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Exploring identity within the institutions of the EU and assessing its impact on the Turkish membership bid.

by

Hamish R. Leese

Abstract

Although social constructivism has gained in popularity and increased in application in studies of the European Union, a deficiency still exists in the understanding of identity in the European Parliament and the interests of MEPs. In this study I formulate and employ a social constructivist theoretical framework to answer research questions concerning the presence and nature of European identity; the role the European Parliament plays in the constitution of identity and the impact of identity and normative factors on the interests of MEPs concerning Turkish accession. My analysis is grounded in secondary data sources, primarily statements made by MEPs and members of other EU institutions, and backed up by primary research, interviews and questionnaire responses from MEPs. My research indicates that a European identity is present within the European Parliament, largely based on the stated values of the EU, and is felt alongside other identities by the majority of MEPs. I found the European Parliament itself to be a key factor in the constitution of the identity of actors within it, with an important role in the socialisation of norms, as well as in selecting appropriate norms. Finally, I found that in debates concerning Turkish membership of the EU arguments of identity are sometimes used explicitly, but that 'rational' factors in decision making are inextricably tied to 'normative' factors, with the result that an analysis ignoring norms and identity would be fundamentally flawed. These findings are important in understanding identity within the EP, and have implications for EU decision making and, potentially, in understanding identity in other institutions. My research allows me to build on the basis of social constructivist theory concerning institutions to explore a model of actor identity within the European Parliament.

Exploring identity within the institutions of the EU and assessing its impact on the Turkish membership bid.

by

Hamish Robert Leese

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Research conducted within the School of Government and International Affairs

University of Durham, Durham, UK

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Introduction

The European Union, and the movement which was to create it, have been the subject of academic study since its inception 50 years ago. This study has taken a wide variety of forms and rested on a variety of theoretical bases, but virtually all have shared similar underlying assumptions. The institutions of the EU have generally been viewed as intervening variables which facilitate rational choice decision making and nothing more. Membership of the institutions had no role to play in the identity of the actors within them, the tactical approach to bargaining could be affected but nothing more. Identities were, for the most part, seen as fixed and unchanging, those which did see some variation in identity¹ saw this as happening away from the EU level. Once again EU institutions are reduced to the level of arenas for compromise finding, often lowest common denominator decision making. Within these theories of European integration decisions are made using rational choice models, with each actor arguing for their national interest. I believe that the nature of the institutions of the EU, and the decisions which have been reached demonstrate that these models for the European Union and its institutions are inadequate, and a shift in theoretical approach could reap rich rewards in our understanding of these issues.

Although I believe that there are a number of areas in which current theoretical approaches to European integration are inadequate, I do not assert that there is no value to these approaches. For that reason it is important that I outline a comprehensive theoretical framework which does not irrevocably oppose the current approaches, but which is complimentary and commensurable with them. I will begin this process by reviewing the literature concerning social constructivist theory in international relations and attempt to introduce concepts such as norms, dynamic identity and “thick” institutions into the theoretical landscape of European integration. To achieve this a programme of empirical research must be devised which is appropriate for, and based in, the variables being studied. Through this empirical research, allied to the social constructivist theoretical framework, I aim to answer a series of research questions.

¹ Eg. Moravcsik’s Liberal Intergovernmentalism. Moravcsik, A., 1998. *The Choice for Europe*. London: Routledge.

1. *Is there a “European identity” within the European Parliament? If so, on what norms is this identity based?*

Approaches to European integration have traditionally viewed actors in the European Union as having fixed identity, based either in universal or national factors. I will investigate whether this captures the identity of actors within the institutions of the European Union, or whether traditional approaches to European integration lack the ability to accurately model actor identity.

The issue of European identity amongst the population of the European Union is frequently discussed, often in relation to questions of legitimacy, but I intend to look specifically at the élite level, actors within the European Parliament. Identity within the European Parliament is the key focus of study within this research and, as such, this is a vital research question to answer. As I go on to study the role of the European Parliament in identity creation and transmission, and the way identity influences actor interest and behaviour, establishing the nature of identity in the EP is a cornerstone of the research. If a European identity is found to be present I will then assess the basis of this identity, what it means for actors to feel European, and ways in which this differs from national identity.

It is highly unlikely that there will be unanimity of responses in relation to identity and adherence to European identity, and throughout the research I will attempt to elucidate a framework for which actors will feel a European identity, as well as how norms come to comprise that identity. Although I believe that this European identity will extend beyond the European Parliament, in order to study these phenomena in appropriate depth, my research will focus solely on the EP.

2. *How strong is this identity, and how does it interact with pre-existing identities?*

The subjective nature of identity means that it will be impossible for me to objectively measure the strength of European identity and I will have to consider this problem carefully when designing my empirical research programme. Despite this, it is not enough merely to point to some norms which might be influencing actors. I will attempt to assess the relative importance of different identities in given situations, and this will

allow me to analyse the factors which influence the relative strength of identities in a particular situation.

It is my contention that it is too simple a model of identity in the European Union that actors will either retain a national identity to the exclusion of European level norms, or “go native” and abandon their national identity entirely, rather than factors of European identity will be experienced alongside national identity. If this contention proves correct I will investigate how these different norms interact and are interpreted by actors to produce a complex identity. To assess this, it will be necessary to investigate actor interests, which are inextricably linked to identity, and how these are expressed in attitudes towards Turkish membership.

3. What effect does the institution of the European Parliament have on the identity of actors within it?

This is another key area in which I believe social constructivist theory can add value to existing approaches, and I will examine the literature in this area closely in the next chapter. I intend to investigate the constitutive power of the European Parliament in actor identity, and the ability of the EP to socialise norms.

Within a social constructivist framework, it might be expected that European identity would be felt more strongly within the European Parliament than amongst the population of the EU as a whole, and that it will play a role far stronger and more important than that afforded to it by existing theories of European integration and decision making. For this reason I will investigate whether this effect is present and, if so, the ways in which this effect is felt and the factors which afford the European Parliament this strong role in actor identity. Although the key focus of study is identity within the European Parliament, this line of study may point towards a broader role for European institutions in identity creation and transmission.

4. What is the role of identity within the European Parliament?

I will address this question in two connected ways: by looking at the role which the European Parliament is seen to play in broader European identity, and by investigating whether identity influences actor preferences and attitudes within the Parliament itself.

If, as anticipated, European identity is felt more keenly in the European Parliament than by the population at large, I intend to investigate whether there is perceived to be a role to play for the EP in propagating and strengthening European identity as a whole. Similarly, I intend to investigate whether there is seen to be a special role to play for the European Parliament as the elected body of the EU. I believe that similar questions could profitably be asked of the European Commission, having as it does the power of initiative, but this is beyond the scope of this research.

It is also my intention to investigate whether the strength of identity varies by policy area within the European Parliament. In line with social constructivist theory, I anticipate that this variation will be present, and I foresee it being along two broad axes, the degree to which a common European position is required, and the degree to which identity is threatened. In competences where a common position is required there will be greater discussion and greater recourse to factors of European identity. In such instances it would be difficult for an actor to convince a colleague using arguments relating to an identity which is not shared. Similarly issues which are perceived to challenge European identity would bring these factors to the fore in discussion and prioritise argument based on European identity over national identity. It was for these reasons that the Turkish efforts to gain membership of the EU have been chosen as the case study for this research. I believe the issue of Turkey's potential accession fulfils both these criteria and, as such, will result in identity arguments gaining importance, allowing me to analyse them. I will assess the validity of this contention and attempt to refine my model so that it is applicable more broadly within the European Parliament.

