



Military Advisory Missions and The Turkish Professional Military Education: An Uneasy Relationship

Askeri Yardım Misyonları ve Türk Profesyonel Askeri Eğitimi: Huzursuz Bir İlişki

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Abstract

This article explores the foundation and evolution of Türkiye's modern professional military education (PME) system within the context of foreign military assistance missions. The outcomes of these missions were primarily determined by the country's general situation and the degree to which the officer corps embraced the innovation. In this regard, the Germans, who started to work in the late 19th century, encountered an officer corps relatively open to innovation due to military defeats. On the other hand, the Americans operating after the Second World War came into contact with the officers of a victorious army that established a country, firmly committed to the status quo and resistant to change. Thus, the disparate working conditions of the military aid missions affected the change in the military education system at different levels. Additionally, this research shows that the Turks adopted the less beneficial aspects of each model, namely German elitism and American teaching principles based on fact-based learning. These findings are corroborated by archival sources, officer memoirs, and even institutional practices. Another common feature of the PME modifications is that they were all adopted in response to a crisis, yet each could only alter some components of the prior system without totally eliminating it. However, after the 2016 coup attempt, for the first time, Turks created a model tailored to the needs of the country and, more importantly, developed by their own experts.

Key Words: Professional military education, military advisory missions, Military Academy, Staff College, JAMMAT.

Öz

Bu makale Türk modern askeri eğitim sisteminin kuruluş ve gelişimini askeri yardım misyonları çerçevesinde incelemektedir. Söz konusu misyonlar hem dönemin genel şartları hem de subay sınıfının yeniliği kabullenme derecesinden etkilenmiştir. Bu anlamda 19. yüzyılın son döneminde göreve başlayan Alman Askeri Yardım Heyeti, askeri yenilgiler dolayısıyla kısmen de olsa yeniliğe açık bir subay sınıfı ile karşılaşmıştır. Buna karşın 2. Dünya Savaşı sonrasında faaliyet gösteren Amerikalılar ise ülke kurmuş muzaffer bir ordunun statükoya sıkı sıkıya bağlı ve değişime dirençli subayları ile muhatap olmuşlardır. İki ülke askeri yardım misyonlarının içinde buldukları farklı durumlar askeri eğitim-öğretim sisteminin değişimine de doğrudan etki etmiştir. Ayrıca bu araştırma, Türklerin her modelin daha az avantajlı yönlerini, yani Alman elitizmini ve ezbere dayalı Amerikan öğretim ilkelerini benimsediklerini göstermektedir. Arşiv kaynakları, subay anıları ve hatta kurumsal uygulamalar bu bulguları doğrulamaktadır. Modern askeri eğitim sisteminin genellikle kriz durumları ile birlikte değiştiği, ancak bu değişimin eski sistemi tamamen ortadan kaldırmadan sadece bazı yönlerini etkileyebildiği görülmektedir. Bununla birlikte 2016 darbe girişiminden sonra ilk defa ülkeye özgü bir modelin geliştirilebildiğini söylemek mümkündür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Profesyonel askeri eğitim, askeri yardım misyonları, Harbiye, Harp Akademisi, JAMMAT.

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Introduction

Turkish modern professional military education (PME) dates back to the early nineteenth century and has evolved with each foreign military advisory mission since then. Throughout this period, various countries' models were adopted, modified, and renewed; in short, a dynamic course of action prevailed. *"Every time they have war in Europe, we adopt the cap of the winning side"*, a statement made by Sheridan to reflect the American experience (Muth, 2011: 17), also holds true for Ottoman/Turkish PME. This PME, which was initially modeled after the French system, was subsequently modified by German and American military advisory missions. However, it would be overly optimistic to assert that this model change was implemented so that the old was phased out and the new was seamlessly adopted. The theoretical optimism has been disproved by reality, and as a result, some practices from the previous model have prevented the emergence of a completely new model.

The attitude of the officer corps and the domestic and international political contexts were the primary determinants in these model changes. From this point of view, significant distinctions exist between the experiences of the German Military Advisory Mission, which took effect at the end of the nineteenth century, and the Joint American Military Mission for Aid to Turkey (JAMMAT), which began operations following World War II. While the Germans gained an advantage due to the Ottoman officer corps' search for solutions to their bitter battlefield defeats and struggles against uneducated Alaylı officers, the Americans encountered greater resistance. Simply because the Turkish officer corps, as victorious commanders of the Independence War, was not in desperate need of a new model. Thus, the Americans' partial failure to alter the PME is unfathomable without considering the position of the older generation of the Turkish officer corps. To summarize, when the American mission concluded, the PME retained a mixed structure comprised of both old

and new characteristics due to the international security environment and alliance relations, as well as the officers' attitude toward change. Turkish PME has also been shaped by the military and overall country's requirements. Thus, it would be an incomplete perspective to discuss the development of modern military schools solely through the lens of foreign missions. The army revised the imported model and eliminated some of its features according to its capabilities and needs.

The impact of the German mission in 1913 and the Americans in 1947 on the overall Turkish military organization has been recently investigated by Uyar and Güvenç (2022). This article, on the other hand, solely explores the impact of the advisory missions on the Turkish PME. What kind of changes has the Turkish PME undergone under the influence of foreign military missions? How effective were those changes? How did the officer corps respond to these changes and, in some cases, to the pressures imposed by foreign military missions? Could Turks develop their own model? These are the questions that this study will attempt to address.

This article sheds light on the newly implemented model by revealing the experiences of the past period. In addition, it contributes to the literature by revealing that the models taken from other countries should be scrutinized and modified to conform to the conditions of the importing country. The primary sources are the official histories of military schools, official reports, archival sources, and personal accounts of soldiers who lived through periods of change. This research focuses on the Staff College of the Land Forces and the Military Academy (Harbiye), which were the focal point of both advisory missions mentioned previously. Moreover, general staff officers (GSO), as the *crème de la crème* of the army, constituted the main decision-makers in these change movements, rendering the study more significant. The first section of the article will provide a brief history of the Turkish PME. Then, the PME-related activities of the German

and the American Military Advisory Missions will be discussed comparatively in order to assess their degree of influence. Finally, the initiatives of Turkish experts to develop a model for Turks will be discussed.

