

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background

Throughout the history, the relations between Turkey and EU have always been complicated yet still interesting to be brought upon discussion. Their relations could be traced back into the mighty times of Ottoman Empire where Turkey firstly managed to get in contact with European countries. Turkey is an integral part of Europe's history, because through times Turkey and European countries were in relation in any kinds of circumstances such as war, diplomacy, art, commerce, cuisine and/or even inter-marriage.

Over centuries, relations between the two were characterized by cooperation and convergence—for instance, the deep economic, cultural, artistic, and social exchanges between the Ottoman Empire and European powers and city-states in the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries. (Tocci, 2014) The relations were based on peace in European continent and Ottoman Empire was considered an honorable guest in center Europe. Due to the relations between the two, Ottoman Empire representing Turkey was labeled as European other by some scholars given their proximity. However, the relations, as aforementioned above, were not always in peace. At the same time, conflict and competition were rampant, notably the Ottoman-Habsburg wars, until the “European balance of power” in the eighteenth century. But even in times of war, a code of honour existed between the warring parties, in a sign of recognition and legitimization of one another. (Tocci, 2014)

This contrasting mix of conflict and cooperation has rested at the heart of the contested identity construction of both Turkey and Europe from the outset. This form of relationship has managed to create a complex form of analysis

in understanding the aforementioned parties. On the one hand, the early Turkish Republican project was adamant in asserting its European credentials at all costs, even if this meant playing up the inherited nineteenth century slogan of the ailing Ottoman Empire as the “sick man of Europe”. On the other hand, Turkey stood on the frontiers of the early ideas of European unification in the inter-war years (Tocci, 2014)

The initiatives of Turkey-EU relations date way back in 1963 where Turkey signed the agreement of European Economic Community. Since the event took place, Turkey had been trying to enroll as exclusive and permanent member of the EU. However, on its way today to become permanent member of the EU, Turkey is on another edge of the table. Turkey is unlikely to join the EU due to the failure of accession talks and the absence of democratic support from consisting members of the EU. The hardship which is currently being undertaken by Turkey to joining EU is becoming more complicated as Turkey fails to cooperate with the EU in terms of dealing with its principle and regulation. It is believed that myriad of issues in terms of human rights leading to the rule of law is not compatible with the EU.

The acceleration of Turkey’s reform momentum particularly after late 2001, defined by many as a “silent revolution” in the country, spilled into Turkey’s EU accession process, especially when the Copenhagen European Council in December 2002 concluded that it would determine whether and when to open accession talks with Turkey in December 2004. The approaching green light for the opening of negotiations set a target and a timeline in the reform programme of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government elected in November 2002. Turkey’s progress in reforms spurred the December 2004 European Council to conclude that Turkey “sufficiently” fulfilled the political criteria and that accession talks could begin in October 2005. (Tocci, 2014)

*Figure 1 1.1 Turkey's Accession Comparative Perspective*

**Table 1: Stages in the EU Accession Process - Turkey in Comparative Perspective**

	Spain	Austria	Poland	Turkey	Croatia
Application submitted	1977	1989	1997	1987	2003
Commission Opinion	1978	1989	1997	1989	2004
Candidate status	1978	1989	1997	1999	2004
Accession talks start	1978	1993	1998	2005	2005
Accession talks end	1985	1994	2003	-	2013
Accession	1986	1995	2004	-	2013

Surprisingly, the tumultuous developments in the EU over the last four years have not had a visible impact on the content of the enlargement policy. When compared to the heydays of the eastern enlargement in the early 2000s, there has been a clear reduction of the political priority attached to enlargement. The Western Balkans and Turkey have both been victims of this scaling down of European attention. However, the actual content of the accession process has remained untouched. While the EU as a whole may evolve into a federal entity, through concentric circles, hub-and-spokes or multiple clusters in the years ahead, so far, none of these possibilities have been factored into the enlargement policy. Enlargement proceeds in slow-motion, as if the world stood still. And yet at some point, when the dust settles and the future EU's contours are revealed, the enlargement process will necessarily have to catch up with reality. Whether this will facilitate or hamper EU enlargement remains to be seen (Tocci, 2014) . Even if and at some point, Turkey and EU had an agreement on the accession, the process of adjustment or catching up with the reality would be a top priority matter due to their distinction in perspectives.

