

The Issues on the “Trans-European” Development: Politico-military Concerns in Turkey¹

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If the balanced and sustainable urban development is the overall objective of the European Union in spacial planning, each member of the Union as well as those who are willing to join the Union must commit and conduct spacial strategies accordingly. However, such economic and probably social rationales are often ignored in the mist of politics and military. From geopolitics to national strategy, whatever the label of alternative rationales would be, military expedition does not seem to enhance the balanced and sustainable development. Rather, military deployment in boarder areas prevents further trans-regional development beyond national boundary; Xenophobia in regional security cannot be cured by military expedition. On the contrary, continuous existence of military personals and micro-monitoring of every aspects of trans-regional activities would accelerate disintegration of such problematic areas from the central spacial planning. This essay, therefore, calls attentions of spacial planners on the impact of regional conflicts. This essay encourages positive trans-regional, or more precisely, “trans-European” spacial planning and “syn-local” approaches to minimize the regional conflicts within the broader Europe.

Analyzing the levels of military expenditure as well as the stocks of military equipments, Kollias and Makrydakis conclude that Greece and Turkey have been engaging in an arms race, in which the Cyprus question holds the key driving factor (1997)². In fact, Greece increased the number of armored combat vehicles (ACVs), combat helicopters, and combat aircraft, while Turkey increased the number of ACVs and combat helicopters between 1990 and 2000. Considering the fact that both country has modernized all ground, aerial and naval equipments, the number of arm equipments purchased by both country is more than that of any NATO nations³. Furthermore, naval and aerial

1 This is a working paper and a guideline for further quantitative research. Due to the limited time given to each presenter, the author has modified the topic, focusing only on the case of Turkey. The original proposal contained the cases of Greece and Portugal whose military budgets are some of the highest among NATO. The abstract published on the Conference program may not reflect this modification.

2 Georgiou, Kapopoulos, and Lazaretou emphasize the *shares* of military expenditure in GDP, and claim there is a little evidence on arms race (1996). The *shares* analysis is important when one compares the impact of military expenditure on the local economy *relative* to other expenditures. Here, the author focuses on the *absolute* impact (i.e. positive or negative) of military expenditure on the local economy.

3 Those new equipments include nearly 1000 M-48 tanks which replaced M-47 tanks. Many of them were donated by the United States and the united Germany after the Treaty of Conventional Armed Forces in Europe restricted the number of tanks each country can possess. Transfer of such equipments was conducted by NATO, and costs were shared between donors and recipients. For the details, see the annual report *Military Balance* edited by the International Institute for

equipments particularly require constant maintenance. Resources including human capital poured into arms each year are large, and therefore, one can claim that military sector stimulates the local industrial sector⁴.

However, the opportunity cost must be considered when one calculates the overall economic impact of the military sector. Of course, heavy industry as well as research and development is a part of the military complex and helps the economic growth (Matthews, 1999). Nonetheless, weapons cannot produce secondary commodity or service unlike computer; The chain of production in the military sector seems to be short compare to other civilian industries. In terms of more direct effects to the production cycle, combat aircraft produces unbearable noise which surely affects the productivity of agriculture. Waves caused by submarine activities reduce the fishery resources. Because tanks have about a kilometer of range, practice fields must be as large as 4 square kilometers. Access to such lands is usually limited, and infrastructure hardly exists. Special equipments purchased for the maintenance are usually imported, and thus, negatively affect the national income (capital outflow). While military *produces* unmeasurable security, the opportunity cost of military mentioned above seems high, particularly under the assumption that conventional war is unlikely to occur within Europe at this moment.

While the impact of military expenditure on the national income is under the argument, the impact of military expedition on the *local* economy is also under criticism. First of all, military personals *at service* do not spend their earnings in the *local* market where they station; Military order often keeps them from consuming luxurious goods while they are at service, and other necessity goods are provided by military anyways. Additionally, such consumption of necessity goods within military is often made by the regional headquarters, and thus, it does not directly affect the local economy of the stationed area. Moreover, since the recruit centers often locate in large cities, the majority of soldiers resides in (or comes from) larger cities as well. Therefore, military personals *off duty* spend their earnings in large cities which does not help the nation-wide balanced development.

