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“How Has Turkey's EU Accession Course Affected Greek-Turkish
Relations”

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Dedication

This is dedicated to the people who are always by my side, my mother, my grandfather Sotiris and my best friend Catherine...

Chapter I

Introduction

Studying about the European Union and Greek-Turkish relations, it is really interesting to imagine how things would be if Turkey was a full member of EU's family since the time that Greece joined the Union. A possible question probably seems pointless but if we all realize that this scenario plays the most important role in each country's foreign policy and behaviour towards its neighbours, such as the relations among the three players in the triangle of Greece - Turkey and EU, we could infer that this transnational organization had influenced Greek-Turkish relations.

Furthermore, there was an impact on the opposite side in which EU-Turkish relations had affected positively or negatively the relationship between these two neighbouring countries. No one could answer the previous question without having doubts because of it's totally theoretical and rhetorical status but it is believed that from the one hand Turkey should join the EU as soon as possible, in order to control its behaviour under EU law and keep the balance in the status quo and on the other hand to stabilize the relations in the triangle and with all neighbouring countries. Full membership in the EU implies certain economic, political and social criteria to be fulfilled. Turkey belong to the countries that need to be scrutinized from this point of view because it does not have a stable democratic regime and sufficient respect of the rule of law which is the first and foremost criterion written in the EU's founding treaties and if there was a political will to improve these issues then everything could have been changed.

In this paper it will be provided an effort to examine the following working hypothesis: "how could Turkey's EU accession course have affected Greek-Turkish relations", by referring to the historical background since the EU was the European Economic Community, Greece's process to join the Union as a full member and Turkey's application to enter the EU. Moreover, the totally different aspects between the two countries and the crucial "*Cyprus problem (Kypriako provlima)*", which was continuously deteriorating their relationship.

In the second chapter it is argued that the "Europeanization" process affected the behavior of each country, their foreign policy and also the European neighborhood policy which aid in a positive way the relationship between EU members and their neighbors. Moreover, it will be elaborated "*why Turkey does not fulfill the criteria needed to join the EU*", mentioning the fundamental criteria which Turkey didn't succeed to meet since the association agreement (Ankara Agreement 1963). Turkey does not have the practical capability to join the EU even if sometimes had the will to do so and it will be underlined the periods which were a milestone in EU-Turkish and Greek-Turkish relations, too. It will be explained the basic criteria, the so-called "*Copenhagen Criteria*", and also the "*Acquis Communautaire*" and the role of the European Enlargement project affecting the States.

The third Chapter it will be divided in two different parts. The first one it is named “*Greek-Turkish relations after 1995*” with specific reference to key points such as the *Custom Union*, the *Helsinki Summit*, *Cyprus* and *Aegean issues* (in example the *Imia Crisis*) underlying the deterioration in the relationship between the two countries (Greece and Turkey) whenever EU-Turkish relations were getting worse in specific periods of time. The second part refers to the EU-Turkish relations, when they started cooperating with each other having significant results. It will be analyzed the negotiation process until 2005 and whether we could note a progress in the following years. “*Were there positive or negative consequences in Greek-Turkish relations? If any, did they influence each society and in which level?*” The attempted coup d’état that occurred in 2016 literally changed the political situation in the domestic policy and showed that the country cannot absorb the authoritarian elements in its political life and the involvement of the army in politics which means that the fundamental inalienable rights and principles are far from being materialized, such as the rule of law, democracy and respect of human rights. Also, it will be shown how Greek-Turkish relations evolved during the last years especially after Davutoglu’s contribution in Turkish foreign policy arguing that there was a change, positively or negatively, in Turkey’s behaviour towards the EU and Greece in terms of foreign policy. The last chapter will include facts and thoughts about Turkey’s Europeanization process in the foreseeable future, combined with some concluding remarks and today’s current situation on those issues.

Historical Background: EU-Greece Relations and EU-Turkish Relations in the ‘50s-‘90s

One of the most significant contributions in the elaboration of a political issue is the reference of the historical background in order to understand the whole situation from its roots and not to omit basic information or misunderstand the framework in which any incident happened because somehow the future “*follows*” the past. Especially in politics we could notice that every single political decision binds the authorities and the state towards international community. First of all, today’s EU started as the *European Economic Community* (EEC) and the *European Atomic Energy Community* (Euratom) in 1957 with the Treaty of Rome signed by BENELUX (Belgium, Luxemburg, Netherlands), Germany, Italy and France and the initial goal was to avoid any possibility of a World War III maintaining peace in international community by uniting the states in economic field (functional spill-over) and afterwards to cooperate the states each other in policy area (political spill-over) by means of the “*spillover effect*” as Professor Tsinisizelis mentioned in his lecture.¹

The notion of this effect was used to describe the mechanisms that supposedly promote the regional integration which was based on the theory of neofunctionalism² as E.B. Haas had underlined. Also, Mr. Haas:

“focused on the societal driving forces of European political integration by defining political integration as a ‘process whereby political actors in several

¹ Notes from Lectures of Professor Tsinisizelis in the Kapodistrian University of Athens.

² Rosamond B, *Θεωρίες ευρωπαϊκής ολοκλήρωσης*, κεφ. Νεολεειτουργισμός σελ. 88.

distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations, and political activities toward a new center, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states”³.

For instance, the idea of *spillover effect* can be used to explain the historical transition from EURATOM to EMU (Economic Monetary Union).⁴

The non-state elites are important too in his theory as the “*new regional bureaucracy*”. In 1961, Greece signed the first Association Agreement with the six founding members of the European Economic Community (EEC). Turkey’s next step was to apply for the same Association Agreement that finally took place in 1963 in Ankara Agreement but there was a noticeable obstacle to the way of joining the European family which is related to the serious human rights violations and the foreclosure of power by the military and this the reason why their relations eased suddenly while the financial aid from EU to Turkey was continuing.

“Following the 1963 European Economic Community (EEC)-Turkey Association Agreement, a customs union between the two partners became a priority, finally entering into force in 1996. The customs union was a core element of the EEC, and the EEC-Turkey customs union was conceived as a step towards membership. Turkey is the only major non-EU country with a trade arrangement of this kind. The customs union provides a common external tariff for the EU and Turkey, and covers industrial goods and certain agricultural products”⁵.

After 1986, and the restoration of the civil government, their relations came closer to normality. In 1972, Cyprus signed its Association Agreement with the EU family, too. In 1987, Turkey made a formal application to EU in order to join as a full member and the Commission replied that “*Turkey qualified in fundamental terms as a candidate for full membership*” stating that “*it was in the interests of the Community to encourage Turkey to achieve greater convergence with the Community*”.⁶

However, the progress that Turkey had already made during the previous period, especially in the field of the consolidation of the democratic rules and the protection of the human rights, the gap between the EU’s rules and Turkey’s way of thinking showed practically that it was literally vast. In 1981, Greece was accepted as a full member of the European family which of course had an obvious positive impact in Greek-Turkish relations, because every single political issue that showed up as a “*bone of contention*” between the two neighbouring states was transferred in a transnational level such was the *Cyprus issue*.

In 1995, we do have one of the most important steps in the relationship between EU and Turkey due to the Commission’s decision to cooperate with Ankara in the field of

³ Graziano, P.R and Vink, M.P, Europeanization: Concept, Theory, and Methods, chapter 2, Introduction: The Europeanization Turn in EU Studies: Beyond Grand Theory.

⁴ Rosamond B, Θεωρίες ευρωπαϊκής ολοκλήρωσης, κεφ. Νεολειτουργισμός σελ. 89.

⁵ European Parliament , Future EU-Turkish relations , Briefing, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/628290/EPRS_BRI\(2018\)628290_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/628290/EPRS_BRI(2018)628290_EN.pdf)

⁶ European Commission, Press Release Database, Turkey’s Application for Accession to the European Economic Community : Commission Opinion and outlook , [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-95-26_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-95-26_en.htm).

customs and trade by abrogating all custom duties in imports from the Community and also by abandoning the export subsidies in order to aid the fair competition ⁷.