Establishment of Modern Military Schools

Since the Ottoman period, the army has been regarded as one of the leading institutions of modernization, and military schools have been instrumental in this process (Berkes, 2012:194; Moreau, 2010:243; Uyar & Varoğlu, 2008). The Military Academy - Harbiye - which was established in 1834 by taking the French Saint-Cyr as a model to meet the needs of the officers for the newly established army after the abolition of the Janissary Corps, is the first example of these schools. Following Harbiye, the Staff College¹ has been founded in 1848 to educate staff officers. One can easily claim that the Ottoman Empire closely followed its European counterparts in the PME development. However, this might be a shallow argument because, although the Ottoman modern military schools were established closely following the modern military schools of European countries, a significant difference existed.

To begin with, Prussian, French, and English military schools had available students capable of following a modern curriculum, and their societies were generally not opposed to, if not supportive of, them (Demeter, 1965; Girardet, 1998). Literacy rates were far higher than in the Ottoman Empire (Şiviloğlu, 2018, p.175), and there was no social opposition to formal education. When the Ottomans founded the first modern military school, Harbiye, they had to literally start from scratch. The first years of the school were devoted to literacy education due to the lack of educational background of the pupils. Students could only reach the level for taking military and science courses in the

eighth grade. Hence, initially, it was unknown how many years the students would study at the Military Academy. Additionally, mainly owing to religious education and lack of a social class in the Ottoman society that would provide human resources to the military schools delayed the effectiveness of the Harbiye (Berkes, 2012:191-192). As a result, although the school accepted its first students in 1835, the first graduates could only receive their diplomas in 1848 (Kurtcepe & Balcıoğlu, 1992: 57). Staff College was designed as a follow-up of Harbiye, with a two-year-long education prior to joining the field units.

Both schools took the French model as an example during the establishment stage. Besides, they employed French military instructors. In fact, it is worth noting that the French system, which focuses on theory-oriented academic courses (Yıldız, 2017: 96), was an ideal model for providing the necessary foundation to educate students who attended Harbiye without literacy skills. It is appropriate, however, to emphasize a critical distinction between the French and Ottoman schools. Unlike the French system, in which admission to the Staff College was granted after an examination, the Ottomans accepted the top 5-10% of the most successful graduates of Harbiye (İskora, 1966: 8). In the same period, the first 30 of the Saint-Cyr graduates were entitled to take the exams, and those who were successful were being admitted to the l'École d'Application d'État-Major (Jazet, 1893: 106). However, the number of students could not exceed fifteen or twenty students per class (Van Creveld, 1990: 36). To compare the number of students of both schools, in 1849, the number of graduates of Saint-Cyr was 272, and the students admitted to the French Staff College was 19 (Jazet, 1893: 89 and 100) whereas, in the same year, the number of graduates of Harbiye was 24, and those of the Staff College was only five (Kurtcepe & Balcıoğlu, 1992: 57).

¹ Regarding the naming, in Turkish, Staff College equivalent was Harp Akademileri - literally War Academies. It is now called Army War College. Harbiye or Harp Okulu - literally war school - is the equivalent of military academy, such as West Point or Saint Cyr.

German Influence on the Development of the Ottoman PME

The critical changes at the Staff College - the effects of which were felt until the late 20th century - came after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 (War of '93). According to Güvenç (2010:255), the most significant feature that separated this period from the previous ones was designing and educating the military in a single model by giving up trying to adapt various countries' models at the same time. This single model was that of the German Army, which achieved a significant victory against the French in Sedan (1870) and became a model for many countries in Europe (Barnett, 1967: 21; Hittle, 1952: 75-76; Yapp, 1975: 340-341). The Ottoman military also got on the bandwagon, and German military advisers were invited. The head of the first advisory group, Colonel Kaehler, found that the GSOs lacked experience in the field units, which was detrimental to their development—especially at the rank of general (Wallach, 1985: 9-40). However, he passed away before implementing any reforms and was replaced by Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz in 1883 at the request of the Ottoman Army.

With the German mission led by Goltz, German military field manuals replaced those of the French and British, and the German arms industry established a monopoly. Hundreds of officers were trained in Germany (Uyar & Erickson, 2009: 207). Many officers who defended the French model were discharged in the early 1880s for political reasons (Moreau, 2010: 48). Significant reforms were also made to the Staff College during the Goltz era (1883-1895). He insisted on education primarily oriented towards military-technical courses instead of theoretical education; however, this recommendation could not be fully implemented because general staff officers were also educated as engineers. Thereupon, two branches were formed as engineering and military sciences. However, these branches would be reunited in 1894.

Not only did Goltz reshape education and

training, but he also significantly improved the status of GSOs - or kurmay - in the army. According to the new system, only the best and most distinguished officers were selected, which meant twenty or thirty out of 1000 students. From then on, kurmay would serve in various combat arms units for three to five years. Goltz aimed to educate only a limited number of officers in an elitist manner, making it easier for GSOs to serve alternately in certain cadres to create a team spirit in a supportive environment (Uyar & Varođlu, 2008: 188). İskora (1966: 20-21) claimed that from 1883 onwards, the Staff College was designed strictly according to the German system. However, one should be cautious about this information. For instance, critical changes that Goltz tried to implement, such as the selection of the staff officer candidates from the troops and on-the-job training, were ignored (Gök & Uyar, 1999: 9). However, a new curriculum, improving school conditions, and sending students to Germany were adopted. At that time, the Staff College and Harbiye were co-located, and the Staff College became a separate school only after 1909. Students would now be selected from the troops. In other words, one of Goltz's most essential proposals was realized only fifteen years after he left.