5. Is European identity observable in the interests and behaviour of actors in the European Parliament?

One area in which my research has the potential to add value is in the area of the prediction of outcomes, which will come through establishing whether European identity influences the interests of actors and the decision making outcomes within the institution. In this area it is not sufficient merely to highlight a European identity, to demonstrate the influence of European level norms on identity and interests requires me to identify mechanisms through which this influence is exerted. While I believe that European identity will have a discernible influence on decision making in the European

Parliament (although I do not anticipate this being felt to the exclusion of rational factors), policy outcomes will not be the focus of this research. Instead, decision making within the European Parliament will only be studied with a view to informing understanding of identity, the key focus of the research. I will attempt to construct a framework for the analysis of actor interests which marginalises neither normative nor rational factors and investigate the interaction of the two. Through this analysis I will be able to investigate the degree to which interests and decisions are shaped by identity.

6. What are the implications for Turkish membership?

It is quite probable that answering the preceding questions and introducing a social constructivist theoretical framework will change our understanding of the possible accession of Turkey to membership of the EU. I believe that an understanding of European identity will allow scholars a better understanding of the attitudes of actors towards the candidacy of Turkey, as well as highlighting issues and factors which are neglected within a rationalist approach to European integration.

Despite this improved understanding of certain factors in the accession process, the prospects of Turkish membership are not the focus of this study. What this question, and the case study of Turkey, will add to this research is an understanding of how European identity and norms are experienced, and how they are expressed in actor interests. If European identity is still strongly grounded in the founding ideology of the EU then it is possible that this will work in favour of the Turkish application. If, however, Christianity is seen to be a major factor it is likely that this will work against Turkey. In this way, the case study of Turkey will provide an important insight into the expression of European identity and norms. I believe that my research will be able to offer a more holistic approach to the study of Turkish accession which is not blinkered to factors of identity, and this could be explored in future research.

Key to understanding these issues and answering my research questions will be a thorough understanding of the theoretical and meta-theoretical positions of social constructivism and, as such, the first chapter of this thesis will take the form of a review of the social constructivist scholarship. Having surveyed the underpinnings of social constructivism, I will look specifically at the creation and spread of norms, their role in

identity, and the nature of institutions and the way in which they influence actor identity. Through these foci, I will build an appropriate theoretical framework to address the research questions outlined above.

Having completed a literature review to understand the theoretical basis of the research, it will be vital that I design and implement an empirical research programme which is appropriate to the research questions I aim to answer and the theoretical concepts I am working with. For this reason my methodology section will examine different approaches to, and theories of, knowledge and how we understand it. Through this examination I will outline the method of empirical research I will be employing to answer the research questions in a way which is coherent with the theoretical understanding outlined in the literature review chapter.

Having formulated my empirical research programme, the following three chapters will form the data analysis section of the thesis. In the first of these chapters I will look primarily at the first two of my research questions, whether a European identity exists, and if it does, investigating the norms on which it is based. This is, of course, a vital section of analysis, and a key part of the research as a whole. In a thesis which focuses on identity within the European Parliament, an understanding of the norms comprising identity which come from a European level is of utmost importance. Alongside an understanding of norms which comprise a European identity, this chapter will explore the interaction between European identity and national identities, as understanding this coexistence or friction will be key if it is possible to move beyond a polarised view of the European Parliament as a “talking shop” for national identity or as a location where MEPs “go native”.

Having examined the presence and basis of a European identity, the subsequent chapter will examine the specific role of the European Parliament in the identity of actors within it, addressing the third and fourth research questions above. A social constructivist understanding of institutions, which will be examined in detail within the literature review, moves away from a view of institutions as intervening variables in the bargaining of rational choice actors, to emphasise the role of the institution within actor identity itself. For this reason the second analytical chapter is dedicated to the role of the European Parliament in the creation and transmission of European level norms and the

resulting impact on the identity and interests of actors who comprise the institution. This analysis is key to gaining an understanding of identity within the European Parliament and, as such, forms an important part of the thesis.

The third analytical chapter will examine the expression of identity in interests, particularly in reference to the Turkish application for membership of the EU. This chapter will address the final two research questions above. Although the preceding chapters will have examined European identity and the role of the European Parliament in MEP identity, I believe that an examination of the expression of interests within the EP will be an important part of the exploration of actor identity within the institution. Social constructivist approaches argue that interest and identity are inseparable, and I believe that the analysis in this chapter will shed important light on the nature of European identity, as well as the strength of European norms relative to those from a national level.

Having analysed the empirical data generated by my research in the manner outlined, I will conclude by revisiting the research questions set out above. Although I will remain cognizant of the fact that the social constructivist framework I am employing asserts that issues of identity are dynamic rather than static, I aim to provide answers to these research questions. Through this concluding examination I will aim to show the novel contribution I have made in this field and the broader applicability of my work in future research.

Social Constructivism and the European Parliament

Key to understanding the role of normative factors, identity and interest within the European Union is establishing a specific, coherent theoretical framework within which to work. To this end this chapter examines the existing scholarship in the field of social constructivist theory and its applicability to the European Parliament, the identities of the actors within it and the ways in which identity will be observable from actor interest. From a starting point looking at the theoretical and meta-theoretical bases of social constructivism and what this approach can add to rationalist approaches, I will go on to look closely at the social constructivist understanding of identity, the creation and spread of norms and their influence on identity, and the vastly different concept of institutions espoused by social constructivists. Having established a social constructivist theoretical framework I will outline how I will employ this framework in studying the European Parliament and how this will allow me to address each of my research questions. This will form an important part of the exploration of methodology which will follow, and provide a basis for the analysis of research data in subsequent chapters.

The added value of social constructivism

Realist theory has held a place of dominance within international relations for many years, and the debate between realist and liberal theories of international relations is a well-established one. In many cases today this takes the form of a debate concerning the effect on state action of structure (such as anarchy and the distribution of power) against process (interaction) and institutions,¹ but the similar meta-theoretical assumptions underpinning these theories mean that in this respect, as in many others, neo-realism and neo-liberalism share a great deal of common ground. These approaches 'share a view of the world of international relations in utilitarian terms: an atomistic universe of self-regarding units whose identity is assumed given and fixed'.² These 'neo-utilitarian'³ theories offer a purely materialistic, individualistic ontology and adhere to the principle of rational choice, affording the process and institutions of world politics the power to

¹ Wendt, A., 1992. 'Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics' in Der Derian, J., 9ed.) *International Theory – Critical Investigations*. MacMillan, Basingstoke, 1995. p.129.

² Ruggie, J.G., 1998. *Constructing the World Polity*. Routledge, London, p.3.

³ Ibid.

affect the behaviour of states, but not their identities and interests. '[L]ike all social theories, rational choice directs us to ask some questions and not others, treating the identities and interests of agents as exogenously given and focusing on how the behavior of agents generates outcomes'.⁴ 'The postwar academic aversion to idealism in the United States...resulted in a widespread discounting of, and thus a poor grasp on, the role of [ideational] factors in international life, be they identities, norms, aspirations, ideologies, or simply ideas about cause-effect relations'.⁵ These approaches have led to an incomplete and inaccurate understanding of the working of the European Union and its relations with third countries, with particular deficiencies in the understanding of EU institutions. These shortcomings in perception stem from the metatheoretical assumptions on which neo-utilitarian theories are based, and other approaches and theories have been suggested to address these shortcomings. One such approach is social constructivism.

It is difficult to give a single, satisfactory definition of the social constructivist movement, which has branches throughout the social sciences, so it is useful to examine the evolution of thought which led to modern social constructivism. The term 'social constructivism' was coined in international relations theory by Onuf in his 1987 work *World of Our Making*,⁶ although Moravcsik attributes the creation of a self-conscious constructivist theoretical approach to world politics to Wendt in the same year.⁷ In a broader context, however, '[t]he roots of the movement may properly be traced to earlier eras, and one might prefer to speak of a shared consciousness rather than a movement'.⁸ Modern social constructivism owes a great deal to the central role afforded to ideas in the work of Durkheim and Weber and, while they left many questions unanswered, the social nature of their theoretical work provided a basis for future research into social action.⁹ Another important stage in the development of social constructivism came with Mead's 1934 work *Mind, Self and Society* and his exegesis of 'symbolic interactionism',

⁴ Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it' p.129.