In 1997, in Luxemburg, fifteen EU member states decided to begin the accession negotiations with six other states including Cyprus. They did not accept Turkey as a candidate but they recognized the potentiality to do so in the foreseeable future. The main argument was that the majority of the EU states in the European Parliament were against to include a Muslim state in their European Family because of their cultural differences as a Christian Community.⁸

Furthermore, they decided to set many binding conditions for Turkey such as good neighbouring relations, settlement of disputes through peaceful means before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), respect of state's sovereignty and its borders and last but not least, they underlined the necessity to restore the Greek-Turkish relations and find a viable solution for the Cyprus issue under United Nations administration.⁹ It is vital for two neighbouring countries to have “*Good Relations*” and thus European Neighbourhood policy underlines that “*offers a framework for more effective and stronger partnerships with the EU's eastern and southern neighbors, based on common interests and action on both sides*”. Furthermore, “*The EU promoting stability and fostering cooperation within the countries, provide financial support through the European Neighborhood Instrument*”.¹⁰ The Luxemburg Summit made it clear that the main opposition against Turkey's membership was Greece due to territorial issues and the issue of Northern Cyprus but also Germany due to its conservative political ideology related to Turkey's Muslim identity and the violation of human rights.¹¹

In 1999, we could notice an obvious change in the bilateral relationship between Greece and Turkey especially when Greeks made a positive step towards the Turkey's accession process due to the significant domestic political alterations by the new government. The two neighboring countries went further towards rapprochement as Yiannos Kranidiotis, the alternate Greek Foreign Minister and also a key advocate of the Europeanizing agenda, explained:

“...this process was marked by a shift away from emphasis on issues of “high political significance,” such as the Aegean disputes, in favor of dialogue on issues of “low political significance...”¹².

Greeks changed their minds about the vetoing of Turkey's candidacy and they moved to a more conciliatory stance towards the latter's accession process.¹³ The result was that the Helsinki European Council adopted Commission's proposal for Turkey to grant the status of an applicant for EU membership but many substantive changes

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Schimmelfennig, F. (2009). *Entrapped again: The way to EU membership negotiations with Turkey*. *International Politics*, 46(4), 413–431. doi:10.1057/ip.2009.5.

⁹ «Αναφορά για νόμιμα και ζωτικά συμφέροντα και ενδιαφέροντα της κάθε χώρας στο Αιγαίο» στο κοινό ανακοινωθέν της Μαδρίτης το 1997. «Συνοριακές διαφορές» στην απόφαση Συνόδου κορυφής της ΕΕ στο Ελσίνκι το 1999. Δηλώσεις Πρόεδρου Δημοκρατίας κ. Κ. Παπούλια (Καθημερινή 22-6-06).

¹⁰ European Commission, European Neighbourhood policy, Context, https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/european-neighbourhood-policy_en.

¹¹ Schimmelfennig, F. (2009). *Entrapped again: The way to EU membership negotiations with Turkey*. *International Politics*, 46(4), 413–431. doi:10.1057/ip.2009.5.

¹² Ker-lindsay, J. (2007). *The Policies of Greece and Cyprus towards Turkey's EU Accession*. *Turkish Studies*, 8(1), 71–83. doi:10.1080/14683840601138153.

¹³ Ibid.

should be made in domestic policy such as the promotion of protection of human rights and the protection of minorities (the political aspect of the Copenhagen criteria) and so “Parliament’s position is not unanimous with regard to granting applicant country status”.¹⁴ In other words, “there was not a consensus on the desirability of Turkish membership”.¹⁵ Furthermore, the earthquakes of Izmir and Athens respectively in August and September 1999 have helped somehow in improving Greek-Turkish relations.¹⁶

Since Helsinki European Council, the two states decided to cooperate in various fields such as “struggle against terrorism, illegal migration, incentives for trade and mutual investment, environmental and health issues”.¹⁷ Another important field of cooperation was through NATO framework in which Turkey and Greece agreed to exchange information related to military exercises.¹⁸ The European Council meeting in Copenhagen in December 2002 underlined that:

“if the European Council in December 2004, on the basis of a report and a recommendation from the Commission, decides that Turkey fulfills the Copenhagen political criteria, the EU will open accession negotiations with Turkey without delay”.¹⁹

In 2003-2004, Turkey under AKP party made serious steps toward the European accession path in two different issues that were continuously flustering EU family: “the civilian control of the military and Cyprus”. In April 2004, the Turkish northern part of Cyprus accepted Annan’s plan of United Nations for a “peaceful reunification” of Cyprus.²⁰ The same year, many domestic political reforms helped Turkey to gain the award of opening the accession negotiations, as the Commission of the European Communities stated. The result for Turkey was that it took the title amongst the countries that were characterized as “Negotiating Candidates” which generally means that they have been confirmed as candidates for EU membership and have opened accession negotiations. Turkey had already opened 16 chapters of the Acquis Communautaire (it will be further elaborated in Chapter II), but it has closed only one already.²¹

The Europeanization process of Turkey became recognizable by the Greek side in the late 90s because until then, Greek policymakers were using EU as a leverage against Turkey which was considered as a “threat” towards country’s interests. An alternative policy began to exist after that period because they realized that a “Europeanized” Turkey will no longer constitute a threat so the purpose was to legitimize the changes and the reforms that this kind of process brings to each country. The benefits of the

¹⁴ European Parliament, Briefing No 7 Turkey and Relations with the European Union, Introduction, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/briefings/7a1_en.htm.

¹⁵ Schimmelfennig, F. (2009). *Entrapped again: The way to EU membership negotiations with Turkey*. *International Politics*, 46(4), 413–431. doi:10.1057/ip.2009.5

¹⁶ Gundogdu, A. (2001) ‘Identities in Question: Greek-Turkish Relations in a Period of Transformation?’ *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 106-117.

¹⁷ Rumelili, B. ‘Civil Society and the Europeanization of Greek-Turkish Cooperation’ *South European Society and Politics*, 10: 1 (March), pp. 43-54.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Schimmelfennig, F. (2009). *Entrapped again: The way to EU membership negotiations with Turkey*. *International Politics*, 46(4), 413–431. doi:10.1057/ip.2009.5.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Notes from Professor Suzannah Verney’s handout.

Europeanization process will be elaborated further in the next chapter but the main argument about this bilateral relation was that:

*“the EU, as a symbol and as a model, has legitimized the pursuit of Greek-Turkish cooperation both on the governmental and the civil society level. Furthermore, the EU symbol and model has served to unite different strands of the state and civil society elites”.*²²

If Turkey joins the EU, its cooperation with Greece is going to be legitimized and any potential problem is going to be transferred in a European level and probably is going to be resolved due to their closer communication and further collaboration.

²² Rumelili, B. ‘Civil Society and the Europeanization of Greek-Turkish Cooperation’ *South European Society and Politics*, 10: 1 (March), pp. 43-54.

Chapter II

Europeanization Process: Theories about EU model / Copenhagen Criteria / Acquis Communautaire

*“Does Europe not have a leading role to play in a new world order, that of a power able ... to point the way ahead for many countries and many peoples ? Europe as the continent of the humane values, the Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, the French Revolution and the fall of the Berlin Wall ... The European Union’s one boundary is democracy and human rights. The Union is only open to countries which upload basic values such as free elections, respect for minorities and respect for the rule of law”.*²³

In this chapter is going to be elaborated the so-called “Europeanization process”.

“What do we mean by referring to this process? Is this process beneficial for states or not? What are the main conditions that a state should fulfill in order to be eligible for the candidacy and then to be acceptable in the EU family as a full member? How important is the negotiation stage? Has already Turkey made a further progress to negotiation stage? Does Turkey fulfill the appropriate criteria to join the EU?”.

These are some of the main questions that it is attempted to be answered helping the reader to construct a personal opinion about the impact of Europeanization process generally. The main argument that “*the Europeanization literature is inspired by the notion of ‘uploading’ domestic societal preferences at the EU level*”²⁴, means that each member-state transfers domestic issues in a higher level in order to be solved or to be helped by a team of technocrats that work for EU in cooperation with the experts who represent other EU member-states that probably face the same political or social or economic problem. Claudio Radaelli underlined:

*“The concept of Europeanization refers to processes of a construction, diffusion and institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ‘ways of doing things’, and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures, and public policies”.*²⁵

First and foremost, the European Union is based on the rule of law which means that every action taken by the Union had previously been written in founding treaties and then had been approved by all EU member-states.²⁶The purpose of the treaties is to

²³ Laeken Declaration, European Council, December 2001.

²⁴ Graziano, P.R & Vink, M.P Europeanization: Concept, Theory, and Methods, CHAPTER 2, Introduction: The Europeanization Turn in EU Studies: Beyond Grand Theory.

²⁵ Radaelli, C 2003, ‘ The Europeanisation of public policy’ in K. Featherstone and C.Radaelli, The Politics of Europeanisation, Oxford University Press, p.30.