Academics and military analysts have often cited the focus on applied military courses imposed by German military advisors; however, this emphasis is poorly assessed. First of all, Germans' emphasis on applied training results from the circumstances in their own country. That is to say, German officer cadets, for whom the German gymnasiums offered an excellent academic foundation, were not to be exposed to a second tour of academic course load in military schools. This capability made it easier for German military educators to concentrate on applied military courses in the curriculum. However, it should be acknowledged that Germans never disregarded academic courses in order to equip officers with a broad and analytical perspective (Demeter, 1965: 63-102; Huntington, 1957: 39-51; Whitton, 1921:

26). They simply had more flexibility to balance academic and military courses. In this respect, Goltz also made contributions to the Staff College program in the Ottoman Empire (Wallach, 1985: 46; Yeşil, 2017: 134). In other words, Goltz was not opposed to academic classes; he simply desired that officers have an education that included both academic and military applied courses. However, neither educational facilities nor a curriculum in the Ottoman Empire could come close to the German gymnasium. Therefore, there was no flexibility similar to the German system required for the candidate officers to be raised with a program that would balance academic education and military training in the Ottoman Empire. As a result, academic courses were gradually removed from the program.

A vital change implemented following the German model concerned the management style of the Staff College. In 1872, the German Staff College was taken from the Inspectorate of Military Education and placed under the direct control of the German General Staff. Besides, almost all instructors were selected from graduate staff officers (Millotat, 1992:35-37). The Ottoman Staff College, which was affiliated with the Directorate of Military Schools (Mekatih-i Askeriye Nezareti), had also been directly associated with the General Staff since 1909 (Harp Akd. 1991: 21). A separate branch carried out the appointment and promotion procedures of the GSOs who pursued distinct career paths (Erickson, 2007: 102). It is important to note that the school, which educates the Army elites, became independent of any control mechanism over time. The Turkish General Staff had a key role in supervising the Staff College; however, because GSOs filled all the critical positions, there was a potential risk of the College being solely

directed by officers from the same source.

It should be noted that the intimate relations that Goltz established with his Turkish pupils facilitated the adoption of certain practices. Officers who had been unable to perform even routine drills for an extended period, whose arms rotted in arsenals, and who had been denied access to their preferred military exercises were highly pleased with Goltz's attempts to rectify this situation. They were under constant pressure due to the strict control of the Abdulhamid period (Yasamee, 1998: 92). As a result, Goltz was more of an ally than a foreigner capable of assisting them in overcoming the difficult circumstances of the time. He was seen as an exemplary teacher, and attending his courses was considered a source of pride and joy. His students translated many of his works into Turkish, and candidate staff officers widely read them. His efforts to abolish corporal punishment and care for his subordinates made him considered a father figure (Akmeşe, 2005: 24; Demirhan, 1953: 5).

The reason why Goltz was embraced to such a degree and preferred over other foreign officers was not only about his contributions to the development of the army but also the fact that he was believed to be a sincere friend of the Ottomans, along with his non-prejudiced view towards the Eastern societies (Akmeşe, 2005: 66). In fact, this friendship would attract so much attention that the German General Staff assigned a colonel to control Goltz in his second term (Türsan, 1983, p. 47).² Nevertheless, Goltz's reputation remained high in the Turkish army, especially among staff officers, until the late twentieth century. For instance, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Goltz's service in the Ottoman army, the Turkish Staff Colleges hosted a symposium in 1983 dedicated to Goltz.³

² Colonel Gleich, whom the German General Staff appointed to oversight Goltz while he was the Commander of the 6th Army in the Iraqi Front during the First World War, explained in his memoirs that he was assigned due to the concern of the German General Headquarters that the influence of the Turks on the Marshal was effective than the Marshal's influence over the Turks. Another German officer working under Goltz's command, von Kisling, claims that the lack of more "Turkified officers like Goltz" was a disastrous situation concerning the administration of the war.

³ Although the name of the symposium is the Historical Development of Turkish Military Education until the beginning of the 20th century, five out of six presentations were related to Goltz and additionally there was a "Von der Goltz Exhibition". 20nci Yüzyıl Başına Kadar Türk Askeri Eğitiminin Tarihi Gelişimi Sempozyum Bildirileri, Harp Akademi-

Around twenty officers were sent to Germany for military education and training per year as part of the German mission (Akmeře, 2005: 25). Besides, the total number of students in all military schools increased from 4,000 to 14,000 between 1883-1895, during which Goltz was directly responsible for military schools (Yılmaz, 2012:27). However, the German influence on PME cannot be explained solely by Goltz's personal efforts. Another factor is inextricably linked with the officer corps' position when the German mission assumed office. At that time, there was an army longing for victory and still ashamed of the bitter memories of the Russo-Turkish War. The officer corps consisted of mostly "Alaylı" (literally from the regiment) officers, with only ten percent academy graduates. The contention between the educated "Mektepli" (from the school) officers and the "Alaylı" was intense (Akmeře, 2005: 20; Uyar & Erickson, 2009: 177 and 201). What the Ottomans needed was a combat-proven model of a victorious army. Therefore, from the beginning, particularly the academy graduates were eager to adopt the foreign model; consequently, these initial conditions facilitated the Germans' efforts. In this situation, it is necessary to examine why the Turks did not implement every German proposal. First of all, the German proposals that were not implemented were also related to the circumstances of the state. Not only military requirements but also the needs of an entire state bureaucracy were taken into consideration. The engineering branches lasted because these officers were also needed in civilian public institutions (Ergin, 1977: 357; Shaw & Shaw, 2012: 107; Uyar & Erickson, 2009: 151). Since the military schools were at the same time leading the overall modernization of the empire, decision-makers could not neglect those needs.