⁵ Ruggie, J.G., 1998. 'What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge' *International Organization* 52:4 p.855.

⁶ Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity* p.11.

⁷ Moravcsik, A., 'Constructivism and European Integration: A Critique' in Christiansen et al (eds.) *The Social Construction of Europe*. SAGE, London, 2001. p.176.

⁸ Gergen, K.J., 1985. 'The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology' *American Psychologist* 40:3. p.269.

⁹ Ruggie, 'What Makes the World Hang Together?' p.861.

which views identities as constructed through social interaction.¹⁰ Further constructivist themes are found in Garfinkel's 'Ethnomethodology', 'an organizational study of a member's knowledge of his own ordinary affairs, of his own organized enterprises, where that knowledge is treated by us as part of the same setting that makes it orderable'.¹¹ Garfinkel begins to elucidate a 'duality of structure' which is both created by, and creates people within it, and this is continued by Berger and Luckmann in *The Social Construction of Reality*. They argue that the object of sociological study should be 'society as part of a human world, made by men, inhabited by men, and, in turn, making men, in an ongoing historical process'.¹² They argue not only for the mutual constitution of agents and structure, but 'the ideas [they] tried to develop [also] posit *neither* an ahistorical 'social system' *nor* an ahistorical 'human nature',¹³ important constructivist concepts.

In recent years these ideas have spread into more and more fields of social scientific inquiry and so, despite this shared history, social constructivist groups in different social sciences share only a 'family resemblance',¹⁴ with social constructivist theorising underpinning concepts like 'discourse analysis', 'critical psychology', 'deconstruction' and 'poststructuralism'.¹⁵ Indeed Hacking suggests that social constructivism 'has become trendy. So many types of analyses invoke social construction that quite distinct objectives get run together'.¹⁶ Even within each field of social scientific inquiry social constructivism does not present a single, unified theory. Social constructivism is 'not itself a theory of international relations...but a theoretically informed approach to the study of international relations',¹⁷ with 'very little clarity and even less consensus as to its nature and substance'.¹⁸ This lack of specificity requires caution be exercised in the use of the term, and requires a distinct research programme be formulated in order to provide meaningful progress in this area. Greater specificity can be found in the work of

¹⁰ Burr, V., 1995. *An Introduction to Social Constructionism*. Routledge, London. p.9.

¹¹ Garfinkel, H., 1968. 'The Origins of the Term 'Ethnomethodology'' in Turner (ed.) *Ethnomethodology*. Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1974.

¹² Berger, P.L. & Luckmann, T., 1966. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Penguin, Harmondsworth. p.211.

¹³ Ibid, pp.208-209.

¹⁴ Burr, V., *Introduction to Social Constructionism*, p.2.

¹⁵ Ibid, p.1.

¹⁶ Hacking, I., 1999. *The Social Construction of What?* Harvard University Press. p.35.

¹⁷ Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity*. p.11.

¹⁸ Adler, E., 1997. 'Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics' *European Journal of International Relations* 3:3 p.320.

Adler, who agrees that social constructivism is not itself a theory of politics,¹⁹ but he does not accept that it is an 'ism' or paradigm, arguing for a three layered understanding 'involving metaphysics, social theory and international relations theory and research strategies – of social reality and social science and of their dynamic mutually constitutive effects'.²⁰ I will remain cognizant of this multi-layered approach to social constructivism, particularly when considering methodology, to ensure a coherent research programme, and it is through an investigation of this social constructivist meta-theory that I intend to analyse the potential 'added value' of social constructivism in European integration theory, and in the action and identity of the institutions of the European Union.

Rationalist theories of international relations subscribe to the '*exogenic perspective*' to knowledge, which 'tends to view knowledge as a pawn to nature',²¹ and such approaches to international relations hold that ideas and beliefs reflect the real, material world and do not have a constitutive role to play. In contrast to this is the social constructivist adherence to the '*endogenic perspective*' which treats knowledge as the result of human processes²² and distinguishes between brute, material facts and social facts. Social constructivists believe that, to a greater or lesser degree, 'reality is affected by knowledge and social factors',²³ that a real, material world exists but that it is meaningless to us without social reality. '[M]eaningful behavior, or action, is only possible within an intersubjective social context'.²⁴ Constructivists believe that international relations are grounded in social facts, which are facts by human agreement.²⁵ While there is a role for brute facts, their effect is always shaped and mediated by the ideas which give them meaning. While post-modernist constructivists argue that social constructivism subscribes to an epistemology which rejects positivism and empiricism, and whose observations are therefore incommensurable with those of rationalism, Wendt argues the opposite. He suggests that 'constructivist social theory is compatible with a scientific approach to social inquiry. Constructivism should be

¹⁹ Ibid, p.322.

²⁰ Adler, E., 2002. 'Constructivism and International Relations' in Carlsnaes, W., Risse, T. & Simmons, B.A. (eds.) *Handbook of International Relations*. SAGE, London. p.96.

²¹ Gergen, 'The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology', p.269.

²² Ibid.

²³ Adler, 'Constructivism in World Politics' p.324.

²⁴ Hopf, T., 2000. 'The Promise of constructionism in International Relations theory' in Linklater, A. (ed.) *International Relations: Critical concepts in political science*. Routledge, London, p.1757.

²⁵ Adler, 'Constructivism in World Politics' p.322.

construed narrowly as an ontology, not broadly as an epistemology',²⁶ a point echoed by Berger and Luckmann, who assert that social constructivism 'does *not* imply that sociology is not a science'.²⁷ This commensurability between rationalist and social constructivist observations is important as it allows the two approaches to complement each other in international relations theory, acting as analytical tools in problem solving. Fearon and Wendt suggest that far from there being a 'war of paradigms', rationalism and social constructivism ask different questions of the same situations and thus paint different pictures,²⁸ and as such are complementary as often as they are contradictory. In this way I intend to employ a social constructivist framework not to rewrite theory concerning the institutions of the EU, but to show the added value of social constructivism and to refine existing theory. Through this approach I intend to create a new theoretical framework for understanding the institutions of the EU and the identity of their constituent actors, with particular emphasis on the competence of enlargement and the unique challenge of Turkish membership of the EU.

Within a social constructivist framework, social life and reality are constructed from the intersubjective understandings which give meaning to the material world, 'intersubjective *knowledge* and ideas...have constitutive effects on social reality and its evolution'.²⁹ These intersubjective meanings cannot be reduced to the beliefs and knowledge of individuals, but are the collective knowledge of groups and are embedded in social practices and routines. 'Intersubjective meanings have structural attributes that do not merely constrain or empower actors. They also define their social reality'.³⁰ Therefore, unlike conventional social scientific thought, which holds that human action can be broken down to, and understood through, the actions of individuals within the system, social constructivists argue that understanding of social action is crucial and that knowledge is socially generated. Understanding does not come from nature, it is the result of active, cooperative enterprise of people in a social relationship.³¹ These rules, norms and causal understandings which comprise intersubjective knowledge do not dictate or prevent individual thought, but provide the concepts and framework for those

²⁶ Wendt, A., 1999. *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge University Press, p.41.

²⁷ Berger & Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, p.211.

²⁸ Fearon, J. & Wendt A., 2002. 'Rationalism v. Constructivism: A Skeptical View' in Carlsnaes, W., Risse, T. & Simmons, B.A. (eds.) *Handbook of International Relations*. SAGE, London. pp.52-53.

²⁹ Adler, 'Constructivism and International Relations', p. 102.

³⁰ Adler, 'Constructivism in World Politics' p.327.