When Turkey adopted a new strategy for its relations with the European Union in 2014 in order to revitalize the accession process as well as open new avenues of integration, this constituted a critical step in marking the priorities in Turkey's foreign policy. While Turkey's accession to the EU still seemed far off, the new strategy, nonetheless, signaled a renewed commitment to the EU. The changing geopolitical

conditions since 2013 –increasing uncertainty in the Middle East, a more proactive Russian presence on the European soil, and instability around the Turkish borders –necessitate the continuation and strengthening of Turkey’s institutional ties to the part of the world that still resonates some stability. Yet, since 2014, the EU faces unexpected consequences of external crisis and internal challenges. (Müftüler-Baç, 2017).

In the eye of constructivist on this case, it seeks to explain that norms and values are the foundation to analyze certain objectives, in which case, Turkey. Implicit in the discussion is often the fact that Turkey is, though officially secular, a Muslim country, and that the current EU members are built upon a Christian foundation. The debate is therefore often about how different Turkey is from the current members, and that these differences are not easily reconciled (Svensson, 2007). The relations between EU and Turkey has its ups and down on the process. That is, the project of the integration has been intense, complex, and at the same time engaging. The political situation in Turkey has, in a way, slowed down the accession talks for Turkey to become permanent member. The recent referendum to expand Erdogan’s authority has managed to create skepticism towards the continuation of the negotiation talks.

The discussion among the EU members about enlargement is claimed to be primarily a matter of rational calculation in which both the EU and the applicant country are supposed to benefit. In this way, enlargement can typically be seen as something that is an intentional and collective action by the member states the applicant country. However, it seems this intentional manoeuvre often results in normatively determined outcomes, where a description in terms of the different parties’ individual benefits from the process seem inapt to determining the factual outcome. The following chapters will include an examination of whether the original intentions of the EU have been lost and instead left the outcome to be determined by the perhaps more diffuse concepts of norms and values. (Svensson, 2007)

During these times, the process of accession is still unclear. The difference is becoming more clear and evident especially with the recent tragedy happening in Turkey. The Erdogan's administration has forced the European Union to give contradictory feedback for Turkey. It may be perceived that Erdogan has been exasperated to go on like this with the postponing of the accession talks. If Turkey becomes a full-member of the EU, the alliance of civilizations will be achieved. If that does not happen, clashes between civilization will continue and also the EU will turn into a Christian club. Turkey is not a primitive tribal community, the EU should view Turkey as a bridge between civilizations as much as Turkey sees the EU membership as a necessity (Aslan, 2012).

Around the same time, Erdogan also stated to a French daily, *Le Monde*, that “[T]he primary reason for Turkey’s motivation to be a full member of the EU is to prevent a clash of civilizations.” He also added that “without an alliance of civilizations, the EU will not be a super power,” because Turkey’s EU membership will bring the support of 1.5 billion Muslims to the EU. The tension between Turkey and the central powers of the EU – Germany and France – has grown over time. In April 2009, Olli Rehn, the European Commission member responsible for the Union’s expansion, threatened Turkey by stating that if Turkey vetoed Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who stood as candidate for the General Secretary of the NATO, Turkey’s membership would be jeopardized. (Aslan, 2012). EU was threatened by Erdogan’s statement and EU has always had negative sentiment towards the aforementioned Turkey’s leader who has never tried to adjust to EU principles. And eventually the EU always prolonged the accession talks due to the conflictual relationship between Turkey and EU, particularly Germany and France.