As a result, the Germans were unable to entirely overhaul the previous PME system, which was heavily inspired by the French model. However, they achieved success in raising a limited number of kurmay, changing the curriculum and course

materials. Overall, the German Military Advisory Mission effectively created a long-lasting influence on PME until World War II, even late 20th century. The faculty included German instructors (Güvenc & Uyar, 2022: 62; Tañ, 2017: 91), and Turkish students were sent to Germany, especially for technical education. Most of the field manuals were taken from Germans, and the Staff Colleges' programs were arranged accordingly (Yamak, 2006: 52). With the influence of Germans, the weight of military courses in the curriculum increased. It is safe to assume that since academic courses were excluded from the curriculum, the required degree for the intellectual development of staff officers after World War I could not be accomplished.

Effects of the American Military Advisory Mission on The Turkish PME

During World War II, the German system was questioned, and the Marshall Aid was instrumental in facilitating the transition to the American system. Beginning in 1947, officers were sent to the US to be employed at the Staff College upon their return. Due to Americans' emphasis on developing specialists, two classes were formed, namely, those corresponding to operations and logistics. The duration of the study was shortened from three to two years, separated by at least a one-year interval during which time the student joined a unit or accepted a staff position before returning for the second year (Harp Akd., 1991: 51; Özcan, 2010: 201).

However, for Americans, starting conditions were much more difficult. They had to contend with officers of a victorious army which succeeded in establishing a new state rather than officers of a defeated army desperate for a remedy as the Germans encountered. Additionally, several of them were officers who fought in those battles. Thus, the scene was set for a growing resistance and reluctance against the American Military Advisory mission. In addition, American officers were very well aware of cultural

differences between the two nations; however, this awareness did not always help them to get along with their Turkish counterparts, especially during the first years of the mission (JAMMATf, 1951: 24–28; Munson, 2012: 74). Two disparate cultures could cooperate with the assistance of solid communication abilities. However, it was not easy for the Turks to embrace Americans as they were quite formal in the face of events that could only be solved through friendly personal relationships. According to the Americans, smooth cooperation was reached later thanks to the outstanding type of US personnel (JAMMATe, 1952: 17; Harris, 1972: 53–61). However, there was growing friction on the part of the Turks, which was expressed mainly by late memoirs of the military officers (Çelikoğlu, 2010; Çıracıoğlu, 2019; Türkeli, 2004). It can be argued that if an “American Goltz” existed, cooperation could have been more straightforward.

At that time, the primary concern of Americans was to equip the army with modern equipment and weapon systems and train the enlisted men who could use this material as quickly as possible that would be able to withstand Soviet attacks until foreign assistance arrived (Uyar&Güvenç, 2022, 95-96; US NA, 1947: 3–4). As a result, branch schools and field units received considerable attention (JAMMATa, 1948; JAMMATb, 1948; JAMMATc, 1948). This policy was logical since an army using horses and mules as the main transport vehicles first needed truck drivers and technicians to use modern communication equipment effectively. That is why, from the very beginning, the development of the non-commissioned officer corps and technical training for enlisted men were among the top priority issues (JAMMATd, 1950; JAMMATe, 1952). The statistics confirm this approach. The first American advisor-led courses started in 1948 and were overwhelmingly geared toward technical training. As of September 1954 as of September 1954, the number of personnel trained with American equipment and methods had exceeded 65,000 (JAMMATg, 1954).

American instructors, on the other hand, could

start their courses at the Staff College only in March 1949, more than one year after the technical courses. The JAMMAT Mission concluded that under the German influence, the education of officers was strict, outdated, and longer than necessary, leaving little room for developing subordinates who could take the initiative. The primary position of this school in the career development of the officers also prompted Americans to invest in officer education, but the number of instructors at the Staff College was no more than ten, even at its height (JAMMATf, 1951; JAMMATh, 1949; JAMMATi, 1949). Consequently, as Güvenç and Uyar stated, the American influence on staff officer education could not become comprehensive enough to alter the system (2022: 69-70).

The JAMMAT’s particular insistence on reducing the duration of the Staff College program caused disquiet among the officer corps. Feridun Akkor, who was at the time a GSO, and who later became a newspaper columnist, wrote that the Americans wanted to educate the officers at the battalion commander level since they did not expect the Turkish Army to conduct overseas operations and, additionally, that a large-scale ground operation would be conducted using guerrilla tactics by battalion-size units. Therefore, a three-year education system was unnecessary. He further claimed that Americans clearly indicated that the military aid would be cut off if the Staff College education was not reduced to one year. Turkish scholars and soldiers have frequently referred to this newspaper article (Akkor, 1967; Akyaz, 2009: 52–53). In fact, the Staff College education was one of the hot topics between the JAMMAT and the Turkish Chief of Staff; however, Akkor’s claims require close scrutiny.

The contention arose due to the amendment of the officers’ promotion law, which increased the duration of education despite the previous agreement with the Americans. In the amendment’s preamble, it was stated that “... it is understood that three-year staff officer education system is no longer in a position to

meet the Turkish military need. The schools in the UK and US have a great similarity by providing one-year courses through the officers' various career steps..."(TBMM, 1950). According to this regulation, the staff officer education was planned as follows: first, one-year service college for first lieutenants and captains, then two-year Joint College, and finally, one-year Armed Forces College. However, this amendment was never implemented. The Head of the American Military Advisory Mission stated that they were not consulted on the said amendment of law and that it was contrary to the agreement that reduced the Staff College education period to one year. He also emphasized that all of the instructors at the Staff College would be withdrawn if this law was implemented. Americans objected to this law for two primary motives. Firstly, the Turkish military lacked the necessary resources, including funds, instructors, and school facilities, to fully emulate the different level courses; hence, they recommended that the Turks focus on a single course and consider establishing a Joint War College future time. Additionally, it was not worth the effort of American instructors to educate lieutenants and captains; instead, their effort should be concentrated on educating senior officers who would serve in a division or higher-level headquarters (JAMMATj, 1950).⁴