³¹ Gergen, 'The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology', p.267.

thoughts,³² becoming the source of people's motives and interests and, when institutionalised, the source of international practices.³³ As such interests are related to the material world but are ideational in nature and therefore 'cannot be mechanically deduced from international anarchy and the distribution of material resources'.³⁴ Social constructivism goes beyond emphasising the regulatory role of intersubjective knowledge, claiming that '[s]ocially shared ideas...not only regulate behaviour but also constitute the identity of actors'³⁵ and the 'rules of the game' governing the system.

Constitutive explanations play an important role in social constructivist theory, investigating events and objects by examining what they are made of and how they are arranged³⁶ with reference to social knowledge and conditions which give meaning to actions and events, as well as providing explanations. This does not mean that constructivism disregards causal explanations, indeed Adler asserts that 'constructivism has history 'built in' as part of theories',³⁷ instead constitutive and causal explanations are linked – any 'attempt to understand the intersubjective meanings embedded in social life is at the same time an attempt to explain why people act the way they do'.³⁸ The acceptance of constitutive explanations and constitutive norms are an important area of meta-theory in which social constructivism differs from rationalist approaches which have no concept of constitutive rules.³⁹ It is through the altering of existing constitutive rules and the creation of new rules that social constructivists envisage change, rather than as an altering of material conditions, and 'it may be only a slight exaggeration to say that if constructivism is about anything, it is about change'.⁴⁰ History plays a pivotal role in the genesis and nature of the time-space dependent context within which social reality is located and is therefore of great importance within social constructivist theorising. Social constructivism allows for changes in constitutive rules as well as changes in agents and structures, which are very closely linked, although the exact mechanisms for change are debated among constructivists. '[S]ome constructivists

³² Adler, 'Constructivism in World Politics' p.327.

³³ Adler, 'Constructivism and International Relations', p. 102.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Risse, T., 2000. "Let's Argue!": Communicative action in World Politics' *International Organization* 54:1, p.5.

³⁶ Fearon & Wendt, 'Rationalism v. Constructivism', p.58.

³⁷ Adler, 'Constructivism and International Relations', p. 102.

³⁸ Gibbons, 1987. *Interpreting Politics* quoted in Adler, 'Constructivism in World Politics' p.329.

³⁹ Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity* pp.22-23.

⁴⁰ Adler, 'Constructivism and International Relations', p. 102.

emphasize collective learning, cognitive evolution, epistemic change and the 'life cycle of norms', all of which involve the institutionalization of people's novel knowledge, practices and discourses',⁴¹ but social interaction and the mutual constitution of agents and structures are key components in the social constructivist vision of change. An investigation of these mechanisms will shed new and important light on the changing nature of identity within the European Parliament, and this understanding of identity would have repercussions for the interaction between the two and the negotiation process on the way to possible accession.

Social communication is another fundamental concept in social constructivism which can add value to rationalist approaches to international relations, enabling the transmission and diffusion of collective understandings, as well as providing an arena 'for agreeing a common normative framework'.⁴² For a movement which focuses explicitly on change, mechanisms for the change of collective meanings and normative frameworks are very important components in the system and can influence the way social facts exert their influence,⁴³ and constructivists have postulated a variety of theoretical positions to explain this change. Risse advocates a 'logic of arguing',⁴⁴ through which 'actors engage in a truth seeking discourse [in which] they must be prepared to change their own views of the world, their interests, and sometimes even their identities'.⁴⁵ Through this process of argument, deliberation and persuasion 'they engage in a discourse that helps demonstrate the validity of their arguments; this discourse in turn promotes collective understandings'.⁴⁶ This effect is likely to be felt strongest in an environment of high normative density, where identities and interests are in competition and where there is a high degree of debate and deliberation. These factors are pronounced within the European Parliament, particularly in areas of identity challenge such as the membership bid of Turkey. The concept of social communication is dependent upon language, and an understanding of the importance of language is a further added value of social constructivism. Language is a vehicle for the diffusion, transmission and institutionalisation of ideas and, as such, is a mechanism for the

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Risse, "Let's Argue!" p.2.

⁴³ Adler, 'Constructivism in World Politics' p.339.

⁴⁴ Risse, "Let's Argue!", p.4.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p.2.

⁴⁶ Adler, 'Constructivism and International Relations', p. 102.

construction of social reality.⁴⁷ Not only is language the medium for the creation of intersubjective meanings, speech acts can also serve to construct the social world.⁴⁸ Within the European Union *Euro-speak* has come to be studied as both a reflection of, and a method of shaping, discourse⁴⁹, and the ability to shape the discourse is a powerful tool. Although I will not be studying the use and meaning of *Euro-speak* directly, interaction within the EU is key, and this will be a key locus of study in this thesis.

The mechanism for normative change advocated by Adler is ‘cognitive evolution’, a theory which argues that the social facts and intersubjective knowledge which give meaning to the material world are, once generated, subject to political and power based selection processes and can therefore be viewed as a process of evolution. ‘Cognitive evolution is thus the process of innovation, domestic and international diffusion, political selection and effective institutionalization that creates the intersubjective understanding on which the interests, practices and behavior of government are based’.⁵⁰ Echoing Risse’s ‘logic of arguing’ which will be discussed in detail later, cognitive evolution is put forward as an explanation for the reification of ideas and institutions and the creation of ‘taken for granted’ knowledge,⁵¹ and in some respect the two approaches are complementary. Risse and Adler agree that ‘it may not be the best-fitted ideas, nor the most efficient institutions, that become ‘naturalized’ or reified, but those that prove most successful at imposing collective meaning and function on physical reality’,⁵² and Adler does afford a role to ‘socialization processes that involve the diffusion of meanings from country to country and from political and diplomatic processes that include negotiation, persuasion and coercion’,⁵³ but Adler places these cooperative and argumentative effects within a larger mechanism. In conjunction with these factors are others such as the collective awareness of problems, the power which backs the ideas and the ‘political leaders’ intersubjective expectations of progress’,⁵⁴ but Adler stresses that institutional and normative selection does not take place ‘in an

⁴⁷ Ibid, p.103.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Diez, T., 2001. ‘Speaking ‘Europe’: The Politics of Integration Discourse’ in Christiansen et al (eds.) *The Social Construction of Europe*. SAGE, London, p.97.

⁵⁰ Adler, ‘Constructivism in World Politics’ p.339.

⁵¹ Ibid, p.340.

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ Ibid, p.341.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

‘instant’ of rational choice. It is rather the continuous rational institutionalization of a tradition that provides new or improved understandings of reality’.⁵⁵ These mechanisms play an important role in constructivist study, and in the value which is to be added by social constructivism, because rationalist and constructivist scholars share an interest in ‘common knowledge’.⁵⁶ While rationalist accounts have little to offer in this area, ‘[c]onstructivism analyzes discourses and practices that continuously recreate what rationalists refer to as common knowledge’⁵⁷ and ‘focus on discursive and social practices that define the identity of actors and the normative order within which they make their moves’.⁵⁸ It is these norms which are of primary concern to constructivist scholars as these constitutive norms generate identity and it is through study of these norms that an understanding of the structures, processes and institutions of international politics can be gained, as discussed later. In this way social constructivism plays an important role in the theory of international relations as it broadens study beyond the actions of actors in a fixed environment to include the context of such actions and the nature of the system as a whole. This has the potential to ‘add a wider and perhaps more sophisticated range of theories concerning the causal role of ideational socialization’⁵⁹ within the European Union, which I will argue is key to understanding identity in the European Parliament and will be demonstrated by the preferences of actors within the institutions.