²⁶ Europa, EU law, EU treaties, https://europa.eu/european-union/law/treaties_en.

make EU more transparent and efficient, to facilitate the cooperation among the states, to help EU enlargement process and to give the right to EU's institutions to adopt legislation etc.²⁷ The treaty of the European Union (Lisbon Treaty-2009) provides the legal bases for any European country to join the EU (article 49) and the values on which the EU is based (Article 2).²⁸ In this treaty we do have for the first time in EU history the exit clause, "*Any Member State may decide to withdraw from the Union in accordance with its own constitutional requirements.*" (Article 50).²⁹ If a state has the intention to join the EU should respect and promote Union's values and then deliver an application form to the European Council but the European Parliament and the national Parliaments are aware of this action simultaneously. The European Parliament may agree with the unanimous decisions made by European Council. However, the Lisbon Treaty adds some eligibility criteria that the state should fulfil except for the Copenhagen Criteria. This idea was incorporated after the "*persistent*" request that France and Holland had proposed albeit initially they wanted to be a specific and clear reference of membership's criteria in the Treaty as Professor Ioakeimidis argued.³⁰

The key criteria for a state's accession were defined at the European Council in Copenhagen in 1993 and they are considered as the first step of this process for every country that wants to join the EU. To begin with, a state should have:

*"stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competition and market forces in the EU and the ability to take on and implement effectively the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union".*³¹

These are fundamental criteria that cover political, social and economic field. Also, another important fact is Union's capacity to absorb new members, maintaining the momentum of European integration. However, someone could argue that Copenhagen criteria are somehow vague because the notions included are considered ambiguous:

*"a reading of the Copenhagen European Council report does not provide any insight as the Council does not endeavor to specifically define what exactly it means by a "functioning market economy" or how it defines "democracy" for its purposes."*³²

Also, it is considered that the Criteria "*are ineffective due to the European Union's lack of response to candidate countries' failures to meet all requirements before accession*". The problem seems to be a *lack of accountability*, or the fact that with the increasing accession of European Union members, from fifteen to twenty-five, an *overwhelming amount of problems* erased that are needed to be addressed with insufficient resources. The author's argument about the limited efficacy of Copenhagen

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ European Commission, Policies, EU Enlargement.

²⁹ Europa, EUR-EX, Access to European Union Law, consolidated version of the treaty on the European union.

³⁰ Ιωακειμίδης, Π.Κ, Η Συνθήκη της Λισσαβόνας, Παρουσίαση, ανάλυση, αξιολόγηση, β' εκδοσι συμπληρωμένη, Εκδόσεις Θεμέλιο, σελ. 50.

³¹ Europa, European Commission, Neighbourhood- Enlargement, Conditions for Membership.

³² Rezler, P, International Law review, Volume 14, No. 2 2011, the Copenhagen criteria: are they helping or hunting the European Union?

Criteria is based on Poland's example which failed to implement the specific directive regarding telecommunications.³³

The Europeanization process has two-way definitions in accordance with the quotations of some intellectuals who have an expertise to EU's concept. Tanja Boerzel wrote that:

“Europeanization is a two-way process. It entails a ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ dimension. The former emphasizes the evolution of European institutions as a set of new norms, rules and practices, whereas the latter refers to the impact of these new institutions on political structures and processes of the Member States”

Furthermore, we should not omit the “*administrative capacity criterion*” which was defined in Madrid European Council (1995) that underlines the necessity of “*making sound preparation for enlargement on the basis of Copenhagen Criteria and in the context of the pre-accession strategy defined in Essen for the CCEE ...*”. The main purpose of this strategy is to “*create the conditions for the harmonious integration of those states and the adjustment of their administrative structures ...*”, as Professor Suzannah Verney mentioned. The last but not least significant entry criterion is the “*Good Neighborliness*” which was defined in Helsinki European Council (1999). Professor S. Verney cited that:

“the European Council stresses the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter and urges candidate States to make every effort to resolve any outstanding border disputes and other related issues. Failing this they should within a reasonable time bring the dispute to the International Court of Justice...”. “*Moreover, the European Council recalls that in compliance with the political criteria laid down at the Copenhagen European Council is a prerequisite for the opening of accession negotiations and that compliance with all the Copenhagen Criteria is the basis for accession to the Union.*”

As mentioned previously in Chapter I, there is a very important stage of the accession process that includes 35 negotiating chapters, the so-called “*Acquis Communautaire*”.

“The acquis or Acquis Communautaire refers to the rules and policies of the European Union. It includes the entirety of the European Community legislation, the founding Treaty of Rome, all the directives passed by the Council of Ministers as well as all judgments made by the European Court of Justice”.³⁴

The negotiating issues are related to “*the conditions and timing of candidate's adoption, implementation and enforcement of all current EU rules.*”³⁵ For instance, some chapters are related to transport, energy, environmental issues, the judiciary, fundamental rights, foreign/security/defense policy etc. Furthermore, the *acquis* refers to financial and transitional arrangements. Finally, the Commission is responsible to monitor the progress of each state regarding the implementation of EU legislation.³⁶

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Rezler, P, International Law Review, Volume 14, No. 2 2011, The Copenhagen Criteria: Are They Helping or Hurting the European Union?

³⁵ Europa, European Commission, Neighbourhood- Enlargement, Conditions for Membership.

³⁶ Ibid.

This process includes the so-called “*structural policy*” which means that during Europeanization process each country receives funds from EU in order to aid the implementation of the criteria. Generally speaking, the main purpose of EU funds is “*to promote regional development of its member states and to speed up the process of convergence*”.³⁷ Most of the EU budget is spent on various programs that boost infrastructure, help the development of industries and modernize educational system. The EU gives directions on how the money should be spent and where should be distributed. Additionally, EU makes an effort to keep the balances between the states and thus “*poor regions tend to receive more support than rich regions*”.³⁸

*“[The] structural funds are the most important instrument of EU regional policy which aims to support economic change rather than to maintain the existing economic structures. These funds support agriculture and rural development, business and tourism, investment in education and various measures improving human capital, investments in infrastructure, transport and environment”.*³⁹

EU structural policy can be effective in the recipient country if there is also close cooperation amongst domestic institutions and a favorable policy in order to be noticed a positive and flourishing growth rate. It is not enough for a country to be solely a strong economic partner/player in international system, like Turkey, or just receive the funds from EU to join as a full member. It is necessary to meet all the requirements in conjunction with a strong effort to ensure a smooth accession in EU family, with no significant divergences between members-states afterwards and even if something like that exists, at least to have the willingness to work together to reduce the gap and maximize the possibilities for a convergence.

Generally speaking, Turkey’s accession process is a debatable issue because this country is «*large, poor and Muslim*»⁴⁰. Turkey’s accession will have significant consequences in EU. The first one is going to be a substantial impact in financial issues due to Turkey’s large population and its annual growth rate that has the potentiality to influence the whole existing situation in the EU. The Worlds Bank in 2013 concluded that: “In 2011, Turkey’s population was 74 million, with an estimated annual growth rate of 1.2%”. Also, due to its large population is going to be a shift in balances in the decision making process in the EU by influencing the procedure of Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) which can be adopted by the Council of Ministers. In this way, the effectiveness of this process can be affected by the demographic size of EU member-states and the power in the Council obviously is going to be distributed.⁴¹

The Copenhagen Criteria that all member-states and future member-states should respect and promote are debatable too in Turkey’s case. First of all, Turkey is considered as “*hybrid regime*”⁴², which is based on a very complicated political system. From 1923 to 2018, Turkey was a parliamentary representative democracy, a parliamentary system that was adopted by referendum in 2017. The new system came into effect with the presidential elections that took place in 2018 which gave to the

³⁷ The Impact of the EU’s Structural and Cohesion Funds A literature review, Adamadia Kehagia, p.3.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Dalle Mulle, E et al, EU Enlargement: Lessons from, and Prospects for, IES WORKING PAPER 3/2013, Turkey: a contested EU candidate.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² EIU digital. “Democracy Index 2016 - The Economist Intelligence Unit”, www.eiu.com, Retrieved 1 December 2017.

president, who is the head of the state, the absolute control of the executive power.⁴³ The office of the Prime Minister has been abolished and its powers (together with those of the Cabinet) have been transferred to the President, who is elected for a five-year term by direct elections.⁴⁴ Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was the first President elected by this way of voting. Also, Turkey was established as a unitary centralized state and since 1923 is deemed a strong supporter of secularism.⁴⁵

The issue that Turkey faces is the authoritarian⁴⁶ behavior which is increasing day by day under Erdoğan's party (AKP).