The Americans and the Turks took entirely different approaches and had conflicting views on the Staff College education. The rationale behind these contradictory views cannot be adequately assessed from the current sources available. Güvenç, for example, argues that it has emerged from the deep differences between the two military cultures in conceptualizing war. While Americans recognize war as a continuation of politics; The Turks, under the influence of the Prussian/German paradigm, tried to stick to a conceptualization that regards war as a central

phenomenon (Güvenç, 2010: 270-271; Güvenç & Uyar, 2022: 69). However, this macro-level analysis does not fully explain the resistance of the Turkish officer corps. We also should consider the vested interests of the officer corps, especially older generations. The memoirs of the officers who were on active duty at that time confirm that this argument does fit the Turkish military transformation after World War II. Especially the high price paid to become a kurmay (Bölügiray, 2009: 51-56; Tanç, 2017: 86) was not a bargaining element for those who had already gained this privilege. That is one of the reasons why they strongly opposed any change which might affect their status. For example, they perceived the expansion of the non-commissioned officer corps as a threat to their status (Çelikoğlu, 2010: 70). One should be aware that this perception has no basis given to legally binding rank and status differences between officers and non-commissioned officers. Thus, if general staff officers perceived the expansion of a lower-status bureaucratic group as a threat, how would they approach changes that directly target their own status?

Apparently, the Turkish general staff officers noticed that the JAMMAT was in a position to challenge their long-lasting privileged status. For example, Americans could not understand the promotion of staff officers three years earlier than their peers because, in their view, this early promotion award did not match their performance (JAMMATe, 1952). One of the methods to induce change within military organizations is to change the promotion path of officer corps. This phenomenon has been a well-studied fact for the military change movements of other countries (Rosen, 1991). From this perspective, it would not be an exaggeration to accept that Turkish general staff officers did not only have the macro-level differences of the war concept but also strictly

⁴ From the JAMMAT report: "It was learned on April 10 that the Turkish Grand National Assembly had passed law establishing a new national curricular in the Turkish Staff College. This law had been prepared and introduced by the Turkish General Staff. The Chief of TUSAG in several conferences with the Minister of National and the Chief of the Turkish General Staff concerning this matter, has notified them that all American instructors will be withdrawn from the Staff College if the provisions of this law are carried out. No decision had been reached by the end of the month."

tried to stick to the existing German-type elitist PME model in order to keep their status intact.

Moreover, contrary to Akkor's claims, it is almost certain that there is no relationship between the role projected onto the Turkish army and the duration of the education. First of all, at that time, a gradual education that was not exceeding one year was also being given in the American military schools. For example, the US Command and General Staff College (CGSC) increased its education period to two years several times before World War II but eventually decided on one year of education (Schifferle, 2010: 33). In other words, Americans tried replicating their model in Türkiye. However, in the end, it became clear that the erroneous perception had prevented the Turks from fully implementing the American model.

The American advisors' concerns regarding officer education were more of the system in general rather than its certain parts. For them, the PME system was based on inadequate and outdated practices. Therefore, they tried to come up with solutions to all these problems over time. For example, they tried to convince the Turks to establish a Joint Staff College (National Security Academy) in addition to the existing single-service colleges. It was expected that the new school would bring senior officers to a level where they could work on NATO affairs (JAMMATk, 1952). But, again, there were differences between Turks and Americans in their thinking. The Americans demanded that the new school be opened in Ankara instead of Istanbul and wanted at least two years between the two staff colleges. On the other hand, the Turks insisted on setting up the new school where the service colleges were located in Istanbul and using their instructors. According to the Americans, the new school would be nothing but a continuation of the service colleges, and if it were established in Istanbul, it would lower the quality of the education. Furthermore, it was stated that the Turks' aim to bring the duration of the education back to three years was contrary to the earlier

agreement (JAMMATl, 1952; JAMMATm, 1952; JAMMATn, 1952).

Issues regarding the quality of education delivered at the Staff College had often been debated between Americans and Turkish officers. For example, they warned the Turkish General Staff to prevent Staff College instructors from teaching in civilian schools in Istanbul. The fact that only forty percent of the teaching positions were complete and those existing instructors also taught in other schools reduced the quality of education (JAMMATo, 1952). In another correspondence, the JAMMAT reported that they had succeeded in convincing the Turkish General Staff that the officers who passed the entry exams to the Staff College should complete advanced courses in their own branches because they could not digest high-level staff officer courses (JAMMATp, 1951).

The differences between the Americans' and the Turks' views on officer education are most clearly evident from the report of an American instructor at the Staff College. According to the American concept, an officer's graduation from any school did not make him better than a non-graduate officer. The graduate officer, of course, would be a better officer than before he graduated from that school. However, evaluations of both officers on an equal and competitive basis should continue thereafter. It was also added to the report that the Turkish staff system could not be changed because it would require modification of the entire military. Since that extent of change was almost impossible, the staff system had to be accepted in its present form (Moseley Jr, 1951).

On the other hand, in the Turkish system, it is believed that the military profession and especially the art of commanding can be taught through theoretical education. Therefore, an officer who graduated from more schools was viewed as superior to the others in every way. This understanding became widespread among the officer corps. Even though all other abilities may be lacking, officers who graduated from the Staff

College had a better reputation and privileges than the other officers. This understanding clearly appeared in the appointment of kurmay officers. For instance, the officers from the combat-support branches, such as supply or maintenance, were appointed as the commanding officers of mechanized infantry or armor battalions after graduating from the Staff College.

As a result of JAMMAT pressure, the Staff College shifted to an entirely new system in 1950, and only one year of education was granted. However, this system was implemented for only three years until 1953, when a two-year continuous education system began (Harp Akd, 1969:22). Even the officers who completed the one-year course were called back to the school in groups between 1954 and 1959 to complete the second-year program (Yurdabak, 1979: 33). To sum up, the Staff College had a three-year program before the war according to the German system, then was reduced to one year and finally increased to two years. Although the educational materials, doctrine, and instructors were sourced from the US, German-style long-term education offered only to a minority of officers continued. It would be unrealistic to claim that Americans successfully built their own systems despite all their efforts. In this period, the American field manuals replaced the German ones, the old generation officers were given doctrine courses, and the new generations were educated entirely with American methods. Moreover, the structure of the General Staff was changed; however, the main features of the German system continued.