While power politics is a core concept of rationalist thinking it is another area in which social constructivism can add value, without norms ‘exercises of power... would be devoid of meaning’.⁶⁰ Wendt asserts that ‘two ostensibly materialist explanations associated particularly with Realism – explanations by reference to power and interest – actually achieve most of their power through tacit assumptions about the distribution of ideas in the system’.⁶¹ ‘[N]ational interests are intersubjective understandings about what it takes to advance power, influence and wealth, that survive the political process, given the distribution of power and knowledge in a society’.⁶² Power is not merely

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Katzenstein, P.J., Keohane, R.O., Krasner, S.D., 1998. ‘*International Organization* and the study of World Politics’ *International Organization* 52:4, p.680.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p.681.

⁵⁸ Ibid, pp.681-2.

⁵⁹ Moravcsik, ‘Constructivism and European Integration’ p.176.

⁶⁰ Hopf, ‘The promise of constructivism in International Relations theory’ p.1757.

⁶¹ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p.41.

⁶² Adler, ‘Constructivism in World Politics, p. 337.

concerned with material capabilities however, it has an important role to play in the construction of social reality and the ability to determine shared meanings and understandings is a very real form of power. The ability to define the constitutive norms of a system affords the possibility of committing other actors to abide by those rules and to shape discourse. Power can also serve to define who has legitimate access to a discourse and what counts as a “good argument”.⁶³ This is important in cognitive evolution, which argues that ‘to be taken for granted, institutional facts must be backed by power; in other words, intersubjective ideas must have authority and legitimacy and must evoke trust’.⁶⁴ The ability to shape discourse and debate is an important locus of power for the European Parliament, particularly in areas of intergovernmental decision-making. While the final decision is taken out of the hands of the EU bodies, the institutions take a leading role in framing the issue and shaping the debate. The issue of EU enlargement is a prime example of this effect, with negotiation proceedings largely controlled by EU institutions, before a decision is taken by member states. In this way, the institutions of the EU and the negotiators on behalf of the Turkish government will have the ability to shape the discourse and institute and alter collective understandings.

One of the areas of difference between rationalist and social constructivist theories is in the treatment of structures and agents ‘which is often claimed to constitute *the* central problem in social and political theory’.⁶⁵ This is a metatheoretical debate which has profound effects on theory generated, and rationalist approaches largely follow Popper’s assertion that ‘all social phenomena, and especially the functioning of all social institutions, should always be understood as resulting from the decisions, actions, attitudes, etc. of human individuals...we should never be satisfied by an explanation in terms of so-called ‘collectives’’.⁶⁶ This goes a long way towards explaining the rationalist belief in exogenously given, fixed identity in which interaction and institutions play no role – that is they are “thin” institutions. There is however ‘an increasingly widespread recognition that, instead of being antagonistic partners in a zero-sum relationship, human agents and social structures are in a fundamental sense

⁶³ Risse, “Let’s Argue!”, p.16.

⁶⁴ Adler, ‘Constructivism in World Politics, p. 340.

⁶⁵ Carlsnaes, W., 1992. ‘The Agency-Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis’ *International Studies Quarterly* 36 p.245.

⁶⁶ Popper, K., 1966. ‘The Open Society and Its Enemies’ quoted in Carlsnaes ‘The Agency-Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis’ p.249.

interrelated entities'⁶⁷ and that viewing one without the other, or viewing either as ontologically primitive, is an incomplete and inaccurate viewpoint. In contrast to the rationalist view, constructivists argue for a two way process with people making society and society making people continuously,⁶⁸ echoing the work of Berger and Luckmann. '[T]he constructivist position on the relation of agents to structures is that they constitute each other. Simultaneously, agents and structure enable and constrain each other'.⁶⁹ One 'highly acclaimed and vigorously contested'⁷⁰ explanation for this mutual constitution of agent and structure has come in the form of Giddens' 'structuration theory' which puts forward the concept of 'the duality of structure',⁷¹ a descendent of the concept advocated by Burger and Luckmann. 'According to the notion of duality of structure, the structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize'.⁷² In the same way as other elements of social constructivist theory, structuration theory has historicity built into it, and the basic domain of study becomes 'social practices ordered across space and time'⁷³ in which 'properties of collectivities and procedures of action in some way presuppose one another in the reality of social life'.⁷⁴ Within structuration theory therefore, actors cannot be separated from the institutions in which they are embedded, nor can institutions be studied in isolation from the actors which comprise them. This sets it apart from both individualist rationalist theories and structuralist accounts, each of which reduces either agent or structure to an explanation in terms of the other. As already noted, Giddens' structuration theory is not without criticism, and Carlsnaes suggests that despite the historical study of social practices which structuration engages in, the theory cannot incorporate temporal relations between action and structure.⁷⁵ As action and structure ontologically presuppose each other it is not possible to analyze the interplay between the two or provide an adequate causal explanation of either. The recursive nature of the duality of structure goes some way to addressing these

⁶⁷ Carlsnaes, 'The Agency Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis' pp.245-6.

⁶⁸ Onuf, N., 1998. 'Constructivism: A User's Manual' in Kubálková, Onuf & Kowert (eds.) *International Relations in a Construsted World*. M.E. Sharpe, New York, p.59.

⁶⁹ Gould, H.D., 'What Is at stake in the Agent-Structure Debate?' in Kubálková, Onuf & Kowert (eds.) *International Relations in a Construsted World*. M.E. Sharpe, New York, p.80.

⁷⁰ Carlsnaes, 'The Agency Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis' p.256.

⁷¹ Giddens, A., 1984. *The Constitution of Society*. Polity Press, Oxford. p.25.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Cassell, P., 1993. *The Giddens Reader*. Stanford University Press. p.89.

⁷⁴ Cohen, I.J., 1989. *Structuration Theory: Anthony Giddens and the Consitution of Social Life*. MacMillan, Basingstoke. pp. 9-10.

⁷⁵ Carlsnaes, 'The Agency Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis' p.258.

criticisms, and Carlsnaes suggests ‘a continuous cycle of action-structure interactions, a dialectical process which not only serves to provide both continuity and change to social systems, but also can be penetrated analytically as a consequence of its essentially sequential thrust in societal transformation’.⁷⁶ While the exact nature of this duality of structure is still very much under debate, the mutual constitution is an important concept within social constructivist thinking, and many of the areas in which it can add value flow from this concept. The social constructivist notion of institutions differs markedly from the rationalist viewpoint, as will be discussed later, and these institutions and norms provide one arena for systemic change. The constitution of agents from structures also goes against the rationalist assumption of exogenously given, fixed identities and interests and institutional norms play a major role in the social construction of these identities. For these reasons a study of the European Parliament will form a crucial part of my analysis, as the institution itself will play a key constitutive role in the identity of actors within it. I will argue that any model for identity in the EU which does not afford this key role to institutions is fundamentally lacking and flawed.

One method for characterizing the different constraints on, and motivations for, individual action proposed by rationalist and social constructivist approaches is to talk of different modes or ‘logics’ of social action and interaction. A ‘logic of consequentialism’ is attributed to the rationalist approach, which views decision making as rational actors making choices based on a calculation of the consequences of their decision. While the ‘logic of consequentialism’ has evolved from and moved beyond Simon’s view of perfectly rational actors, with perfect information and a perfect ability to perform calculations, to include some measure of power given to beliefs and desires,⁷⁷ the rationalist view of identities still views actors taking decisions which will have beneficial consequences for them. In contrast to this view is the ‘logic of appropriateness’ which is associated with social constructivism. Within this mode of action decision making is seen as ‘driven by rules of appropriate or exemplary behavior, organized into institutions’,⁷⁸ where actors attempt to fulfill the obligations of the role and identity which they occupy within an institution. This is not to say that social constructivists dismiss the notion of rational action, instead rationality, along with

⁷⁶ Ibid, p.60.

⁷⁷ Fearon & Wendt, ‘Rationalism v. Constructivism’, pp.55-6.