"Even before the constitutional referendum in 2017 the Council of Europe had noted the country's autocratic tendencies and warned of a 'dramatic regression' of [Turkey's] democratic order".⁴⁷

Turkey has been condemned many times by the international community and EU family because lacks of protection of human rights and minorities, including the Kurdish issue. Under AKP rule, many violations of human rights have already occurred such as violations against the right to life and freedom from torture and many special groups of people like LGBTI, Kurds, women and journalists are facing mistreatment and marginalization by state's organs.

Turkey's records show that human rights issues continue to be a very important obstacle to a future EU membership. For example, in 2016 after the failure of the coup attempt

"over 160,000 judges, teachers, police and civil servants have been suspended or dismissed, 77,000 have been formally arrested⁴⁸, and 130 media organizations, including 16 television broadcasters and 45 newspapers⁴⁹ have been closed by the government of Turkey⁵⁰ and 160 journalists have been imprisoned⁵¹".

On 29 April 2017, Turkish authorities blocked online access to Wikipedia in all languages across Turkey.⁵² All previous facts can help us reach the presumption that the political system is literally authoritarian and corrupted. It's obvious that Turkey needs to reconsider and reconstruct its principles, democratize its political system and then implement EU law and provisions regarding human rights. The most important principle in a democratic regime is respect of all freedoms and human rights, which means that every citizen should feel free and comfortable in the society without being suppressed by his own government. Kurds are the largest ethnic and linguistic minority in Turkey, but they still don't have the official recognition by the authorities and also

⁴³ "Recep Tayyip the First: Erdogan inaugurates a new political era in Turkey". *The Economist*. 28 June 2018.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Çarkoğlu, A 2004, *Religion and Politics in Turkey*. Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-34831-7.

⁴⁶ "Turkey quickly sliding into authoritarian rule after move to increase Erdogan's powers". *The Independent*. 30 December 2016. Retrieved 9 January 2017.

⁴⁷ "EU: Bericht: Europarat sieht Türkei auf dem Weg in die Autokratie". *Die Zeit*. 1 March 2017. Archived from the original on 4 March 2017. Retrieved 3 March 2017.

⁴⁸ "Turkey orders 70 army officers detained over Gulen links – CNN Turk". Reuters. 29 March 2018.

⁴⁹ "Erdogan Renews Putsch Purge With Targets in Media, Academia". Bloomberg. 31 October 2016.

⁵⁰ "From soldiers to midwives, Turkey dismisses 15,000 more after coup bid". Reuters. 24 November 2016.

⁵¹ "Turkish court orders release of journalists during their trial". Reuters. 9 March 2018.

⁵² "Turkish authorities block Wikipedia without giving reason". *BBC News*. 29 April 2017. Retrieved 29 April 2017.

they have limited exercise of many cultural and political rights. The only three non-Muslim minorities that Turkey recognizes are the Armenians, the Orthodox Christians (Greeks) and Jews.⁵³

Another significant fact that shows the corruption of Turkey's political system in the years of AKP rule, particularly after 2013 is that:

“the independence and integrity of the Turkish judiciary has increasingly been considered in doubt by institutions, parliamentarians and journalists both within and outside of Turkey; due to political interference in the promotion of judges and prosecutors, and in their pursuit of public duty.”⁵⁴

Turkey has also a strong presence in the international economic system because it has the world's 13th largest GDP by PPP and the 17th largest nominal GDP as the World Bank indicates in its Database.⁵⁵ Also, Turkey is a founding Member of the OECD and G-20. By referring to some information about Turkey's domestic policies, the purpose was to show that in some fields Turkey could become a Europeanised country but in some others a hard work is needed. The Europeanization process helped country to be modernized and develop its principles in comparison to the initial situation before EU's contribution but the most significant step will happen after achieving the political will needed and after a strong effort to rationalize and democratize its institutions and the political system. This will result to the possibility to be in accordance with EU norms and directions and if this happens, Greek-Turkish relations will be prone to be smoothed out.

⁵³Minority Rights Group International, World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples, Turkey, <https://minorityrights.org/country/turkey/>.

⁵⁴ "European Commission: Turkey 2015 report" (PDF). *European Commission*. 10 November 2015. Retrieved 6 July 2016.

⁵⁵ "Gross Domestic Product 2015, PPP. (Last revised on 22 July 2016.)" (PDF). The World Bank: World Development Indicators Database. Retrieved 31 August 2016.

Chapter III

Greek–Turkish Relations: *From 1995 to 2005 (Milestones)*

The '90s period was a new era for various reasons. The Cold War was ended officially after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and also Germany was reunited in 1990 after 45 years of separation. The fact that the rivalry between the two strongest powers in the world ended, means that each pawn lost their importance in the international game. One of them was Turkey, which was a very significant actor during the Cold War era because its geostrategic and geopolitical position led the country to be an emerging regional power. The two global powers USA and the Soviet Union were manipulating Turkey in order to reach their goals but Turkey played the game in favour of its interests. This introduction helps us realize that after the Cold War era, Turkey behaved differently because during aspiring to be seen useful and important in international community, attempted to promote the idea of being an emerging independent regional and probably global power during the following years.⁵⁶ The problem was that Turkey during the '90s, particularly after 1995, had the will to join EU and the best result was Helsinki Summit in 1999 but after the new millennium and the rise of AKP and the regime that Erdogan established, things had totally changed. In fact, Turkey's behaviour towards Greece depended on its aspirations related to country's foreseeable future.

The Greek-Turkish relationship has been a very difficult one because of two main problems: the *Cyprus issue* and the *persecution of the Greek minority in Turkey*, culminating in the events of 1955, resulted in the latter's decimation. As the Ministry of foreign Affairs underlines, the issues that cause a bilateral tension between Greece and Turkey are related to:

*“the attempt by Turkey to revise and change the territorial status quo established by the Treaty of Lausanne and other international treaties, as well as the legal status of maritime zones and airspace deriving from international law, by raising disputes and claims against the sovereignty, the sovereign rights and the jurisdiction of Greece and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in July 1974 and the subsequent Turkish occupation of the northern part of Cyprus, which continues to this day”.*⁵⁷

The Cyprus invasion was not only a milestone in Greek-Turkish relations because of the illegal occupation of the 37% of the Republic of Cyprus, but it was an international invasion and infringement of the UN Charter and its resolutions but also a violation of Human Rights in practice. In the beginning of the '90s, as it was previously mentioned, particularly in 1992, the bilateral relations started to smooth out when the two Prime Ministers Mr. Demirel and Mr. Mitsotakis were met in Davos in order to cooperate on some policy fields such as the “*good neighboring*” relations, coordination and on a good will for resolving the Cyprus issue. However, no one of them was materialized due to the death of Ozal.

⁵⁶ Notes from Lecture of Dr. Thanos Dokos.

⁵⁷ Hellenic Republic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, Greece's Bilateral Relations, Turkey, <https://www.mfa.gr/en/blog/greece-bilateral-relations/turkey/>.

In 1995, Greece withdrew its veto about the customs union between Turkey and the EU, given that the latter promised to start negotiations for Cyprus accession process after 1997. In 1996, there were strong tensions between Greece and Turkey due to former's legal right to extend its territorial sea to 12 nautical miles as indicated by the Law of the Sea, and as has been done by virtually all coastal states in international community.⁵⁸ Turkey's response was clear: "*threat of war*" (*casus belli*). It could be argued that this reaction was somehow expected. If Greece decides to extend its territorial sea to 12 n.m, Aegean Sea will be converted into a Greek lake. Turkey has 6n.m in the Aegean Sea, too. The reason why they chose to determine the nautical miles by the method of median line is the following. In the Aegean Sea everyone needs to exercise some basic principles such as *Freedom of Navigation* and *Innocent Passage*, and Turkey claims that Greece should not put almost the entire Aegean Sea region under its sovereignty and control. The next step, according to Turkey, would be to force every single ship or boat of any nationality, to ask for permission in order to pass the territorial waters because high seas are going to be lost.⁵⁹ This is not going to happen because no one wants it and at the end of the day, from a political and economic aspect, Greece doesn't have the capability to do so.