Munson (2012: 183-184) stated that JAMMAT fulfilled its mission as a "military modernization program". Güvenç (2010: 283-284), on the other hand, claims that this mission produced only a partial modernization with regard to mechanization and technical training. Based on the amount of technical material and the number of trained personnel, it seems that JAMMAT

was a successful mission. However, in terms of the professional military education system, the American model was abandoned after three years which proves the resistance level of the officer corps. Furthermore, the negative perception towards the American Mission and the vested interests of the old generation officers prevented adopting the positive aspects of their model. Finally, delivering education for large masses was never brought to the agenda. Turks returned to the system they knew, and again a small number of young officers were accepted, and a rote-learning education system settled. Perhaps the only change was that the American field manuals replaced the German doctrines and field manuals. Therefore, one can speak of neither strictly American, German, nor an original Turkish PME model. In this regard, school success was more important than anything else. The crucial flaw in this process, however, was that Turks embraced the worst traits of both countries rather than the best.

What kind of PME model: Germans vs. Americans vs. Turks...

Turkish PME had a couple of enduring characteristics borrowed from the respective foreign military missions. One of the most persistent was raising a limited number of general staff officers. Despite the constant increases in student quotas, this problem has never been solved. For instance, at the end of the 19th century, the number of officers admitted to the school increased from fifteen to forty per year. This number was augmented from forty to sixty just before World War II; however, staff officers could not be assigned to all units. Considering that only 46 staff officers per 10,000 soldiers in the army in 2011, even this increase was insufficient (IISS, 2012; Harp Akd, 1991; Harp Akd, 1969).⁵ To put it sharply, it is adequate to highlight that only six percent of the entire officer corps has received education in the Turkish Staff Colleges

⁵ Due to the lack of official information, these values are estimated using data from the IISS Military Balance 2012 and Staff College yearbooks.

since their establishment.⁶ These statistics are far behind the western militaries. For example, as of 2015, there were 35,000 officers in the US Army in the rank of senior captain-major, and 5,000 were educated at the Staff College (CGSC, 2016; US DoD, 2015). Fort Leavenworth graduated more than 5,000 officers between 1880-1940. Similarly, around 5,000 officers have been educated in the German Staff College since 1957 (BwCSC, 2021; Schifferle, 2010: 155). In the British army, it is mandatory to complete the intermediate staff officer course. Approximately twenty percent of the lieutenant-colonels can attend the advanced level staff officer course (UK Gov, 2017). In other words, the Turkish PME adopted German elitism as a standard feature and reinforced it.

The independent structure of the Staff College, just like the German system, was preserved despite American influence. Staff College was able to operate as a separate service directly attached to the General Staff, which was reinforced by its graduates' dominance in critical positions. The closed, team-spirited, elitist structure of kurmay remained precisely the same, just as Goltz planned, even in the 21st century. This situation only changed after the coup attempt in 2016. With the establishment of a defense university, the Staff College lost its independent position within the military. However, the German-type governance model had managed to survive for more than a century. This governance model is another area that the Americans were not able to change.

Another critical aspect affecting the educational standard of military schools was related to the teaching methods, which were probably the most glaring example of the disparity between German and American models. For example, there is no school solution for tactical and doctrinal debates in the German Staff College, where students just memorize information without performing their own analysis or contributing. The main objective is to improve students' judgment and

promote open-mindedness and critical thinking in an open-class environment. The American system has been criticized for applying the exact opposite by putting more emphasis on school solutions (Barnett, 1967: 33-34; Muth, 2011: 165, 172). Schifferle (2010: 100-122) devoted a whole chapter to this subject and the associated applicatory method in his book to explain that the school solution was misinterpreted and suggested that student solutions along with the school solution were also taken into account. However, this did not prevent many students from receiving unsatisfactory grades. Accordingly, the discontent of both students and graduate officers confirms this situation.

Problems with teaching methods are not limited to "school solution". For example, West Point has adopted the textbook-recitation model since its establishment (Ambrose, 1999: 89). In this model, it is possible to use the textbook as a guide with a flexible approach or to be accepted as the sole authority (Alvermann, 1989; Stodolsky, Ferguson, & Wimpelberg, 1981; Zahorik, 1991). However, the latter inevitably comes to the fore, especially in the military school environment where the hierarchical order is stricter than its civilian counterparts. In this case, even if the students have broad analytic views, they should remain within the boundaries of the textbook. Thus, rote learning may gradually become the primary teaching method. The textbook-recitation method became even more problematic in the Turkish military schools due to the strict cultural codes and the excessive power distance.

Consequently, one can easily claim that Turkish military schools closely followed the American model regarding the teaching methods, despite the German influence. For example, Imhof Pasha, who served with the German Military Advisory Mission from 1901 to 1909, stated that memorizing field manuals was not necessary, students should be discouraged from the rote-learning education system, and they should

⁶ Statistics have been compiled from the official histories and yearbooks of Staff College and Harbiye. Between 1849-2015, 87163 officers graduated from Harbiye, and only 6113 officers were admitted to the Army Staff College.

reinforce their knowledge also with practice (Akmeře, 2005: 65–66). Moreover, educational directives published by the German advisory mission widely reflected their own approach. However, these principles were not promoted in later regulations. Consequently, rote learning became the dominant teaching method, which significantly impaired the strategic analysis capability of kurmayıs—a vital feature of any GSO. Additionally, the lack of proper teaching principles caused inertia among GSOs with respect to organizational change.

A similar argument can be applied to the admission exams. The regulations of 1927, written based on German principles, clearly highlighted an expectation for questions that force the candidate officers to use their intellectual abilities and own ideas. Ready-made answers, or analyses derived from books or other publications, were not desirable. The goal was to assess the judgment skills of the candidate officer and to prevent him from taking advantage of previously crafted work or ideas (İskora, 1966: 76–117). However, this policy shifted over time, and candidates were expected to memorize almost all exam materials that the school advised or prepared. Consequently, analytical thinking and judgment were no longer critical to the ability of a candidate to pass the exams. Likewise, the history, law, and diplomacy questions were based entirely on rote learning. Ultimately, officers with a superior ability to memorize had an advantage in passing the entrance exams. To sum up, in terms of the teaching methods, the American model has prevailed over that of the Germans.