⁷⁸ March, J.G. & Olsen, J.P., *The Logic of Appropriateness*. Arena Centre for European Studies, University of Oslo. WP 04/09, p.3.

everything else, becomes context dependant. '[H]umans take reasoned action by trying to answer three elementary questions: What kind of a situation is this? What kind of a person am I? What does a person such as I do in a situation such as this?'⁷⁹

Constructivists therefore argue that rationality is not merely instrumental rationality, advancing the notion of 'practical or communicative rationality'.⁸⁰ In this way rules and norms prescribe what is appropriate action in a given situation, although March and Olsen argue that actors have multiple roles and identities associated with different institutions which they help constitute, and a major factor in deciding actor behaviour is which role is appropriate to a given situation and which rules to obey. Because decision making within a 'logic of appropriateness' is rational it is possible to predict the behaviour of actors, as it is within a 'logic of consequentialism', but these predictions require knowledge of the role of the actor, the situation the actor finds themselves in and the most appropriate norms for that situation. Despite the neat division of modes of social action it is not always possible or desirable to separate the two within analyses, and each logic may have a role to play within a single decision making process.⁸¹ As such social constructivism has value to add to a rationalist analysis of decision making and allows the identities and interests of actors to be problematised. This move to problematise identity will allow me a more nuanced understanding of the identity of actors within the European Parliament, so I will investigate in detail the presence and effectiveness of norms in the EP and the expression of these norms in interest and behaviour.

While social constructivism has value to add to rationalist approaches to international relations, the meta-theoretical assumptions which underpin the movement are not without problems. The belief that 'the objects of our knowledge are not independent of our interpretations and our language'⁸² extends beyond giving individual meaning to the world around us, knowledge is also 'the theories, concepts, meanings and symbols that scientists use to interpret social reality'.⁸³ In this way interpretations and language play an important role in the social scientific study of the social world, including social constructivist work, and the time-space dependent nature of intersubjective meanings

⁷⁹ Ibid, p.4.

⁸⁰ Adler, 'Constructivism and International Relations', p.102.

⁸¹ Fearon & Wendt, 'Rationalism v. Constructivism', p.60.

⁸² Adler, 'Constructivism and International Relations', p. 97.

⁸³ Ibid.

requires the acceptance of the impermanence of knowledge. Social constructivism is therefore an interpretation of the social world, 'a set of paradigmatic lenses through which we observe *all* socially constructed reality'⁸⁴ and, despite advocating different methods for selecting which interpretations are selected and accepted,⁸⁵ Risse and Adler agree that the ideas and institutions which become reified and naturalised are not necessarily those which fit best. It may be that social constructivism is not the interpretation which best fits the real world, it is merely successful at imposing its collective meaning through the institution of social constructivism. Wendt's definition of an institution as 'a relatively stable set or 'structure' of identities and interests'⁸⁶ can be viewed as applicable to the social constructivist movement, and constructivist adherence to the duality of structure results in the implication that the movement and its followers are mutually constitutive. 'The terms in which the world is understood are social artifacts, products of historically situated interchanges among people',⁸⁷ and the discourse which is social constructionism, the 'set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements...[the] version of events'⁸⁸ which comprise the movement, is merely one of multiple possibilities.

These objections are those which have long been levelled at reflectivist approaches and, although it is important to be cognizant of problems of the impermanence of knowledge, a Wendtian view of constructivism subscribing to a social ontology but sharing the rationalist epistemology goes some way to addressing these problems, and it 'constitutes...the somewhat messy middle ground between the rationalist mainstream and more radical 'reflectivism''.⁸⁹ Viewed in this way constructivism complements rationalism rather than opposing it, and, by asking different questions, provides a different picture. Constructivism provides a framework to address the shortcomings of international relations theory with respect to ideational factors, but while '[i]t may make sense for analytical purposes to distinguish between "material" structure and "ideational" structure...in the end a social system has just one structure, composed of

⁸⁴ Adler, 'Constructivism in World Politics' p.336.

⁸⁵ eg. Risse's 'logic of arguing', and Adler's cognitive evolution.

⁸⁶ Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it', p.136.

⁸⁷ Gergen, 'The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology', p.267.

⁸⁸ Burr, *Introduction to Social Constructionism*, p.48.

⁸⁹ Risse, T., and Wiener, A., 2001. 'The Social Construction of Social Constructivism' in Christiansen et al (eds.) *The Social Construction of Europe*. SAGE, London. p.199.

both material and ideational elements'.⁹⁰ When analysing the added value of social constructivism the analogy of a 'conceptual toolbox'⁹¹ is a useful one, and constructivism adds analytical tools to this conceptual toolbox. Walt argues that 'the "complete diplomat" of the future should remain cognizant of realism's emphasis of the inescapable role of power, keep liberalism's awareness of domestic forces in mind, and occasionally reflect on constructivism's vision of change',⁹² and I believe that an examination of norms has an important role to play in studies of the European Union generally, the European Parliament specifically, and the enlargement of the Union. The dominance of rationalist theorising in studies of the EU has led to the neglect of the roles of identity and institutions and the roles of norms in these areas and an analysis utilising a social constructivist framework will complement the existing literature concerning the European Union. A study of interest and identity in the EP will also allow a more nuanced view of the enlargement process and decision-making within the EU, although this will be explored within this thesis only to shed light on the issue of identity in the European Parliament. 'By itself, each school explains important elements of the integration process; working together, or at least side-by-side, they will more fully capture the range of institutional dynamics at work in contemporary Europe'.⁹³

I have demonstrated that there are advantages to be gained by applying a social constructivist framework to the study of the EU, in particular in relation to the institutions and the identity of actors within them, which are not found in more traditional, rationalist approaches. To investigate how this "added value" can improve our understanding and modelling of the EU, I will look at a number of areas in which I believe social constructivist theory can be applied to the EU and construct a theoretical framework within which questions can be answered concerning the nature of European identity.

⁹⁰ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p.136.

⁹¹ Walt, S.M., 1998. *International Relations: One world, many theories*.
[<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/delivery?vid=5%hid=117&sid1403>]. 14.04.07.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Checkel, J.T., 2001. 'Social Construction and European Integration' in Christiansen et al (eds.) *The Social Construction of Europe*. SAGE, London. p.51.

Norms and Identity

One of the most useful tools which social constructivists can bring to bear on International Relations theories is an appreciation of norms. ‘Norms and normative issues have been central to the study of politics for at least two millennia’⁹⁴ and, despite long being neglected within IR, norms have come to be afforded an important position within social constructivist theory. Areas as diverse as ‘foreign aid, opposition to slavery, piracy, trafficking in women, science policy, development, racism and laws of war’⁹⁵ have been employed to demonstrate the effectiveness of norms, with constructivists arguing that non-material structures such as norms have a role to play in identity formation, and by extension interest formation. Despite this important role afforded to norms, much early IR scholarship recognised the presence of norms without theorizing the normative processes⁹⁶ which are vital for continued theoretical debate and to provide legitimacy to empirical research. This is particularly true in the normatively dense environment of the EU, as will be discussed in detail later, and I believe that identifying norms and normative processes within the European Parliament is important in establishing an accurate model of actor identity and decision making, and that this should form an important basis for any empirical research within the EP, and indeed the institutions of the European Union more broadly.

An important first step in theorising normative processes is to establish a definition of norms. Finnemore defines norms simply as ‘a standard of appropriate behavior for actors within a given identity’,⁹⁷ although I believe that this is too ambiguous. I believe that it is important to explicitly identify that any given norm will be only one of many at any given time which provide an actor with a ‘standard of appropriate behaviour’. Indeed Finnemore herself later asserts that ‘political scientists tend to slip into discussions of “sovereignty” or “slavery” as if they were norms, when in fact they are (or were) collections of norms and the mix of rules and practices that structure these institutions has varied significantly over time’.⁹⁸ Chayes and Chayes define norms as a

⁹⁴ Finnemore, M. & Sikkink, K., ‘International Norm Dynamics and Political Change’ *International Organization* 52:4, p. 889.