Another issue that raises controversy between the two countries is the so-called "*Continental Shelf*". The Greek position is in favour of the argument that the islands have their own Continental Shelf and all ambiguities between the states should be solved through judicial means but the Turkish side insists that the islands constitute special circumstances in the delimitation process and all rivalries should be resolved by bilateral or direct negotiations. This is a complicated situation totally that emerged in the '70s and there is a confusion until now albeit International Court of Justice (ICJ) actions to smooth out the relation between Greece and Turkey.⁶⁰

The issue related to the extension of 12n.m in the Aegean from the Greek side was the bone of contention, one more time, in 1996 that triggered Ciller's irritating statements and thus, Turkish journalists drew down the Greek flag which had been placed to Imia by Kalimnos' mayor raising the Turkish flag instead, showing their immediate response. This incident triggered a new episode between Greek and Turkish government because Ciller argued that the islet of Imia should be under Turkish sovereignty and this issue is non-negotiable and it consists "*casus belli*". Fortunately, the crisis calmed down due to American intervention.⁶¹ In 1997, a summit took place in Madrid under NATO's alliance when the Greek P.M Simitis and the Turkish President Demirel reconciled to avoid any action that could cause a confrontation between the two states. Also, they decided to respect the sovereignty, the interests and the rights of each country, follow the provisions and principles of the International Law and International Treaties, settle their differences by peaceful means in the base of consensus and avoid every unilateral action against the other state. It's obvious that the two states are totally different in various fields of policy or society and economy but the main problem is that the role of the military in politics is a habit that it does not facilitate the development of Turkey itself into a democratic state in practice but also Greek-Turkish relations in general are getting worse day by day due to Turkey's authoritarian domestic system.

⁵⁸ Βερέμης, Θ, Ιστορία Των Ελληνοτουρκικών Σχέσεων 1453-2005, Εκδόσεις Ι.Σιδέρης, Σελ. 211.

⁵⁹ Notes from Lecture of Professor Gavouneli Maria.

⁶⁰ Notes from Lecture of Professor Doussi Emmanouela and Gavoueli Maria.

⁶¹. Βερέμης, Θ, Ιστορία Των Ελληνοτουρκικών Σχέσεων 1453-2005, Εκδόσεις Ι.Σιδέρης, Σελ. 211-212.

A new era in the Greek-Turkish relations begun after the Helsinki Summit in 1999, when EU family decided to give the title of “*candidate state*” to Turkey. From that period and on, Turkey tried to gain a position in the EU family and did it best in order to start the negotiations for the EU accession process. It is known that two years ago Turkey was not acceptable to the list of official candidate countries due to its human-rights record and its disputes with Greece.⁶² Turkey’s membership was a disputable question because of two main issues: *the territorial disputes over Aegean islands*, as it was previously mentioned, and *Turkey’s occupation of Northern Cyprus*. Also, a significant prerequisite was to settle the territorial dispute between Greece and Turkey before the ICJ “*at the latest by the end of 2004*”. As an official mentioned:

*“This time there is the momentum, not just of the terrible earthquakes, but the fact that we have two very good ministers Ismail Cem and George Papandreou, in place at the same time.”*⁶³

This fact shows that Greek-Turkish relations were in a very good path of smoothing out and being totally friendly each other in a framework of the EU perspective. In the Helsinki Summit, it was discussed that every single dispute in the borders of each candidate state should be resolved constituting a prerequisite for the EU membership in order to start the negotiation process and if there is still any dispute then it should be brought before the International Court of Justice.

Finally, the Greek side accepted Turkey’s candidacy and the former’s right to raise issues related to “*borders dispute*” but also that occurring every issue falls under EU jurisdiction.⁶⁴ The next important historical fact and a remarkable step towards EU accession process of Turkey was in 2004 when the Commission published a Report of Progress. The latter was ensuring that Turkey fulfils the Copenhagen Criteria, so it was ready to start the negotiation process. The states which were in favour of Turkey’s EU membership were: the *UK, Italy, Germany* and the *Netherlands* and states against were: *France, Austria, Poland and Hungary*. Erdogan made a positive contribution to Turkey's way to the European family and this was understood by accepting Annan's plan for the reunification of the two parts of Cyprus and by opening the European path not only for Cyprus but for Turkey too, though the Turkish Cypriot leader Denktash and his followers opposed to Erdogan. However, there were Turkish people who strongly supported the European perspective of the country, such as the journalist Mehmet Ali Birand who pointed out that “*Cyprus is the biggest obstacle in Turkey's European route. We cannot ignore this important issue. We should not sacrifice this great case for rhetoric*”.⁶⁵

The so-called Annan plan has been signified historically as a remarkable attempt to promote cooperation between the two communities within Cyprus with the ultimate goal of integrating the country into the European Union. The conclusion is that the Cyprus issue at that time served as a key leverage of Greece's pressure on Turkey towards the European perspective of Cyprus, as well as the future of the Islamic State

⁶² Independent, News, World, Helsinki Summit: Turkey must now be wooed to accept EU membership, EU high commissioner flies to Ankara on a personal mission as Turkey frowns upon membership offer, Stephen Castle in Helsinki, Saturday 11 December 1999 01:02, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/helsinki-summit-turkey-must-now-be-wooed-to-accept-eu-membership-1131681.html>.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Notes from Lecture of Professor P.K. Ioakeimidis.

⁶⁵ Βερέμης, Θ, Ιστορία Των Ελληνοτουρκικών Σχέσεων 1453-2005, Εκδόσεις Ι.Σιδέρης, Σελ. 238.

itself. Unfortunately, the US military preparations against Iraq gave to Turkey a strategic importance in terms of its geopolitical position. Greece's negotiating position was at the forefront as Turkey was not interested in joining the union, and thus Greece loses the opportunity to use the Turkish European perspective as a lever to promote its interests and create peace and stability in the region.⁶⁶

In the 3rd of October 2005, Turkey signed the Protocol related to the customs union like Cyprus did, as well. However, “*the Prime Minister of Turkey mentioned that this signature does not confirm the recognition of Cyprus Republic and as a response EU told that Turkey should recognize it during the negotiations process*”.⁶⁷ In addition, EU admitted that Cyprus entrance in the EU will remove the country from the Turkish zone of influence and will place it in a zone of stability and peace. Greece did not have the potential to face Turkey alone, particularly about the Cyprus issue, so EU perspective could aid in two different ways: by *including Cyprus in EU family*, lifting the issue from a domestic to an international (EU) level and secondly *bringing Turkey in a position to discuss and negotiate an issue at a European level*, which could on the one hand to attract Turkey and on the other hand to seek a way out of the European path even for its own future.

Euro-Turkish Relations since late ‘90s until 2018 (Key Points)/AKP’s Rule/Euroscpticism in Turkey / EU’s impact in Greek-Turkish Relations

The European Union as a “*political being*” without an autonomous constitution and an independent government, operating as a state, has been studied by many scientists based on various theories. The so-called theories of European integration aim to explain this unique phenomenon of European perfection through theories such as functionalism, neo-functionalism, federalism and constructivism. Each theory explains European integration from a different perspective, setting different criteria. Constructivism, therefore, referring to Euro-Turkish relations underlines that one of the most important features of European integration is the notion of identity. Identity is a social construct promoted and supported by political leaders. Based on the approach of constructivism, European identity is directly linked to the notion of Christianity and as a result Turkish people are deemed “*the other*” due to their Muslim identity.⁶⁸ Also, the notion of identity is directly linked to interests, for example, Turkey's potential contribution to the ESDP project placed a positive sign towards Turkey's accession to the European Union, but its counterpart claims that this would undermine its security due to the closer borders with the Middle East. Still, Turkey's accession will solve the demographic problem that plagues the European Union mainly by integrating young people but will exacerbate the problem with uncontrolled immigration.

Where do we end up? The most obvious conclusion is that the pros and cons of Turkey's accession to the European Union are directly dependent on the interests at stake that

⁶⁶ Ibid, p.239.

⁶⁷ Ιωακειμίδης, Π.Κ., «Οι διαπραγματεύσεις δεν προεξοφλούν την ένταξη της Τουρκίας στην ΕΕ», Αυγή, 9 Οκτωβρίου 2005.