Turkey opposed the Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen’s candidacy for General Secretary of NATO due to his uncompromising attitude towards Turkey in the

“cartoon crisis” and his turning a blind eye to a pro-PKK Kurdish television channel in Denmark. Turkey did not back down in the face of the EU’s pressures and vetoed Rasmussen. The crisis was resolved after the US President Obama persuaded the Turkish government to change its vote. Later, the tension between Turkey and the EU peak when the French parliament passed a law enabling legal charge against those, including historians and researchers in the field who refute the Armenian “genocide” (in 22 December 2011). Erdogan reacted to the decision by saying it is “flippant” and “unjust.” Similarly, in April 2011, in response to criticisms leveled against the AK Party around the 10 percent election threshold, Erdogan attacked France as being not “enough democratic” by giving examples of the purge of Roma and the lack of religious freedom in France in his speech in the European Commission in Strasbourg (Aslan, 2012).

The latest development of Turkey’s political situation in 2017 where Erdogan won a poll and became the President of Turkey again which lessen the chance of Turkey of getting into EU. This was emphasized by Juncker as EU Chief of Commission stating that Turkey can hardly join EU these days due to its regression of political stability.

This paper is to examine that history, identity, and attitude play an important role between EU and Turkey, which in a way, determines Turkey’s foreign policy directed towards the European Union. However, substantial issues might not be the case for this paper as it will examine more of the distinguished values and distinction between the two. Yet, it will be inevitable if particularly relevant issues are brought into account to give broadening analysis in understanding the issue.

## **B. Research Question**

Research question or simply the problem is the foundation of the thesis content, thus, from the abovementioned background describing Turkey's accession to become EU permanent member, a question emerges, **“According to constructivist approach, why Turkey's application to the EU membership is problematic?”**

## **C. Theoretical Framework/Approaches**

### **▪ Constructivism Theory**

In the analysis, the writer mainly utilizes one of the International Relations theories to be taken into account. One of which used here is “constructivism theory”. Alexander Wendt once said that “500 British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the United States than 5 North Korean Nuclear Weapons”. By definition, constructivism is the view that the manner in which the material world shapes and is shaped by human action and interaction depends on dynamic normative and epistemic interpretations of the material world. (Adler, 2005). Other scholars such as Nicholas Onuf, Alexander Wendt, Friedrich Kratochwil, John Gerard Ruggie and Peter Katzenstein agreed on stating that constructivism is a “social theory of international politics” that emphasizes the social construction of world affairs as opposed to the claim of (neo)realists that international politics is shaped by the rational-choice behaviour/decisions of egoist actors who pursue their interests by making utilitarian calculations to maximize their benefits and minimize their losses, hence the materiality of international structures.

According to the constructivist approach, norms, rules and values form an important part of the explanation or understanding of political events. As Koslowski and Kratochwil claim: ‘in general, institutions are settled or routinized practices established and regulated by norms’, and

accordingly societal institutions, both formal and informal, can be regarded as dependent on the norms and rules surrounding them. Relatedly, history can have an impact on the behaviour of political actors. Since actors preferably are regarded as free in important ways, but simultaneously limited in their freedom by structure, here relevantly represented and manifested by different institutions, the trajectory of a political phenomenon is almost impossible to predict. These institutions also have the effect that they help define what is 'right' and what is 'appropriate behaviour'. A constructivist description of political action is thereby characterized by actors trying to find out what the relevant rules or norms concerning a certain situation are, and following these. This logic of action, clearly contrasting the 'instrumentalist logic' rationalists typically embrace, is often called 'the logic of appropriateness'. In the present context, understanding the prevailing discourse implying certain norms, values and rules is imperative in understanding the dynamics and events of European integration and enlargement. Constructivism does not, however, completely exclude arguments instrumentalist often invoke; to the extent actors behave freely, it is of course possible and even probable that they compare different possible prospects and opt for the most beneficial one.