⁹⁵ Finnemore, M. & Sikkink, K., ‘Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics’ *Annual Review of Political Science* 4, 2001. p.396.

⁹⁶ Finnemore & Sikkink, ‘Norm Dynamics and Political Change’ p.889.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p.891.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

‘broad class of prescriptive statements – rules, standards, principles, and so forth’ that are ‘prescriptions for action in situations of choice, carrying a sense of obligation, a sense that they *ought* to be followed’.⁹⁹ Again, I believe that this definition is helpful but not completely satisfactory. I believe that there is scope for norms which actors do not feel obliged to follow, such as those which are so institutionalised as to be subconscious. These norms will determine behaviour without influencing a ‘situation of choice’. I will address the way in which norms exert influence below. Another important facet of norms, and another reason that they are of interest to social constructivists, is their inherently social nature. ‘Unlike ideas which may be held privately, norms are shared and social; they are not just subjective but *intersubjective*...One could say that they are collectively held ideas about behavior’.¹⁰⁰ Norms are shared amongst people, or a group of actors, and the norms are sustained by the actors attitudes towards the actions of group members with reference to the norm, whether approving or disapproving.¹⁰¹ There are no absolute requirements as to the size of the group within which a norm is shared, norms relating to human rights are shared between many actors throughout the world, other norms are shared within states, organisations, companies or even amongst fans of a particular football team. I define norms as intersubjective forces towards appropriate behaviour for actors within a given social identity, and this is the definition I will employ throughout my research and analysis.

One method employed by theorists to help shed light on normative processes is to investigate different types or categories of norms. Finnemore claims that there are ‘many kinds of norms in the world – social, cultural, professional, moral, religious and familial’,¹⁰² although a more common categorisation sees division into ethical, constitutive and regulative norms. Within this schema ethical or moral norms equate to judgements of right and wrong, beliefs of rectitude. Ethical norms are not universal, and they will not necessarily coincide with an individual agent’s notion of goodness, that notion is after all itself a result of ethical norms, by its very nature an ethical norm is

⁹⁹ Chayes, A. & Chayes, A.H., ‘Regime Architecture: Elements and Principles’ quoted in Hurrell, A., ‘Norms and Ethics in International Relations’ in Carlsnaes, Risse & Simmons (eds.) *Handbook of International Relations*. SAGE, London, 2007. p. 143.

¹⁰⁰ Finnemore, M., *National Interests in International Society*. Cornell University Press, New York, 1996. pp.22-23.

¹⁰¹ Elster, J., *The cement of society: A study of social order*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989. p. 99.

¹⁰² Finnemore, M., ‘Are Legal Norms Distinctive?’ *International Law and Politics* 32 p. 701.

seen as good by the actors who subscribe to, and support, it. ‘Norms most of us would consider “bad” – norms about racial superiority, divine right, imperialism – were once powerful because some groups believed in the appropriateness...of the norm’.¹⁰³ Within Europe and the EU ethical norms exist labelling as ‘appropriate’ notions of freedom, human rights, democracy, justice and progress, as well as defining what is understood by these terms, and these affect the attitudes and behaviours of individuals and states in their dealings with one another. Although I will not be making value judgments concerning the presence or absence of ethical norms, I will examine in detail the effect of these norms within European identity. The classification of these norms as “ethical” does not imbue them with universal applicability, and I will demonstrate later that they are interlinked with other norms and I believe can, therefore, be classified as “European norms” with an influence on European identity.

Throughout the history of International Relations theory regulative norms have received the greatest attention, as they have a role to play in rationalist accounts of the international system. Regulative norms take the form of laws and rules – ‘specific prescriptions or proscriptions for action’¹⁰⁴ and are generally attributed causative powers (although Ruggie objects to the terminology, arguing that they do not strictly *cause* the action).¹⁰⁵ Finnemore has questioned whether legal norms have any special role to play in affecting state behaviour, arguing that ‘[w]hat distinguishes legal norms from other norms is simply not clear’,¹⁰⁶ but I believe there are factors which set legal norms apart from their non-legal counterparts. Legal norms are explicitly stated in written form, this is in marked contrast to many other forms of norm which are interpreted by the individual. This allows legal norms to be backed by the power of the body from which they originated, ‘the state’s coercive powers exist precisely for the purpose of enforcing law’,¹⁰⁷ and this provides a clear sanction associated with the violation of a legal norm. Further power is afforded to legal norms by ‘western’ ethical norms which treat the rule of law as appropriate behaviour not only on the part of the violators of legal norms, but also those violated against. These factors combine to make legal norms key factors in determining appropriate behaviour at the level of individuals

¹⁰³ Finnemore & Sikkink, ‘Norm Dynamics and Political Change’ p.892.

¹⁰⁴ Krasner, S. D., ‘Structural causes and regime consequences’ in Krasner, S. (ed.). *International Regimes*. Cornell University Press, New York, 1995. p.2.

¹⁰⁵ Ruggie,., *Constructing the World Polity*. p.97.

¹⁰⁶ Finnemore, ‘Are Legal Norms Distinctive?’ p.703.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

and at state level. Finnemore suggests that if legal norms enjoy a status distinct from other norms ‘we would expect that a prominent goal of norm entrepreneurs... would be consolidating unambiguous legal status for their norms’,¹⁰⁸ and I believe this to be the case. While one of the goals of norm entrepreneurs is to ‘change peoples’ minds’ about their particular issue, the ultimate goal is to change the law, norms concerning women’s suffrage, slavery, child labour and many others are now codified in law. Within the EU ethical norms have been codified into the Copenhagen Criteria, a potential member country must reach certain standards with regard to the ethical norms before membership is permitted. The importance of legal norms can also be observed in Turkey, which has instituted a large number of law changes in the process of preparing for entry into the EU, these legal changes have been required by the EU, signalling their added importance.

In contrast to norms with causal power are those with constitutive effects, the norms which dictate the practices themselves. While neo-utilitarian approaches to international relations have no concept of constitutive norms,¹⁰⁹ they play an important role in constructivist theory. Constitutive norms generate identity and study of these norms allows understanding of the structures, processes and institutions of international politics. Wendt discusses three degrees to which norms can be socialised, with each degree of socialisation resulting in a different mechanism of norm compliance. When a norm is experienced with ‘first degree’ socialisation¹¹⁰ actors comply with the norm due to coercion, because they are forced to, ‘[h]e is neither motivated to comply of his own accord, nor does he think that doing so is in his self-interest’.¹¹¹ There is a requirement for shared understanding, the actor is aware of the norm, but behaviour is externally rather than internally driven. The ‘second degree’¹¹² of socialisation differs from the first degree in that the actor has a meaningful choice as to whether to obey the norm, the actor is free from coercion but adheres to the norm as they believe it to be in their self-interest. Although at this degree of socialisation actors will not necessarily view the norms as legitimate, justification of behaviour will be by reference to shared

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p.705.

¹⁰⁹ Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity*, p.4.

¹¹⁰ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p.268

¹¹¹ Ibid, p.269

¹¹² Ibid, p.271

expectations¹¹³. The ‘third degree’ of socialisation¹¹⁴ corresponds to norms which have been accepted, and are followed by actors because ‘they think the norms are legitimate and therefore *want* to follow them’.¹¹⁵ It is at this third degree of socialisation that actors’ identities and interests are constituted by norms, and this process becomes self-reinforcing as actors view the norms as part of their identity.¹¹⁶ Socialisation and norm compliance will be addressed in more detail later in this chapter, but this Wendtian view of norm compliance gives an insight into the role norms play in dictating practice and generating identity. Social constructivism’s treatment of the constitutive nature of norms broadens the theoretical outlook beyond the actions of actors in a fixed environment to include context and the nature of the system in which the actors and actions are situated.