⁶⁸ Rumelili, B. 2008. ‘Negotiating Europe: EU-Turkey Relations from an Identity Perspective’ *Insight Turkey*, 10: 1, pp. 97-110.

change which vary according to the perspective from which we are considering this issue.⁶⁹

*“Turkey is often represented as a country of contradictions; one that is geographically situated both in Europe and in Asia, where a predominantly Islamic society coexists with a staunchly secular westernizing state, which is founded on the rejection of its Ottoman and Islamic heritage. Turkish society is represented as “torn” and divided between Islamic fundamentalists and secularists, Westernizers and those seeking closer relations with the Islamic and Turkic countries”.*⁷⁰

Turkey is deemed a “hybrid” entity. Since 1997, when the European Council did not grant Turkey the status of a candidate for membership in the European Union, Turkey has been trying to rebuild and revise its identity by orienting it towards Western and European characteristics. This made it possible to transform society into a multicultural entity with greater tolerance for Christianity, to function this way both as an Asian as well as a European country. Finally it made it possible in 1999 to bring to power a political party which was a great supporter of democracy and a promoter of the idea of integrating Turkey in the European Union.⁷¹ As Ismail Cem argued in 1997, “We consider ourselves both European and Asian and consider this dual identity to be an asset”.⁷²

As we can reasonably discern, the years between 1995 and 2002, when the Islamist political party AKP maintained a more friendly and conciliatory behavior towards EU, Turkey's *hybrid character* acted as a motive and a boon to its integration into the European Union with the concept of combining two totally different worlds (West and East) effectively helping this way to promote the idea of interaction without establishing Turkey as a purely Muslim republic that will act against Christianity. As Erdogan underlined giving a speech in the US:

*“Turkey is the most successful Muslim country in putting together Islamic culture, democratic order, and the principles of secularism... Turkey not only has proven false the idea that the [West and Islam] represent two incompatible worlds, but also provided an example for why these two can't even be separated by definite lines”.*⁷³

In 2005, the suspended negotiating chapters by the European Council were related to: *Free Movement of Goods, Financial Services, Agriculture and Rural Development, Fisheries, Transport Policy, Customs Union, External Relations, Right of Establishment and Freedom to Provide Services*. The negotiating chapters which opened between 2005 and 2016: *Science and Research, Consumer and Health Protection, Financial control, Enterprise and Industrial Policy, Statistics, Trans-European Networks, Free Movement of Capital, Company Law, Intellectual Property Law, Information Society and Media, Taxation, Environment and Climate Change,*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Rumelili, B. 2008. ‘Negotiating Europe: EU-Turkey Relations from an Identity Perspective’ *Insight Turkey*, 10: 1, pp. 97-110.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

*Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy, Regional Policy & Coordination of Structural Instruments, Economic and Monetary Policy, Financial and Budgetary Provisions.*⁷⁴ The only negotiating chapter that has been already closed is Science and Research in 2006 and European Council blocked the opening of 8 negotiating chapters over Cyprus. In 2009, France blocked opening of 5 negotiating chapters and four years later Hollande's government in France lifted veto on opening the Regional Policy chapter. Turkey's Economy Minister suggested that EU should renegotiate the terms of Customs Union or replace with it with a free trade agreement. In 2016, Turkey and EU cooperated due to the refugee crisis under the "*refugee deal*" and the same year in July there was the attempted coup d'état which eventually removed the country from the European path and its possible future accession in the union because of the blatant violation of human rights and freedoms through the exploiting situation of the "*state of emergency*" by the government securing its interests.

As we can see in table 1⁷⁵ below, regarding the behavior of the Turkish people towards Turkey's European perspective, changes are observed over time. In 2005, at a time when the European Union and Turkey came closer than ever due to the basic premise that the country itself wanted to achieve full membership in the Union, the population was above the European charm of Turkey, which was also supported by its own leadership under AKP rule. The process of scrutinizing the *Acquis Communautaire* begun. In 2008, the Council adopts the revised partnership for Turkey's accession, therefore Euro-Turkish relations are still on track. Nevertheless, the will to enter the EU in the following years started to decline and as it is written in the index about Turkish attitudes towards EU membership of 2010 has been deteriorated "*falling*" from a "*good thing*" to a "*bad thing*" demonstrating the shift in preference.

Erdogan's political attitude shifts towards a geostrategic hegemonic ambition without caring about a European perspective given the weaknesses and instabilities within the union, the ineffectiveness of its institutions and its diminishing economic and institutional coherence. With the rise of political Islam and the search for a new global identity, Turkey is looking towards the Middle East. In 2018, Turkish people are somehow divided equally so, as table 1 indicate, 29 people are in favor of Turkey's membership in EU and 29 are against. This argument could be corroborated by the fact that 35 people don't know if Turkey's membership is a *good* or a *bad* thing and 8 people don't have a clear answer. The population has been totally divided and the Turkish support for EU membership has been declining during the last years (table 2).

⁷⁴ Notes from Lectures of Professor Suzannah Verney.

⁷⁵ Notes from Professor Suzannah Verney, «Turkish Public Opinion and elaborated by SV»

Turkish Public Opinion and Membership

Table 1

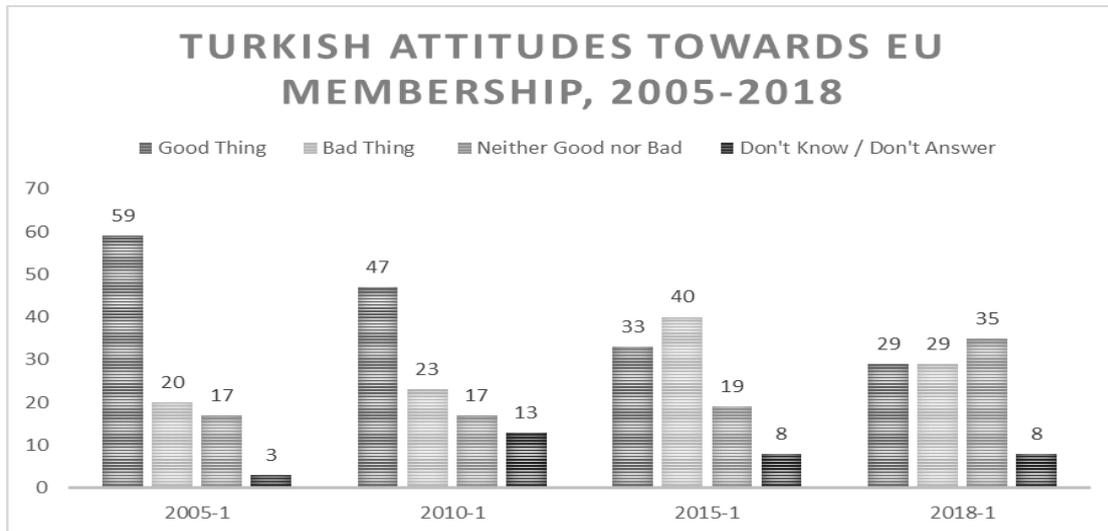
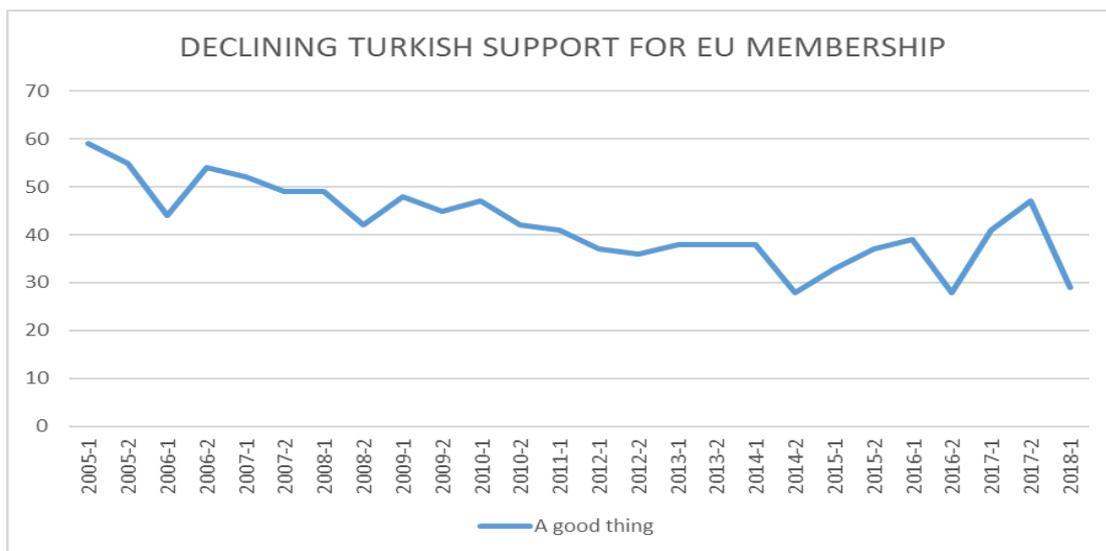


Table 2



The pros and cons of Turkey’s membership sometimes cannot be understood by ordinary people, especially when we are talking about a society that is deeply watered by religious-mania for centuries, and the political leadership itself is reinforcing that spirit aiming to divide and shake them for their own benefit. Looking through the eye of the European Union, Turkey could supply alternative energy sources to Europe which needs such goods, and to achieve this, Turkey will play the role of a transit company while releasing energy from it at the same time. On the other hand, as it was previously mentioned, Turkey having huge population, difficult to be managed by a Union, is plagued by problems and incidents caused by migratory and refugee flows over the last years. European Union itself is not always in a position to tackle domestic problems that have emerged in the aftermath of the economic crisis that has plagued almost all countries of the Union and has shown that its mechanisms are not as strong

and stable as they could possibly be until a possible withdrawal of a country because of its weakness or the likelihood of its own dissolution. Turkey's demographic size, however, confuses even the decision-making process within the Council of Ministers as it will make it the largest parliamentary group in the European Parliament to effectively block decision-making processes when Turkey refuses to make a consensus.

On the Turkish side, radical reforms and changes must be made within the economic, social, political and cultural levels in order to be in line with European ideals, norms and values and to effectively dispose any inherent ideals that they could be seen as an obstacle to the accession in the European family. Finally, it became clear that:

*“the cultural dimension of the integration of Muslim Turkey and Political Islam prevailing in the Turkish political scene, leads to the EU's departure from its Christian-Judaic backgrounds and its Greco-Roman cultural roots, in a way that underscores further reinforcing the principle of multiculturalism and transnationalism ».*⁷⁶

«The choice ideally preferred by the Turkish leadership, but also by the Turkish elite, is an à la carte European perspective or à la turque, where Turkey will be excluded from the mandatory European orientations, safeguarding the hardline nationalist core of the Kemalist state and leaving margins on the Kurdish issue».

The European Union has made a significant contribution to improve Greek-Turkish relations, especially during Turkey's apparent attempt to join the Union in the sense that it pushed Turkey towards democracy. From 1999 to 2005, a significant effort was made for radical change within Turkey with the effect of political and economic liberalization of the country and modernization, the limitation of military intervention and sovereignty in political life, the improvement of the relationship with the state, assessing from a different angle the notion of national identity and secularism and establishing and legitimizing Erdogan's AKP in power as his aspirations were more pro-European, friendly, Western and liberal rather than conservative and pro-Islamic.⁷⁷ Still, while in power, Davutoglu gave new impetus to Turkish foreign policy as he applied the “*Davutoglu doctrine*”: the principles of “*zero problems with neighbors*” combined with the “*maximum cooperation with neighboring countries*” that will stabilize Turkey's geostrategic position making Turkey the most important player in the regional system.⁷⁸ Consequently, the process of Europeanization of Turkey, even so far incomplete, has contributed to the democratization of the country, to its liberalization and to the westernization of certain norms and principles within the political, social, economic and cultural system. So far, however, the Copenhagen Criteria have not yet been met until the procedures for Turkey's full accession to the European Union have been completed, but there has been a significant improvement over the backward legacy inherited by the Ottoman Empire.

“...the post-1999 Greek-Turkish rapprochement at the political level is more likely to be sustainable (than past initiatives) because it possesses an EU

⁷⁶ Φιλίππου, Χ, «Το ευρωπαϊκό όραμα της Τουρκίας, η στρατηγική της ήπιας ισχύος και ο ρόλος του περιφερειακού ηγεμόνα κατά την διακυβέρνηση του ΑΚΡ», Τμήμα: Διεθνών και Ευρωπαϊκών Σπουδών Πρόγραμμα Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών :«Διεθνείς και Ευρωπαϊκές Σπουδές», Διπλωματική εργασία, Πανεπιστήμιο Πειραιά, σελ. 27-28.

⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 52-54.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

dimension. Turkey's EU membership perspective has empowered the moderate elites in both countries who are interested in promoting Greek-Turkish reconciliation and legitimized the civil society activities geared toward that purpose".⁷⁹

It could be said that the European Union had a more positive influence on the development of Greek-Turkish relations, mainly within the structures of the social community, bringing the two neighboring countries closer. For example, through stability pact for south-eastern Europe, learning the history of the two countries' relations highlighting the points of cooperation over the years and highlighting also the phases of peaceful coexistence and solidarity aiming to deal with the enemy.

In general, the aim was to remove any negative "comments" against the "others", thereby avoiding the possible bias from the society's foundations. Still, an important factor that certainly creates prejudice in the formation of the popular opinion against "someone" or "something" is mass media and the transfer or distortion of information and news by whistleblowers, on the one hand governments and on the other journalists. From the late '90s onwards, popular opinion and the media's treatment on Greek-Turkish issues were clearly more alternative and more friendly than Turkey's accession to the European Union. Of course, someone could argue that Greece's accession to the Union has widened the gap between the two countries as it has become a clear separation and a discrimination that intensifies diversity. However, since 1999 and beyond this kind of "differentiation" has diminished sharply following Turkey's bid to open accession negotiations with the European Union.⁸⁰

On the subject of human rights and minorities, the European Union has made a significant contribution to the Greek-Turkish relationship as it has raised as a priority issue the integration into the Union of the mutual protection of human rights and minority groups. The Council of Europe regarding the above-mentioned issue referring mainly to Turkey stated: "The EU serves as a model and reference point in activities aimed at improving the status of minorities and citizenship regimes in the two countries".⁸¹

Moreover, a key area of cooperation, trade and investment, resulted in the 1995 agreement between Greece and Turkey. Since then, their relationships have been normalized for a long time as there has been plenty of collaboration and communication on trading and investment issues.

"In 1998, bilateral trade between Greece and Turkey alone amounted to 200 million dollars. Through a fivefold increase, the figure reached 1.3 billion dollars in 2003. The trade balance is tilted in Turkey's favor; 942 million dollars of total trade were Turkish exports to Greece. The bilateral agreements on mutual investment incentives (20 January 2000) and on the avoidance of double taxation (2 December 2003) have spurred investments. Around 77 Greek companies operate in Turkey, mainly in the services sector, and Greek investments constitute

⁷⁹ Rumelili, B, The European Union and Cultural Change in Greek-Turkish Relations, Ph.D Research Fellow Bogazici University/ University of Birmingham, Working Papers Series In EU Border Conflicts Studies, p. 2-3.

⁸⁰ Rumelili, B, The European Union and Cultural Change in Greek-Turkish Relations, Ph.D Research Fellow Bogazici University/ University of Birmingham, Working Papers Series In EU Border Conflicts Studies, p.5-14.

⁸¹ Ibid p.18.

*approximately 3.2% of total foreign investment in Turkey. Most recently a Turkish brokerage firm has been bought by the Greek bank EFG Eurobank Ergasias for \$25 million. On the other hand, only 10 Turkish companies operate in Greece mainly in the tourism and logistics sectors”.*⁸²

Finally, as it is mentioned, there has been a significant progress beyond Turkey's accession to the European Union on the Greek side, with much emphasis on education, arts, literature and popular culture in the meaning of the two countries which came in contact with two different worlds and cultures. The ultimate goal was to influence public opinion towards Turkey's accession in the Union without being seen as the “*other*”. The purpose was to support this idea by its own leadership that promotes and constructs positive or negative images in accordance with the policies of each side's interests. However, since 1995 the political leadership had a friendly approach to the question about Turkey's accession to the European Union.⁸³

⁸² Ibid, p.24.

⁸³ Ibid, p.20.

Chapter IV

Concluding Remarks/Turkey's aspirations nowadays

“Even though the potential of cooperation is there, the experience of the last few years indicates that due to Turkey's troubled relations with most of the neighboring countries and due to its own very slow Europeanization process, Ankara's added value to the implementation of EU's neighborhood policy is perceived to be rather limited. Turkey does not constitute a model of a modernizing Muslim country anymore.”⁸⁴

Turkey had many choices to join the EU, especially from 1999 until 2005-2006. The last decade Turkey does not have the will to join the EU family, although EU and Greeks are not against. It is believed that:

“despite the serious problems and obstacles, the Europeanization of Turkey is still considered by Greek political elites as the most effective path for solving the persisting security dilemma”⁸⁵

Greek-Turkish relations deteriorated in the aftermath of the 2016 coup d'état because it turned out that this Muslim country lacks of democratic values, rule of law, respect of human rights and minorities. A state that can easily be vulnerable to a coup, it cannot be deemed a consolidated democracy for sure. Greece underlines that Turkey needs to be democratized by throwing away all elements that could be bring backsliding such as the protection of minorities and respect of religious rights which are connected to the status of the Greek Ecumenical Patriarch. Moreover, every single bilateral dispute should be resolved through peaceful means and in compliance with international law, as the Greek authorities support. An energy and economic cooperation had begun during the 1990s and on between the two states and also the Cyprus issue is always one of the highly contested among the others.

