KARS KAYNAR, Aysegül. Political Activism of the National Security Council in Turkey After the Reforms. *Armed Forces and Society* [online]. 2017, 43(3), pp. 523-544. Available at: doi:10/gbj9hscivil-military relations in Turkey have been tremendously overhauled. The National Security Council (MGK

58 KŘÍŽ, Zdeněk. Army and Politics in the Czech Republic Twenty Years after the Velvet Revolution. *Armed Forces & Society* [online]. 2010, 36(4), pp. 627-646. ISSN 0095-327X, 1556-0848. Available at: doi:10/fbsfqw

59 AKNUR, Müge. Civil-Military Relations During the AK Party Era: Major Developments and Challenges. *Insight Turkey*. 2013, 15(4), pp. 131-150.

60 DANĚK, Pavel and Zdeněk KŘÍŽ. Politický vliv turecké armády. *Politologická revue*. 2011, 17(2), pp. 35-52. ISSN 1211-0353.

61 UÇUM, Mehmet. Reforming Turkey's Democracy. *Insight Turkey; Ankara*. 2017, 19(2), 21-42. ISSN 1302177X.

era⁶², and in the post-war era, it reserved for itself the prerogative to intervene whenever the principles of Atatürk were at stake⁶³. For the present situation, it can mean two things: either Atatürk's legacy has only now been completely cemented, or the army as the last refuge of Turkey's founding principles is unable to defend them any longer. The readers can take their pick, either way it means 2018's Turkey is vastly different from the Turkey of the past.

Samuel Huntington's seminal work *The Soldier and the State* also cites the military's popularity as one of the reasons why it can interfere in civilian politics⁶⁴. In 2012, 73.9% of Turks expressed "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the military⁶⁵. After the coup attempt, another survey pegged the confidence at 66%⁶⁶. The coup attempt was deliberately cast as a rebellion of a small fringe group and the government used it not necessarily to undermine the trust in military, but to subsume it under control. The following military operations in Syria might have even caused the public's confidence in the military to rebound almost completely⁶⁷. The focus of the Turkish military

⁶² DANĚK, Pavel and Zdeněk KŘÍŽ. Politický vliv turecké armády. *Politologická revue*. 2011, 17(2), pp. 35-52. ISSN 1211-0353.

⁶³ DANĚK, Pavel and Zdeněk KŘÍŽ. Politický vliv turecké armády. *Politologická revue*. 2011, 17(2), pp. 35-52. ISSN 1211-0353.

⁶⁴ HUNTINGTON, Samuel P. *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. First Edition. Cambridge, MA; London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957, pp. 88-89. ISBN 978-0-674-81735-7.

⁶⁵ INGLEHART, R., C. HAERPFER, A. MORENO, C. WELZEL, K. KIZILOVA, J. DIEZ-MEDRANO, M. LAGOS, P. NORRIS, E. PONARIN and B. PURANEN. *World Values Survey: Round Six - Country-Pooled Datafile 2010 - 2014* [online]. Madrid: JD Systems Institute. 2014. Available at: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV6.jsp>

⁶⁶ Chains of command. *The Economist* [online]. 2016 [accessed. 2018-05-20]. ISSN 0013-0613. Available at: <https://www.economist.com/europe/2016/09/29/chains-of-command>

⁶⁷ Chains of command. *The Economist* [online]. 2016 [accessed. 2018-05-20]. ISSN 0013-0613. Available at: <https://www.economist.com/europe/2016/09/29/chains-of-command>

is now on external, not internal, threats⁶⁸ and in any event, we cannot conceivably talk about the military as a political actor on its own right anymore. These developments do not mitigate the internal problems Turkey has. On the contrary, the problems are even further exposed. The massive polarization and abuse of political power deepens grievances in people. Turkey's military is engaged in regional conflicts, often opposed to its NATO allies⁶⁹, bringing Turkey to the edge of conflict within NATO and/or a conflict of a NATO power against an adversary - all of these conceivably in a bid to rally domestic support.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this paper is to determine if it is likely for Turkey to remain a stable country that will avoid serious internal conflicts and violent conflicts abroad. A worst-case scenario for the region, Europe, and NATO would be an escalation of political violence and/or a military conflict involving Turkey in the region. The paper examined the long-term cultural and civilizational variables of *cosmopolitanism* and *rationality* and deemed both insufficient for a sustainable social peace. Subsequently, we examined indicators that are more immediately associated with the escalation of an internal conflict. *Violent criminality* and specifically violence against women in Turkey are on a rise. Turkey has a high *youth unemployment rate* and high level of *income inequality*, although these

⁶⁸ VAROL, Ozan O. The Turkish "model" of civil-military relations. *International Journal of Constitutional Law* [online]. 2013, 11(3), pp. 727-750. Available at: doi:10/gdh8hqa chorus of commentators advocated a "Turkish model" for civil-military relations in Egypt's nascent democracy. That term is frequently invoked in both popular and academic discourse, but rarely defined. This article takes up the task of giving content to that elusive phrase. It begins by analyzing the composition, structure, and objectives of the Turkish military beginning with the Ottoman Empire. It then turns to May 1960, when the Turkish military staged its first direct intervention in republican politics by toppling an authoritarian government and installing democratically elected leaders after seventeen months of interim military rule. The article shows that the military played a crucial role in Turkish modernization and democratization during the coup and in its immediate aftermath—a role that has been largely obscured by the current portrayal of the Turkish military as a hegemonic and repressive institution. The article then explores why, following its initial democratization role after the 1960 coup, the military failed to retreat to the barracks and began to present impediments to democracy. It argues that the plethora of counter-majoritarian institutions established in the 1961 Constitution, drafted under military supervision following the 1960 coup, sparked frequent power vacuums in Turkey, prompting the military to stage political interventions to ensure stability. It further argues that the military's focus on domestic policy matters with its institutionalization in the National Security Council in the 1961 Constitution ensnared the military in domestic disputes, providing an impetus for the military to stage further interventions. The article then explains the recent exodus of the Turkish military from politics with the ascension to power of stable civilian governments and Turkey's accession process to the European Union. It concludes by offering observations and lessons for other nations seeking to normalize their civil-military relations."DOI:"10/gdh8hq","author":{"family":"Varol","given":"Ozan O."},"issued":{"date-parts":[["2013"]]},"locator":{"74 9"},"schema":"https://github.com/citation-style-language/schema/raw/master/csl-citation.json"

⁶⁹ DETTMER, Jamie. Turkey's Erdogan Says He's Ready to Risk Confrontation With US. *Voice of America News* [online]. 2018. Available at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/ergodan-says-he-is-ready-to-risk-confrontation-with-us/4227613.html>

two indicators are not yet to be deemed alarming. More disconcerting are the indicators of Turkey's *corruption perception* (with a very negative trend), and *political terror* that pit it among the most corrupt and repressive states in the world. Turkey is also one of the most *militarized* countries in the world and although the military is now much more under civilian control, it is hardly under democratic control.

The reason Turkey has not succumbed to violence and social instability is likely due to its high level of political repression. Given the characteristics of the Turkish society, two basic scenarios for the future development are feasible: Turkey can either become much less stable and a victim to social discord with a chance of dangerous escalation; or it will cement its authoritarianism and manage social order by draconian policing, disproportionate "counter-terrorism" laws and disregard for the rule of law. Either way, Turkey will in all likelihood remain a country full of problems and, indeed, the Sick Man Upon the Bosphorus. It is imperative, therefore, to be very attentive to the developments in Turkey and work within the framework of existing alliances and international organizations to mitigate the risks of Turkey either becoming a rogue player or a state embroiled in a civil conflict.

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