Second, although military could have spend a large sum of money into infrastructure, civilians are most likely limited, if not excluded, from using such infrastructure. Furthermore, Turkey,

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4 Sezgin, on the other hand, claims that military sector is less productive than the civilian sector and has a negative externality effect in Turkey (1997). Although Sezgin himself overturned his findings in the later paper (2000), Brauer (2003) and others remained skeptic of the positivism on the economic effect of the military expenditures. Sezgin (2003), interestingly, finds positive effect of military expenditure in Turkey while he finds the “negative significant” *short-run* effect of military expenditure on *equipments* in *Greece*. Yet, no explanations, why it is different in short-run vs. long-run, equipments vs. non-equipments, and Turkey vs. Greece, are given in any of the papers by Sezgin.

the highest military spender in terms of GDP share among NATO, does not spend even 5% of the total military expenditure into infrastructure between 1995 and 1999 anyways (*NATO Review*, 2002). Comparing the relatively high percentage of the national budget spent on infrastructure in general, this number is relatively low, and one can easily conclude that military prevents infrastructure development. Even when the civilian sector plans the balanced development, military and other national security advisory bodies may halt high-speed trans-regional accesses such as highway and high-speed railways under the security concerns. Border areas, particularly southeast, are also under security concerns as the war on terrorism continues. Turkish military tightly controls its southeast border with the assumption that Kurdish radical groups come from Iraq. Another case is its eastern border; Since Turkey deployed its military in Northern Cyprus in 1974, there has not been many Greco-Turkish trans-regional networks. Today, it is hard to find the memory of the beautiful Oriental Express, the key-stone of the “trans-European” infrastructure.

Finally, trades in military conflict zone are highly limited both in quality and quantity. Of course, weapons and other equipments are purchased continuously. Yet such trades are dealt at the regional command center, not at the front line. With the similar assumptions and concerns mentioned above, all trans-regional activities and commodities crossing problematic borders are monitored by military. Such monitoring delays the speed of transaction, and therefore, undermines the efficiency of trans-regional trades.

In conclusion, military expedition seems to harm the local development within the region where military stations. While there is a doubt in the overall effect of military expenditure on the national economy, the inefficiency of local development caused by military expedition is obvious. Cyprus, for example, would be difficult to achieve the island-wide balanced and sustainable development because the island is divided into several pieces with foreign military expeditions (Greek, Turkish, British, and the UN)⁵. Furthermore, a large number of Turkish expeditionary force is currently stationing in Southeast Turkey in order to maintain continuous deployment in Northern Cyprus and Iraq. As a consequence, regional development in Southeast Turkey has separated from the rest of Turkey: the military sector in the region is prioritized higher in the local spacial planning than the civilian sector. While military has (rather asymmetrically) accelerated the development of infrastructure in this region, the usage of such networks has been limited within the blanket of “national

5 For the detailed history of the island up to the 20th century, see Panteli, S. (2000) *A History of Cyprus: From Foreign Domination to Troubled Independence*. London: East-West Publications.

security.” Surely, national security concerns must be accounted in high importance. Yet, the price the locals pay for the security seems high. Recently, however, Greek and Turkish local communities in both the Balkans and Cyprus commenced closer exchange of goods and services. Not to mention, the humanitarian aids provided by the Turkish local community during the aftermath of the Greek earthquake in 2006 surely helped the future of the Greco-Turkish relationship. Such “low” politics (as opposed to “high” politics such as territorial disputes) and the “syn-local” approach (i.e. local cooperation beyond the territorial boundaries) are the keys for “trans-European” development. As Turkey applying for the EU, and as Greece being the oldest member of the Union, this “syn-local” development should be the milestone of the balanced and sustainable development promoted by the European Union.

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[Note: This paper covers almost all papers on defense economics which the author has cited. The author thanks Brauer and strongly recommends this paper as both primary and secondary research on Greek and Turkish defense and military economics.]

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In addition, the author has referred to *Military Balance* (edited by International Institute for Strategic Studies), *NATO Review*, and *SIPRI Yearbook* (edited by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute).