The Constantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy
Series on European and International Affairs

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The Constantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy Series on European and International Affairs consists of edited multi-author works dealing with contemporary political and socio-economic issues of European and international concern. It attempts to offer comprehensive and up-to-date accounts of the relevant debates currently taking place within the discipline of International Relations. The series is addressed to a wide audience: undergraduate and postgraduate students, scholars, think tanks and decision-makers.
Turkey’s Accession to the European Union

An Unusual Candidacy
Acknowledgements

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Finally, I am profoundly indebted to the scholars whose work is included in this volume for their participation and contribution.

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### Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACE</td>
<td>Allied Command Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>AKP</td>
<td>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, Justice and Development Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANAP</td>
<td>Anavatan Partisi, Motherland Party (of Turkey)</td>
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<td>CEECs</td>
<td>Central and Eastern European countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFSP</td>
<td>Common Foreign and Security Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHP</td>
<td>Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, Republican People’s Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMECE</td>
<td>Commission of the Bishops’ Conferences of the European Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSU</td>
<td>Christlich-Soziale Union, Christian Social Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>DSP</td>
<td>Demokratik Sol Parti, Democratic Left Party</td>
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<td>DTP</td>
<td>Demokratik Toplum Partisi, Democratic Society Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>DYP</td>
<td>Doğru Yol Partisi, True Path Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDA</td>
<td>European Defense Agency</td>
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<td>EDAM</td>
<td>Center for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies</td>
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<td>EEC</td>
<td>European Economic Community</td>
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<td>EKD</td>
<td>Evangelistische Kirche in Deutschland</td>
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<td>ELIAMEP</td>
<td>Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy</td>
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<td>ENP</td>
<td>European Neighbourhood Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESDP</td>
<td>European Security and Defence Policy</td>
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<td>ESI</td>
<td>European Stability Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EUPM</td>
<td>EU Police Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina</td>
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<td>FCO</td>
<td>Foreign and Commonwealth Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>FYROM</td>
<td>Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCA</td>
<td>Helsinki Citizens Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICJ</td>
<td>International Court of Justice</td>
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<td>ICMPD</td>
<td>International Center for Migration Policy Development</td>
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<td>IHS</td>
<td>Imam-Hatip Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organisation for Migration</td>
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<td>ISAF</td>
<td>International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan</td>
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<td>JHA</td>
<td>Justice and Home Affairs</td>
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<td>KADEK</td>
<td>Kongreya Azadi u Demokrasiya Kurdistan, Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>KEK</td>
<td>Conference of European churches (Konferenz Europäischer Kirchen)</td>
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<td>KFOR</td>
<td>Kosovo Force</td>
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<td>MHP</td>
<td>Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, Nationalist Action Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSP</td>
<td>Milli Selamet Partisi, National Salvation Party</td>
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<td>NAC</td>
<td>North Atlantic Council</td>
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<td>NPAA</td>
<td>National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>OLAF</td>
<td>Office Européen de Lutte Antifraude/European Commission: European Anti-fraud Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAG</td>
<td>Political Analysis Group</td>
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<td>PASOK</td>
<td>Panhellenic Socialist Movement</td>
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<td>PKK</td>
<td>Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan, Kurdistan Workers’ Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRIO</td>
<td>Peace Research Institute of Oslo</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Political and Security Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSW</td>
<td>Problem-solving workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>Refah Partisi, Welfare Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>RUSI</td>
<td>Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>SFOR</td>
<td>Stabilisation Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina</td>
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<td>TIPH</td>
<td>Temporary International Presence in Hebron</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<td>UNIFIL</td>
<td>United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon</td>
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<td>WEU</td>
<td>Western European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>WMD</td>
<td>Weapons of mass destruction</td>
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<td>WEF</td>
<td>World Economic Forum</td>
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<td>WW I</td>
<td>First World War</td>
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<td>WW II</td>
<td>Second World War</td>
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<tr>
<td>YTP</td>
<td>Yeni Türkiye Partisi, New Turkey Party</td>
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Turkey’s accession to the European Union (EU) is in every respect an extraordinary process. Its integration is not merely about the entry of another state into European structures. Turkey’s European membership is expected to profoundly affect both the material and ideational components of the Union. This is why it is commonly assumed that Turkey’s European integration will not be decided solely on the basis of the candidate’s success in meeting the Copenhagen membership criteria. As one analyst put it, Turkey’s EU membership will be determined by at least three additional criteria: the material benefits and costs of its accession, the perceptions of its Europeanness and the internal dynamics in the EU (Müftüler-Baç, 2008, pp. 204–205).

Utility-based and value-based considerations have certainly come into play in previous rounds of enlargement (Sjursen, 2002; Sjursen & Smith, 2005). Yet the extent to which the question of Turkey’s EU accession has been intermingled with debates on Europe’s borders, the content of European identity and the capacity of the Union to integrate more members is definitely without precedent. Indeed, the European Commission’s Negotiating Framework (for Turkey) includes stipulations that have not been part of previous negotiations with other applicants. To illustrate, the Commission (2005, p. 5) stated that it may consider the inclusion of ‘permanent safeguard clauses’ in areas such as the free movement of persons, structural policies or agriculture. More importantly, the negotiations have, for the first time, been described as ‘an open-ended process, the outcome of which cannot be guaranteed beforehand’ (2005, p. 1). Not only has the Union reserved the formal right to reduce the cost of Turkey’s membership but also has maintained the option of giving up altogether the accession process (Nugent, 2007, pp. 494–495).

The current context of EU politics without doubt adds to the uncertainty regarding the prospect of Turkish accession. The negative national referenda in France and the Netherlands on the ratification of the European Constitutional Treaty have plunged the Union into a period of introversion. What the Commission and the European Parliament initially described as mere ‘hiccups’ (Sedelmeier & Young, 2006, p. 3), turned out to be an enduring crisis following the rejection of the Treaty of Lisbon by the Irish people. The Union’s deepening process has come to a standstill and this, in turn, has also brought the widening process to a halt. Although the ‘No’ votes in the European national referenda cannot be attributed to any single cause (Font, 2008), one cannot overlook entirely the role that public discontent with enlargement actually
did play in the French and Dutch votes (Qvortrup, 2006, p. 92; Whitman, 2007, p. 228). It is worth noting here the uncommonly low level of support among European citizens with respect precisely to Turkey’s EU membership prospects.

Turkey’s accession to the Union is also complicated by its own insufficient progress towards meeting the Copenhagen criteria. The latest annual Commission evaluation report of Turkey inter alia underscored the absence of progress in ensuring full civilian supervision over the military, parliamentary oversight of defence expenditures, cultural diversity and respect for and protection of minorities in accordance with European standards (European Commission, 2007, pp. 9, 22). More importantly, political assassinations, occasional threats by the military to intervene (to defend secularism) and the two cases that were brought before the country’s Constitutional Court, aiming at banning the governing Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) and the pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party (Demokratik Toplum Partisi, DTP) – that together represent over 50% of the Turkish people – have recently manifested how volatile Turkey’s democracy is (ESI, 2008). Some analysts claim that the EU has lost the ability to persuade the country to adopt EU norms and goals owing to its growing scepticism about Turkey’s membership. One possible result is, as Sahin Alpay (2008, p. 12) states, that ‘[t]he narrowly avoided crisis will hopefully contribute to increased awareness in Brussels that politics in Turkey may take a very ugly turn if the EU fails to provide credible and strong support for Turkish accession’.

Others have for some time pointed precisely to Turkey’s sui generis democracy in order to assert that there is a real danger that the accession negotiations might fail. To avoid, in the words of German Chancellor Angela Merkel, ‘failure or catastrophe’, it is claimed that the Union should be ready to make an alternative offer such as a ‘privileged partnership’ (cited in İçener, 2007, p. 423).

European views on Turkey’s accession to the Union have indeed been split between those in support of its full integration, on the one hand, and those advocating a privileged partnership, on the other. To the extent that many of the latter proposals imply the applicant’s partial (or restricted) European integration in certain areas, the question of Turkey’s accession is probably not about ‘if’, but about ‘how much’ integration into the Union’s structures. The purpose of this book is not to offer a definitive response to this question. The book aims instead to examine the complexity of the issues pertaining to Turkey’s prospective EU membership by presenting several often-divergent accounts of the political, security and socio-economic dimensions of the entire process. In this regard, the book aspires to be informative of the relevant debate. It provides a forum for an exchange of views among distinguished scholars and researchers from different national backgrounds in order to make a contribution to the ongoing public discussion of Turkey’s accession.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part (Chaps. 1–6) discusses institutional dimensions of Turkey’s European integration. It is here that the question of whether the candidate should eventually be granted (or seek) full membership is more intensively debated. The second part of the book (Chaps. 7–12) deals with the security implications of Turkey’s accession to European structures. It analyses Turkey’s potential contribution to the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and European
policies against illegal migration; the overall impact of the accession process on the Greek–Turkish conflict is also assessed. Finally, the third part (Chaps. 13–17) presents socio-economic perspectives, placing particular emphasis on questions of identity as well as the political economy of Turkey’s EU membership.

The first chapter provides an overall account of why the EU has increasingly utilised enlargement for the attainment of foreign policy objectives. Arvanitopoulos and Tzifakis propose that enlargement functions as a form of governance potentially influencing not only the immediate policies of third countries but also their long-term attitudes. The authors argue that enlargement has nevertheless become the victim of its own success. The debate on the EU’s absorption capacity has demonstrated that the EU has generated expectations of membership among third states (such as Turkey) that the Union was not genuinely intending or ready to pursue. The chapter concludes that the EU should honour all of its actual commitments and cease using enlargement instrumentally where other means of external policy seem to be failing.

In the second chapter, Julio Crespo MacLennan points to the fact that many Europeans and Turks have fears with respect to Turkey’s integration into the Union’s structures. References to historical analogies such as the siege of Vienna and the conquest of Constantinople are definitely unfortunate but they suggest something about the content of these fears. The author argues, however, that the candidate’s accession to the EU will be advantageous for both parties. A possible breakdown in negotiations is described as disastrous. MacLennan argues that it is necessary that the EU and Turkey overcome prejudices and continue the negotiations, which are bound to take a very long time but which should culminate in a mutually beneficial agreement.

The third chapter underscores the need for predictability in EU–Turkish relations. Diba Nigar Göksel recalls that support for the country’s European perspective brought about in Turkey the formation of a loose heterogeneous coalition of social forces that was able to implement essential reforms. The visibly growing opposition in recent years in Europe to Turkey’s EU membership as well as the rise of nationalism in the country have, nonetheless, undermined the work of this coalition. Göksel argues that the EU accession process should be rejuvenated to become again the cause that would energise the pro-reform coalition, which, in turn, would lead to the enactment of much-needed reforms.

Thomas Silberhorn asserts in the fourth chapter that alternatives to full Turkish membership in the EU should be developed. This is so because there are important factional disputes in both the EU and Turkey that render uncertain the outcome of the accession negotiations. Silberhorn claims, moreover, that the two parties do not sufficiently share a common identity (in terms of history and culture), which is indispensable for the eventual attainment of a political union in Europe. Hence the author suggests that the exact content of the Union’s relationship with Turkey should be largely determined by the extent to which Turkey will consent to surrender sovereignty in order to be partially integrated into EU structures.

In the fifth chapter, Hakan Yılmaz researches an often-ignored theme in the EU–Turkish relationship, that is, to say, the existence in the candidate country of a sizeable Eurosceptic trend. Yılmaz’s contribution offers a historical account of the
evolution of this trend from the late 1950s till the present; he remarks that its recent growth is due to the revival of the so-called ‘Sèvres syndrome’, denoting a fear of the country’s dismemberment with the complicity of the West. Yilmaz notes the simultaneous rise in Europe of Turco-scepticism and claims that the concurrence of these two trends can endanger the efforts of AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, the Justice and Development Party), to Europeanise the country’s public sphere and accommodate public displays of Islamic identity.

Aristotle Tziampiris remarks that the aspiration of third countries to become EU members increases the capacity of the Union to project soft power, that is, its ability to make them desire the same outcome that the EU desires. However, if Turkey eventually fulfils the Copenhagen criteria and is not admitted to the Union, owing to widespread opposition to its membership, then, the author suggests, additional identitarian criteria will have been at work. The chapter elaborates on the content of these criteria that are behind much of the scepticism about the Turkish candidacy and argues that it would be ironic if cultural concerns determine the limits of the EU’s soft power, which is largely culturally based.

The chapter by Thanos Dokos undertakes a thorough assessment of what Turkey could contribute to the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The author goes through the threat perceptions and the strategic culture of both parties as well as their perspectives on developments in proximate regions of mutual interest (e.g., the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East) in order to question the existence of common ground for joint action. Dokos concludes that the Union’s own vision of its international role (which has not yet crystallised) will eventually determine the extent to which Turkey’s EU membership will be an asset for the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Can Buharalı offers a Turkish view of his country’s contribution to European security. The author recalls that Turkey has been an important security provider not only as a full member of the Atlantic alliance but also as a participant in several peacekeeping missions deployed in crisis spots around the world. Nevertheless, Buharalı contends that in the post-Cold War era, several developments (most notably Cyprus’ EU membership) have caused the erosion of Turkey’s position in the European security architecture. The chapter recommends that the EU elaborate a way to integrate Turkey within its security structures even in advance of its full European accession.

In the next chapter Özgür Ünal Eriş explains why the fight against illegal immigration has received greater salience in the Union in recent years. This policy development has impinged upon the evolution of the acquis communautaire and, by extension, had an impact on the EU–Turkish accession negotiations. Eriş briefly presents the country’s relevant institutional framework, the main deficiencies in terms of conformity with European standards and the progress that has been registered since Turkey was proclaimed a candidate for EU membership. The chapter suggests that Turkey confronts a difficult dilemma; it must implement costly changes to its asylum and illegal-immigration policies, while it does not know whether it will be eventually admitted into the EU.

The contribution of Panayotis J. Tsakonas explores the capacity of the Union to positively transform the Greek–Turkish conflict. The author ventures a combination
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of rational-institutionalist and constructivist theoretical approaches to claim that the
ability of the EU to change the interests and the identity scripts of Greece and
Turkey is dependent upon the fulfilment of two conditions. The first concerns the
Union’s legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of the two conflict parties as well as
the strength of the norms it exerts upon them. The second condition refers to the
depth of internalisation that results from the Europeanisation process (i.e., whether
it is targeting solely the elites or society as well).

Kostas Ifantis elaborates on Greece’s security policy towards Turkey and
analyses historically the view Athens has had of EU–Turkish relations. The author
explains how Greek policy has evolved over time from a firm stance against any
step towards the further institutionalisation of the Union’s (and previously the
EEC’s) relations with Turkey, to a position in favour of Turkey’s EU candidacy.
Ifantis concludes that the success of the present Greek strategy of engaging and
anchoring Turkey in the EU will hinge upon the preservation of the prospect for full
membership, Ankara’s response to the Greek openings and the progress made
towards the resolution of the Cyprus question, the domestic developments in the
candidate country and its determination to implement the required reforms.

The chapter by Eugenia Vathakou employs Luhmann’s modern systems theory
to study the Greek–Turkish peace processes of the 1996–1999 period. The author
demonstrates that the evolution of bilateral relations depends on the complexity
and contingency of their environment and the connectability of the themes of
conflict or cooperation. The chapter suggests that the process of Turkey’s
accession to the EU has increased the complexity of the environment of the
Greek–Turkish conflict, creating structures such as themes, roles and institutions,
which can guide the operations of different social systems in the direction of
peace. Vathakou points to the fact that the same process also has the potential
to cause chains of multiple connections among existing social systems on each
side of the conflict to emerge.

Dimitris Keridis discusses in his contribution the content of European identity as
the latter was constructed and transformed in recent historical times. Keridis
stresses that Turkey’s exclusion from Europe is not due to geographical and religious factors. It
is instead related to its non-participation in WW II, which was for Europe a key
defining moment. Turkey disassociated itself from the European regional subsystem,
and Kemalism (i.e., its constitutive ideology) was not delegitimised and defeated as
happened with other interwar authoritarian ideologies. If European identity is recent,
evolving and civic, as the author suggests, then Turkey can reform its state ideology
and bring it into conformity with modern European realities.

In the next chapter, Ranier Fsadni offers a cultural anthropological view of the
question of Turkey’s EU admission. The author presents the main cultural arguments
that have been articulated for and against Turkish membership in Europe and discovers
that, quite surprisingly, they share the same four assumptions: religion always
dominates culture in Muslim countries, radical differences exist between Islam and
the West, cultures are separate entities demarcated by clear boundaries and civilisations
can clash or make alliances. Fsadni elaborates on the false premises of these
assumptions and stresses that, while Europe’s identity and future is at stake in the
debate on Turkey’s membership, the terms in which this debate is conducted highlight the increasing Americanisation of European politics.

Ali Ihsan Aydin claims that Europeans seem to have rediscovered in Turkey a mirror of the cultural and religious heritage of Europe. An existential reflection on the content of European identity has been launched, in which European Christian churches are actively participating. Although the latter do not consider that Turkey’s European integration should be obstructed because of Turkey’s religion or culture, the churches are not enthusiastic about this prospect either. Considering that European integration has from its inception been a reconciliation project, Aydin recommends that the EU seize the opportunity offered by the Turkish candidacy to achieve a historic reconciliation between Muslims and Christians.

The chapter of Mustafa Akyol adopts a critical stance on Kemalism. Akyol challenges the mainstream view that Turkish Islam is exceptional because of Kemal’s secularism. The author argues that Islamic modernisation had commenced long before and that it was indeed the Ottoman legacy that gave rise to both Atatürk and modern Turkey. Akyol also reveals the illiberal content of Kemalism, which is in sharp contrast with the forms of secularism that were put forward in western democracies. The chapter concludes that the modernisation of the Islamic world will come about through the spread of democracy, freedom and economic opportunity rather than through secularist tyrannies or western military interventions that may fuel radicalism.

Finally, Pantelis Sklias deals in his chapter with the political economy of Turkey’s accession to the EU. The author compares Turkey’s candidacy with those of the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) that were admitted to the Union in the fifth round of its enlargement and highlights four major differences: Turkey’s more advanced trade integration ahead of its European accession, its lower human capital in terms of education, skills and culture, its greater demographic dynamism and its larger pool of prospective immigrants to Europe. Sklias concludes that although Turkey’s European integration will probably be a lengthy and difficult process, its political-economic transformation will be in the EU’s interest.

Altogether, the book undertakes a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to the question of Turkey’s admission into European structures, an event that will ultimately have ramifications not only for the future of enlargement but also, more importantly, for the medium-term prospect of the European integration process itself.

References