These scholars believe that the international relations structures are "socially constructed" and that "these structures shape actors' identities and interests rather than just their behaviour," the constructivist theory – which has different forms and focus and thus has been termed by some as an "approach" to the analysis of world politics – challenges the materialist and rationalist underpinnings of the old mainstream IR theory. The difference between the neorealist and constructivist arguments is primarily one derived from their views of the nature of structure; in other words, whereas neorealists regard systemic structures as made "only of distribution of material capabilities," constructivists hold that they are "also made of social relationships" which are themselves constructed by three elements of "shared



knowledge, material resources and practices.” This is why constructivist theorists advocate a “sociological rather than a micro-economic structuralism.” What they mean by social “construction” of the world politics is its creation through “a process of interaction between agents (individuals, states, non-state actors) and the structures of their broader environment,” that is, through a process of “mutual constitution” between “agents and structures.” (Behraves, 2011).

According to Ian Hurd, there are four points of distinguishing features in “constructivism approach”, also goes to show how constructivism consign both philosophical and empirical issues which were hardly susceptible in the prevailing models of International Relations theory back in 1980s;

**a. An Alternative to Materialism**

In the original meaning constructivism is “socially constructed”. Alexander Wendt in 1992 says that “a fundamental principle of constructivist social theory is that people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that objects have for them. Another point of view from Kratochwil in 1989 says that “the existence of patterns, cause-and-effect relationships, and even states themselves depends on webs of meaning and practices that constitute them. (Hurd, 2009)

A contrasting approach to “social construction” in world politics is the position known as “materialism”, which suggests that material objects (bombs, mountains, people, oil and so on) have a direct effect on outcomes that is unmediated by the ideas people bring to them (Hurd, 2009). Theory of neo-realism and neo-liberalism are seen materialist from that point of view in which they seek to explain international patterns and behaviors as a product of material forces. This goes to show that material is above of everything in the eye of

them, and if one can obtain such, ergo it shows that one has possessed 'power', in which case, power is manifested in military hardware, strategic resources, and money. By example, in 1995, John Mearsheimer argues that "the distribution of material capabilities among states is the key factor for understanding world politics."

Ideas that shape international politics realm are more than just beliefs of individuals. They include ideas that are inter-subjective (that is, shared among people) and institutionalized forms (that is, expressed as practices and identities). Wendt explained again that "inter-subjective and institutionalized forms of ideas "are not reducible to individual minds". Another point of view coming from Legro stating that "ideas are not so much mental as symbolic and organizational; they are embedded not only in human brains but also in the 'collective memories', government procedures, educational systems, and the rhetoric of statecraft. (Hurd, 2009) Wendt and Legro came to explain on how ideas are shaped and institutionalized through international politics law and how it is constructed into the system. It also proves that forced material is not the source or the outset of everything, just because it is a driving source of behavior in international politics it does not necessarily mean that it shapes or builds the entire the ideas.

## **b. The Construction of State Interests**

National interest is an integral part to discuss with in the realm of international relations and foreign-policy analysis. Constructivism is also a productive approach in solving the national interest issues in the realm of international relation and foreign policy of particular states.

Brooks and Wohlforth explained that non constructivist, with whom differs, argue that they contend that the socially constructed nature of interests does not alter the

fact that the primary interests that drive states are prefigured by the material resources and situation of the states, and so states are either constructed by material forces or can be treated as if their construction is irrelevant to their interests and behavior. However, in contrast, constructivists would argue that the apparent “hostility” of North Korean missiles shows that American leaders respond to the social relationship between the USA and the military resources of others, friend or enemy, rather than hardware itself. Weldes and Finnemore say, under such context, Constructivists often find it useful to examine the historical construction of “national interests” (Hurd, 2009). We perceive a distinction approach in which both perspectives apply, however, one would say that national interests is built upon the social construction issue that later on influences that decision-making in state foreign policy.

Subsequently, what differs a specifically constructivist story on interest is that the influences on interest formation are social. According to Legro who represents constructivist view; “new foreign policy ideas are shaped by pre-existing dominant ideas and their relationship to experienced events (Hurd, 2009). We may understand in a socially constructed view that foreign policy which based on constructivism is laid on the dominant ideas of society, per se. The social constitution of interest encompasses all the ways that actor’s interests and identities might be influenced by their interactions with others and with their social environment. This includes the process of socialization and internalization (Hurd, 1999), the drive for social recognition and prestige (Wendt 1999), the effects of social norms on interests and on behavior (including the desire to create norms that legitimize one’s behavior) (Hurd, 2007), and the presence or absence of a sense of community (Adler and Barnett 1998).

### **c. Mutual Constitution of Structures and Agents**

In addressing the general problem, constructivism falls under the pretense of structures and agents. By “structures” I mean the institutions and shared meanings that make up the context of international action, and by “agents” I mean any entity that operates as an actor in that context. Returning to Wendt’s illustration, the relationship of enmity that makes the USA fear North Korean nuclear weapons is not a fixed and stable fact. It is, instead, a result of ongoing interactions both between the two states and among the states and their social context. These interactions may reinforce the relation of enmity, or they may change it. They may also reinforce or change the broader social structures in which the actors exist, including norms and other forms of shared meaning regarding sovereignty, threat, and interests. (Hurd, 2009). In *Theory of International Politics*, he suggested that two states interacting in anarchy are “not just influencing the other” by their actions; “both are being influence by the situation their interaction creates.

In studying international norms, it quickly becomes clear that states are concerned simultaneously with shifting their behavior to match the rules and reconstructing the rules to condone their behavior. For instance, when states claim they are using force only in self-defense, they cannot avoid reinforcing Articles 2(4) and 51 of the UN Charter (which forbid aggressive war) and at the same time are redefining the rules by specifying how they wish the concepts of “sovereignty,” “self-defense,” and “aggression” to be understood. International norms are simultaneously the products of state actions and influences upon state action. Thus, the idea that states and the international environment are mutually constituted is inherent in the constructivist approach (Hurd, 2009).

#### **d. Multiple Logics of Anarchy**

In viewing with constructivist approach, it leads us to analyze different interpretation of international anarchy from the perspective of neo-realist and neo-liberalism.

“Anarchy” is the term used in international relations to describe a social system that lacks legitimated institutions of authority (Milner 1991). It is a formal condition of a system in the sense that it describes any system that is not organize through hierarchical structures of authority and command. Waltz (1979), in defining the neorealist school, derived from the structural condition of anarchy a set of predictions about the behavior of units, including balancing behavior, selfhelp strategies, and a self-interested identity. Wendt’s critique of Waltz showed that these patterns did not follow simply from the structural condition of anarchy; they came from the additional assumption that units see each other as rivals over scarce goods. “Rivalry” is a social relationship that can best be understood, in international relations and elsewhere, by examining its social construction. This requires acknowledging that the relationship is not fixed, natural, or permanent. Wendt proposed a spectrum of international anarchies based on variation in the ideas that states have about themselves and others. (Hurd, 2009).

These are the four elements to describe the distinguished features of constructivism which can be used as an underlying basis of our analysis. They are related to each other in a sense that if one adopts the first idea then others will follow logically as the implications for studying international relations.

In contextualizing to our analysis, I borrow the concept of ‘Itself’ and the ‘Other’ from Bulac which should be taken into account. It can be examined from two main points; (a) how Turks identify themselves and see Europeans; and (b) how Europeans see Turks and identify themselves which manifested on the idea of constructivism in terms of history, identity, and attitude which are substantially fundamental on

this analysis. Hence, it weighs up the notion to keep on postponing the agenda to Turkey's accession (Svensson, 2007). In addition to that, the political situation in Turkey is not in its best interest to simplify the issue. So far the discussion has concerned the effect structure has on individual actors, which of course is the most pertinent and definitely the most obvious aspect of agency-structure discussions. However, in applying a constructivist approach to European enlargement, we need to discuss the converse effect as well (Svensson, 2007). Arguably, including Turkey in the EU would be considered a major political event, and, following Koslowski and Kratochwil, we need therefore to take into account also how discursive changes affect politics: 'fundamental change in the international system occurs when actors, through their practices, change the rules and norms constitutive of international interaction'. Such a change in rules and norms also has the potential of affecting the actors themselves and hence also their identities. The relevant aspects of change in rules and norms will therefore be scrutinized in this paper. (Svensson, 2007).

## D. Hypotheses

Hypothesis can be understood as the preliminary answer of a research based on the topic background and theoretical framework. Based on the background and theoretical framework, the factors that complicate Turkey's accession into EU, in a constructivism manner, towards European Union on the distinguished perspectives are described in these following hypotheses:

**History**, which by definition, means that 'the whole series of past events connected with someone or something'. Both of the history of Turkey and European are built upon different kind of stories that shape their own existing identities despite years trying to establish relations towards each other. **Identity** is understood as 'the characteristics determining this' or object on this matter. Turkey and the EU have the remote distinction on how they perceive themselves as Itself and the 'Other'. **Attitude** is defined as a settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, typically one that is reflected in a person's behavior. Both Turkey and the EU seem to possess distinguished perspectives on how they view of each other.

## E. Scope of Method

In understanding the process of the research holistically, the research puts focus on seeing the issue from both perspectives EU and Turkey in analyzing the factors that directed Turkey's accession into EU in constructivism. The timely interval of this research is from the first time Turkey submitted the application to EU in the 1987 until its candidacy status in 1995 and with the recent development of its process as accession talks starting from 2005 until current High-level Political Dialogue in 2018. Notwithstanding, the writer could possibly use data before or after the aforementioned period of time if, in any cases, the topics to be analyzed are remotely relevant to the issue of the thesis with the purpose of broadening the scope of analysis.

## F. Methodology

1. **Method of Research** This research is accomplished by analyzing the primary data from Turkey's policy archives, European Commission on Enlargement Policy Protocol and statistical data that are relevant to figure out the factors behind the influence of history, identity, and attitude on Turkey's foreign policy towards European Union.
2. **Method of Collecting Data** The method of collecting data in this research is library research method. Every data used to accomplish this research are secondary data from book, journal online, news media, international agencies report, electronic sources as well as EU and Turkish governments' official website that are still relevant to this research. The data collected will be analyzing to draw conclusions.
3. **Conceptualization** In this research, the writer uses particular terms such as *Enlargement policy*, *Constructivism*, *Itself and the Other*, *European Union*, and *EU-Turkey relations*.
4. **Unit of Analysis** In this research, the layer of the analysis is nation-states.



## **G. Aim of the Research**

This research is aimed to identify the problems and analyze the factors that results in the influence of history, identity, and attitude on Turkey's accession into EU as one of the reliable resources for the succeeding researchers who will observe related to the similar topics about Turkey's accession into EU in the upcoming future. This research is also expected to broaden the writer's knowledge in understanding the issue in Turkey and European Union and conducted as well to fulfill the requirement to finish writer's study as under-graduate student of International Relations.

## **H. Organization of Writing**

The system of writing in this research is arranged as follows:

**Chapter 1** consists of Background, Research question, Theoretical Framework, Hypothesis, Scope of Method, Methodology, Aim of Research and the Organization of Writing.

**Chapter II** elaborates the background of the policy or the history behind Turkey-EU relation in constructivist approach.

**Chapter III** investigates the distinction of history, identity, and attitude between Turkey and the EU in regards to the process of accession within Turkey's perspective.

**Chapter IV** discusses the distinction of history, identity, and attitude between Turkey and the EU in regards to the process of accession within EU's perspective.

**Chapter V** talks about a drawing conclusion of the analysis.