From the late '90s each Greek government (PASOK, Nea Demokratia) was in favour of Turkey's EU accession despite the problems and the obstacles that emerged during this period except for the last years when SYRIZA and ANEL were supporters of Euroscepticism generally, but also in Turkey's case was believed that this state does not belong to the European family.⁸⁶ The main purpose of each Greek government was to imply that if Turkey tries to comply with EU norms and attitudes and come closer to democratization, there are many possibilities to join the EU family and as a result Greek-Turkish relations are going to be meliorated. Many times, Greeks were pushing EU to cooperate with Turkey even if the latter was aggressive and irreconcilable:

“The continuous threat by the Turkish government that the EU-Turkey Statement of March 2016 hinges on good cooperation with the EU, and especially visa

⁸⁴ Manoli, P & Dokos, T, ELIAMEP With the contribution of Angeliki Dimitriadi and Theodore Tsakiris, FEUTURE EU 28 Country Report: Greece, Questioning the potential for strategic partnership in the neighborhood, p.9.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p.6.

*liberalization for Turkish citizens, resulted in repeated calls within Greece to strengthen the Statement and EU-Turkish cooperation”.*⁸⁷

Finally, further cooperation between Turkey and Greece in energy and transport fields could upgrade their relationship. For example, in the field of energy there is a plan for the construction of gas pipelines carrying Russian (Turkish/Greek Stream) gas to Europe via Turkey and Greece. This would primarily link to EU-Russian negotiations at the EU and corporate level.⁸⁸

*“Turkey’s effort to achieve membership to the European Union by fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria is at the same time Turkey’s democratization effort. The success of Turkey’s democratization process will have beneficial influence on Greek-Turkish relations”.*⁸⁹

It is clear that the European perspective is pushing each country towards the democratization of its political system, which has a direct impact on the economic sector as well. On the basis of this argument, Greek-Turkish relations are also improving in the political field, through the democratization of the Turkish political system during country's attempt to become a full member of the European Union, and the two countries will co-operate on an economic level for their own benefit. On the other hand, it is given that there will be moments that the interests of the two countries will not coincide effectively creating an inconvenient climate between them. The ideal outcome would be to have more points of convergence and cooperation, mainly regarding the foreign policy of the two countries, than to have points of contention or disagreement. The European Union certainly contributes to this by trying to democratize Turkey using the method of the implementation of the Copenhagen criteria and the European acquis. Finally, EU’s impact could be fairly noticed between Germany and France, when Union helped them to overcome nationalistic conflict and historic rivalries in Western Europe.⁹⁰ Acting the same way, EU can improve Greek-Turkish relations by helping to get rid of their nationalistic perceptions.

In recent years, Turkey has had a completely different attitude compared to the ‘90s and ‘00s. From 2009-2010 until today, the country under Erdogan's leadership has shaped its prospects and, by extension, its foreign policy based on current developments in international environment and certainly its interests. Nowadays Turkey, under AKP rule, has escaped from its European course and Erdogan's goal is to make the country an independent regional power . Therefore, the European Union as a player in the international stage is no longer as attractive as it used to be in the past, effectively moving Turkey away from the path of Europeanism and democratization. These two concepts are directly linked each other as Europeanism drives radical changes in the social-political system of a country based on the rule of law, democracy, respect for human rights and the rights of minorities and minorities within national law.

⁸⁷ Ibid, p.7.

⁸⁸ Manoli, P & Dokos, T, ELIAMEP With the contribution of Angeliki Dimitriadi and Theodore Tsakiris, FEUTURE EU 28 Country Report: Greece, Questioning the potential for strategic partnership in the neighbourhood, p.8.

⁸⁹ Grigoriadis, I.N, London School of Economics and Political Science, Hellenic Observatory, 1st PhD Symposium on Modern Greece: "Current Social Science Research on Greece", London, 21st June 2003, The Changing Role of the EU Factor in Greek-Turkish Relations, p.10.

⁹⁰ Ibid, p.11.

This means that the European Union contributes to the Europeanization and democratization of countries through the application of the Copenhagen Criteria and European law in general through the regulations and decisions issued by the Union's legislative bodies. According to this view, Turkey, striving to implement the European acquis and fulfill the conditions for its full membership, is essentially fighting for the democratization of its system, which certainly contributes to the formulation of its internal and external policies, with neighboring Asian countries something that is gradually improving. So, Greek-Turkish relations, based on this, tend to normalize everything that Turkey is on its way to the European Union. In addition, Greece is the only country that constitutes a link with the European Union and could push for its accession, as we all know, albeit most of the countries within the European family avoid Turkey's integration due to its religion (Muslim) and its system which tends to be authoritarian under Erdogan and his party.

As Dr Thanos Dokos mentioned, regarding Turkey's future, the Kurdish problem is one of the hottest issues for the country and defines its domestic and foreign policy. Erdogan almost came to a successful political solution but the effort was not successful so we're back to square one. It's obvious that there is a heavy fighting between Turkey and the PKK in South-eastern Turkey and mainly it has domestic and also external dimensions. Also, developments in Northern Iraq and Syria are influencing the whole situation. Another vital problem that the Turkish government will face and manage is the “*polarization*” of the society because it is totally divided in two different and rival camps. On the one hand there are Erdogan's supporters and on the other hand the secular westernized people. This is not a sustainable situation in the long-term.

Turkey and West have a strained relationship a fact which could be confirmed by a probable imminent exit of Turkey from the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO) because there are issues that need to be repaired. The Euro-Turkish relations should be redefined by both sides and choose between the *continuation of negotiations* or a *clean break* followed by some kind of special relationship or a combination of the two. This relationship has been challenged the last years by many issues such as:

“the ongoing management of the migration crisis and the EU-Turkey Agreement, the attempted military coup in Istanbul and Ankara, and the ensuing purge, which the EU and international organizations criticized for its disproportionate severity”.⁹¹

Erdogan has strengthened his position within the institutional system, especially after the 2018 elections, with particular concern the EU and NATO and whether Turkey is prepared to commit to the norms of the Western institutions or not. Turkey also tightened the relationship with Russia through the acquisition of military equipment and the policy pursued in Syrian territory following a co-operation. On the contrary, relations with the West have deteriorated, as the US and Turkey came into direct conflict on account of the deplorable situation in Syria and the armed conflict and on the other hand because of the imprisonment of an American shepherd by Turkey.⁹² However, in February 2018, the European Parliament called on Turkey to release two

⁹¹ European Parliament , Future EU-Turkish relations , Briefing, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/628290/EPRS_BRI\(2018\)628290_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/628290/EPRS_BRI(2018)628290_EN.pdf)

⁹² Ibid.

Greek soldiers charged with having illegally crossed the Greek-Turkish borders, which shows that EU has the will to try to solve perennial rivalries between the two states.⁹³

Negotiations on Turkey's accession to the EU continue despite the difficult and indirect refusal of some European Member States. However, the European Council considers the above as the ultimate goal of its relations with Turkey, seeking to achieve it through reforms and leverage.

“Some have proposed striking an economic agreement with Turkey as an alternative to membership”⁹⁴

“Any progress on the customs union or the visa-free regime is linked to the accession process. Even if these negotiation procedures are formally separate, they reinforce each other. Deeper cooperation through an upgraded customs union or visa-free regime is a step towards accession and negotiations on the chapters of the EU acquis”.

Finally, regarding to Turkey's future prospects, energy is an important factor which affects many other issues. Turkey is trying to become an energy hub for security energy reasons and because it unveils geopolitical advantages.⁹⁵

Turkey's European perspective has indeed contributed to Greek-Turkish relations and of course the closer Turkey is to the idea of Europeanism the more alternative and democratic the foreign policy and its behavior towards its neighbors will be. As all people know from political history, all depend on the *political will* of governments and their interests.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Notes from Lectures of Professor Thanos Dokos.

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