The above explanations show that while Americans followed a model with broad participation, continuous, and multiple phases of education with rote-learning methods, the Germans followed a long-term, elitist education with analytical methods. In other words, while Germans try to equip a small number of officers with high-quality, in-depth education, Americans try to educate as many officers as possible in a relatively low-quality, rote-learning program. If

we compare the effects of both advisory missions on the Turkish PME, it is clearly seen that a very small group of officers had been educated with a long-term and rote-learning program. In other words, Turks had adopted the weak or less preferable aspects of both countries, taking the elitism of Germans and the teaching methods of Americans. Of course, they also considered their own priorities in line with the country's requirements and capabilities. However, the resulting model was a German-American-Turkish mixture. It is safe to claim that if the Turks were able to implement the German teaching principles, together with the more egalitarian American education, to a broader group, the result would have been different.

Finally, it can be argued that elitism and rote-learning may not be related to the German or American influence since these two aspects can also be observed within Turkish society and state bureaucracy (Narlı, 2000, p.107; Heper, 1985, p.70). However, one should be cautious when correlating societal impact on the military education because if we look at the Turkish experience, it can be noticed that the military schools could easily isolate their students and indoctrinate them based on military preferences. So, it is reasonable to argue that institutional factors are more explanatory than the societal impact. Consequently, officer corps resistance caused the derailment of the military advisory missions efforts concerning the PME.

Turks are in Charge: Quest for an Original PME Model

The common trait of the changes in the Turkish PME system is that they all emerged after a defeat or a crisis. The French system came after the abolition of the Janissary corps. Germans were invited after the defeat in the Russo-Turkish War. Americans came to support Türkiye, which faced the Soviet threat after World War II. There were, of course, small-scale changes, but those were not robust and deep enough to rectify the issues of rote-learning, elitist, and a one-time, long-

term education. For example, in the 1970s, the number of officers admitted to the Staff College increased, but even this increase was too low to be compared with other countries. Also, in 1974, Harbiye switched to a four-year university-level program and adopted a full academic curriculum after more than two decades of effort.

A university-level military academy curriculum was first proposed by the Americans in the 1950s without a concrete result (JAMMATr, 1950). Another attempt came in the 1960s. The relevant military departments and the Turkish General Staff prepared the draft law for this change. Accordingly, while Naval and Air Force Academies planned four and three-year university-level academic education, Land Forces planned a two-year technical training for the officer corps. Interestingly enough, a military-origin parliamentarian personally intervened to postpone this proposal, arguing that if this law were passed, Harbiye would turn into a training center for enlisted men (Yamak, 2006: 201-203). Finally, after a long delay, the struggle to bring an academic curriculum came to fruition in 1974, but over time military courses replaced academic courses again, and the balance between military training and academic education was disrupted. This imbalance could only be corrected in the 2000s. However, the model adopted during this period was the system engineering model taken from the American West Point. In other words, there was no model specific to Türkiye, both in the Staff College and in the Military Academy.

This situation changed only after the 2016 coup attempt. Once again, the transformation took place after a crisis. First of all, with the National Defense University's establishment, the Staff College's independent structure was terminated. Also, instead of one-time, long-term education, a continuous model addressing different ranks has been designed. Staff officers now started to be educated according to a three-tiered system, consisting of five months for the basic course, ten-

month education for the intermediate course, and a five-month advanced course, according to the rank and duty requirements instead of a two-year uninterrupted education. Another significant change was the adoption of an original major program (defense management) for the first time in the Military Academy. The program in which academic courses are predominant has been planned to be supported by military training sessions during extracurricular times.⁷ The program, which includes sociology, political sciences, history, science courses, and relevant field courses, allows the candidate officers to follow a broad-based academic education. Besides, faculty members and administrative staff are composed of both civilians and soldiers.

The defense management program, which is tailored to the needs and designed with the participation of the country's civilian-military experts, provides a four-year university-level education. Time will show how successful these practices will be, and the past experiences can offer valuable insights into the implementation of the new model. However, what is essential is that it has now become possible for civilian and military experts to work on and manage the issue of military education together. All these trials and different model applications seem to have provided enough accumulation of experience for Turks to create a model specific to themselves.

Conclusion

The Turkish PME system has been subjected to change since the establishment of modern military schools by taking the models of different countries as an example. However, each change resulted in developing a mixed model that includes the features of the new and some remaining characteristics of the old. The success or permanence of new models varied depending on the resistance of the officer corps, the general conditions of the country, and the working methods of the foreign advisory missions.

⁷ During the 1990s and 2000s, a similar academic program was in effect; however, that program was borrowed from the West Point.

Germans seem to have a long-lasting effect resulting from the more favorable conditions they encountered as they educated the officers of a defeated army, not to mention their approach that took personal relationships into account. In contrast, the relations of Americans with the officers of a victorious army that established a state progressed with difficulty. Besides, the fact that personal efforts did not support formal relations emerges as another difference. This uneasy process naturally caused the end-product that also emerged to be problematic. When the American mission ended, Türkiye was left with an elitist model based on rote learning, providing a very small number of officers with long-term education. However, a much better model could have been created if the high-quality and analytical teaching method of the German model and the broad-based approach of the American model providing more officers with advanced education had been together taken into account.

Another common trait of the Turkish PME change is that each occurred after a crisis. This tradition has not changed in the 21st century, and the Turkish military has been able to implement a country-specific tailored program built on their own needs only after the 2016 coup attempt. It would be premature to assess the effectiveness of this new PME model that is still in its infancy; however, what is important is the capacity of the Turkish civilian and military experts to design and implement a PME model on their own by taking into account its past experiences. Naturally, it is considered that making revisions and changes with regard to potential future problems and needs will be easier.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Türk modern askeri eğitim sistemi 19ncu yüzyıl ilk yarısında başlamış ve her yeni askeri yardım anlaşması ile birlikte şekil değiştirmiştir. Bu süre zarfında farklı ülkelere ait modeller uygulanmış, değiştirilmiş, yenilenmiş kısacası dinamik bir yapıda seyretmiştir. Osmanlı ve sonrasında Türk Ordusu kazanan tarafın modellerini uygulama yolunu seçmiştir. Başlangıçta Fransız modeli temel alınarak kurgulanan askeri okul ve eğitim sistemi, daha sonra sırasıyla Alman ve Amerikan etkisiyle değişime uğramıştır. Ancak bu model değişikliğinin hızlıca eskiyi at yeniyi al şeklinde hayata geçirildiğini söylemek iyimserlik olur. Her değişim dalgasında bir önceki modelden kalan bazı uygulamalar saf bir modelin ortaya çıkmasını engellemiştir.

Bu makalenin temel argümanı profesyonel askeri eğitim (PAE) model değişikliğinde subaylar grubunun tepkisinin temel belirleyici olduğudur. Örneğin 19ncu yüzyıl sonunda göreve başlayan Alman Askeri Yardım Heyeti ile 2nci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında göreve başlayan Amerikan Askeri Yardım Heyetinin (JAMMAT) karşılaştığı tecrübeler arasında önemli farklar vardır. Almanlar Osmanlı-Rus Savaşındaki yenilgiden sonra davet edildiler. Bu davetten önce 1877-78 Osmanlı-Rus Harbi neredeyse devletin çöküşüyle sonuçlanıyordu. Bu durumda değişime direnç nispeten daha azdır. Yine Askeri Yardım Misyonunun önemli figürü Von der Goltz'un kişisel çabaları da PAE değişiminde etkili olmuştur. Buna karşın Amerikalılar ise 2nci Dünya Savaşından sonra Sovyet tehdidi ile karşılaşan Türkiye'ye yardım için geldiler. Ancak Almanların aksine karşılarında muzaffer bir ordunun devlet kurmuş subayları vardı ve bu subaylar değişime direnç gösteriyordu. Sonuçta Almanların mağlup bir ordunun subaylarını eğitmek için daha uygun şartlarda ve üstelik kişisel ilişkileri de dikkate alarak daha uzun süreli bir etki bıraktığı görülmektedir. Buna karşın Amerikalıların ülke kurmuş muzaffer bir ordunun subayları ile ilişkileri daha zorlu olmuştur. Ayrıca resmi ilişkilerin kişisel çabalarla desteklenmemesi de bir fark olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu sıkıntılı süreç doğal olarak ortaya çıkan ürünün de sorunlu olmasına yol açmıştır.

Amerikan misyonu askeri modernizasyon programı olarak başarıya ulaşmıştır. Bunun da ötesinde teknik eğitim konusunda da Amerikalıların başarılı olduğunu söylemek gerekir. Ama PAE açısından yani subay eğitim sistemi açısından Amerikan modelinin üç yıl gibi kısa bir sürede rafa kaldırılması subaylar heyetinin direnç seviyesini göstermesi bakımından önemli bir veridir. Harp Akademilerinde Amerikalıların teklif ettiği model sadece 1950-1953 arasında uygulanmıştır. Amerikan yardım heyetine karşı olumsuz algı bu modelin olumlu yanlarının benimsenmesini engellemiş ve nihayetinde geniş kitlelere eğitim vermek hiç gündeme gelmemiştir. Türkler kendi bildikleri sisteme dönüş yapmışlar ve yine az sayıda, genç subaylar kabul edilmiştir. Üstelik tek seferde uzun süreli eğitim anlayışına geri dönmüş ve ezberci eğitim yöntemi pekiştirilmiştir. Belki de tek değişen Alman doktrin ve talimnamelerinin yerini Amerikan talimnamelerinin almasıdır. Dolayısıyla ne tam olarak Amerikan ne Alman ne de özgün bir Türk modelinden bahsedilebilir. Bu modelde kurmay subayların ordu içerisindeki elitist pozisyonu devam etmiştir. Bu anlamda okul başarısı her şeyden önemlidir. Ama bu sistemde en önemli sorun Türklerin her iki ülkenin en iyi yönlerinden ziyade en olumsuz özelliklerini benimsemiş olmasıdır. Yani Almanların elitizmi ile Amerikalıların ezberci dayalı eğitim yöntemleri yerleşmiştir. Halbuki Alman modelinin kaliteli ve analitik öğretim metodu ile Amerikan modelinin daha çok sayıda subaya eğitim imkanı veren geniş tabanlı yaklaşımı dikkate alınsaydı çok daha iyi bir model yaratılabilirdi.

Türklerin kendi ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda planladığı ve uygulamaya başladığı modelin hayata geçirilmesi ise yine bir kriz döneminden – 2016 darbe girişimi – sonra mümkün olmuştur. Harp Okulun-

da lkeye zgn bir savunma ynetimi programı tasarlanmıřtır. Ayrıca akademide tabana yayılmıř, devamlılık arz eden ve analitik dřnme iin daha fazla fırsat saęlayan bir program uygulanmaktadır. Bu programların başarısını zaman gsterecektir. Ancak daha nemlisi lkenin gemiřteki birikimlerini dikkate alarak kendi bařına bir PAE modeli tasarlama ve uygulama kapasitesinin hayata geirilmesidir. stelik bu sivil-asker uzmanların ortak abası ile gerekleřtirilmiřtir. Artık lkenin kendi uzmanlarının lkeye zgn bir model yaratabilme kapasitesi olduęu anlařılmaktadır. Doęal olarak gelecekte ortaya ıkacak sorun ve ihtiyalara binaen revizyon ve deęiřim yapabilmenin daha kolay olacaęı deęerlendirilmektedir.