Study of the EU has traditionally focused on regulative norms: the treaties, legislation and court judgements from the EU level and the effect that these exerted on member states, their national legislatures, and state interactions. Within the sphere of EU expansion, this takes the form of investigation of the technical procedures and rules which comprise the enlargement and accession processes. While these regulative norms still have a role to play in future enlargements of the EU, the normative power of European integration extends into other, less formal, areas. ‘The EU has developed institutional features beyond the original design and certainly beyond the purpose of managing economic interdependence’ to ‘include shared norms, commonly accepted rules and decision-making procedures’.¹¹⁷ An examination of constitutive norms within the EU and Turkey would not only shed light on the changing environment and context for action, but also any change in actor identity or interest, which could also have an observable effect on EU enlargement policy and decision making. Through an analysis of actor interests within the European Parliament, I aim to observe the effect of constitutive norms on the identity of actors within the EP.

Unfortunately, despite this apparently neat distinction between constitutive and regulative norms, investigation of the nature and effect of norms is not that clear cut. Wendt does not subscribe to a distinction between regulative and constitutive norms, but

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. 272

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p.273

¹¹⁶ Ibid

¹¹⁷ Christiansen et al, ‘The Social Construction of Europe’ *Journal of European Public Policy* 6:4 p. 539.

rather views them on their effect. He states that ‘I assume that norms are norms but that they vary in their balance of causal and constitutive effects’, ‘[a]fter determining empirically that a particular norm has only causal effects we might decide to call it a “regulative”, but this should be taken to describe a pattern of effects, not a “kind” of norm’.¹¹⁸ For this reason it is difficult in practice to divide norms into this neat categorization so, while it is useful in understanding the different elements and effects of norms, I will view norms on the influence they have on actor identity and interests. Similarly, however, the compliance with norms is not a simple, clear cut procedure either, as each norm will only be one of many acting at any given time. It is entirely possible that different norms will be contradictory with one another in a given situation, and by their nature norms are open to interpretation and discussion as to which are relevant to the situation. The interaction between norms within a group will have a large role to play in questions of interpretation and relevancy, as will individual actor choice. Finnemore and Sikkink cite a study of ‘ten countries’ reactions to international human rights norms [which] showed how regime type, civil war, and the presence of domestic human rights organizations affect the degree to which states will comply with international human rights norms’.¹¹⁹

Despite these difficulties, mechanisms have been put forward to explain the normative processes, Ruggie suggests that ‘[n]orms may “guide” behavior, they may “inspire” behavior, they may “rationalize” or “justify” behavior, they may express “mutual expectations” or they may be ignored’.¹²⁰ Onuf sees norms as the vehicle for the creation of agents and structures, ‘[s]ocial rules...make the process by which people and society constitute each other continuous and reciprocal’,¹²¹ a view echoed by Kubáľková who argues that norms mediate, mutually reproduce, enable and co-construct agency and structure.¹²² While the role that norms play in the formation of identity will be discussed in greater detail later, Reus-Smit identifies three mechanisms through which behaviour is affected by norms: imagination, communication and constraint.¹²³ The

¹¹⁸Wendt, A., *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999. p.165.

¹¹⁹Risse et al, 1999, *The Power of Human Rights* quoted in Finnemore & Sikkink ‘Constructivist Research’ p. 397.

¹²⁰Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity*, p.97.

¹²¹Onuf, N., ‘Constructivism: A User’s Manual’ p.59.

¹²²Kubáľková, V., ‘Foreign Policy, International Politics, and Constructivism’ in Kubáľková (ed.) *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*. M.E. Sharpe, London, 2001. p.21.

¹²³Reus-Smit, C., ‘Constructivism’ in Burchill et al. (eds.) *Theories of International Relations*. Palgrave

presence of norms can impose limitations on the range of strategies and solutions to problems which an actor can imagine and restrict the realm of possible actions. Linguistic constructivists, such as Onuf and Kratochwil, point to the role and power of language in creating and enforcing rules and limiting the realm of thought and action possible to actors. It is normative effects of this nature which I do not believe directly present the actor with a choice concerning their actions. Communication allows actors to debate the interpretation and relevance of particular norms, to justify action with reference to the norms of conduct and to express approval and disapproval of other's actions. 'Because they are intersubjective and collectively held, norms are often the subject of discussion among actors. Actors may specifically articulate norms in justifying actions, or they may call upon norms to persuade others to act'.¹²⁴ Constraint is closely tied into communication, and represents the influence of the norms on the choices faced by the actors.¹²⁵ These choices will in many cases be influenced by normative discussions and arguments, and the effect will be felt within the decision-making frameworks established by the normative effects on imagination. Despite the term 'constraint', norms acting in this way can still be disregarded or ignored, and this will often feed back into the 'communication' sphere, with other group members expressing disapproval and potentially imposing sanction. For these reasons it is important to take a multi-faceted approach to understanding norms within the European Parliament. It will be important for me to gain an understanding of identity as interpreted by the individual actor, but it will also be necessary to investigate the impact of norms on actor interest and behaviour within debates. This will be considered in more detail in the subsequent methodology section, as it will be important for me to design an appropriate research programme.

The role played by norms in identity genesis is elucidated by the Wendtian approach to identities and interests, and Wendt suggests four different kinds of identity: personal (or corporate), type, role and collective. Although Wendt concedes that 'the closer [one] look[s] the fuzzier the differences get',¹²⁶ this multiple identity model allows a more nuanced view of the normative factors affecting identity. The personal identity (which becomes the corporate identity when addressing state actors) is a unique identity with a

MacMillan, Basingstoke, 2005. p.198.

¹²⁴ Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*, p.24.

¹²⁵ Reus-Smit, 'Constructivism', p.198.

¹²⁶ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p.224.

material base (in the case of the individual this is the body), but the personal or corporate identity is distinguished by ‘a consciousness and memory of Self as a separate locus of thought and activity.’¹²⁷ Type identity can be seen as taking the form of a socially important label, one which is seen to bracket off those with certain shared intrinsic qualities such as attitudes and beliefs. In this way individuals can have many type identities by belonging to many distinct groups and, by definition, the type identity will be shared with other individuals. While type identity refers to intrinsic properties, role identity refers to properties and qualities which exist only in relation to others. To illustrate this point Wendt suggests roles such as master and slave, professor and student, roles which are meaningless on their own. Because it is impossible to enact a role identity in isolation they are inherently social, and the relationships which form role identities are normatively created and maintained. The final kind of identity, collective identity, in many ways builds upon the preceding forms, which, in specific areas and in relation to definite issues, allows individuals to identify with others and assume common positions and attitudes. ‘Collective identity, in short, is a distinct combination of role and type identities, one with the causal power to induce actors to define the welfare of the Other as part of that of the Self’.¹²⁸ Social constructivism views as possible the development of Other regarding perspectives and collective rationality,¹²⁹ which has important implications for the sphere of international relations and the cooperation of state actors. This could be particularly important within relations between the EU and Turkey, and the possibility of Other regarding perspectives in this relationship will be addressed within this research. An important corollary of this view of identity is the possibility for actors to display multiple identities in different situations or, indeed, in the same situation. It is clear that an actor could assume multiple type or role identities, I could be teacher and pupil in different situations, but it is also possible to experience and exhibit multiple collective identities. A Member of the European Parliament is likely to feel collective identity in relation to their nation (possibly also a region within that nation), but may also experience collective identity in relation to the European Parliament specifically or the European Union (or both). For this reason it is necessary for empirical research to be specific as to the identity being studied, and I will create a framework within which my research will be conducted

¹²⁷ Ibid, p.225.

¹²⁸ Ibid, p.229.

¹²⁹ Lewis, J., ‘Insitutional Environments and Everyday EU Decision Making: Rationalist or Constructivist?’ *Comparative Political Studies* 36:1/2 p.106.

which accounts for the interplay of different identities and has context specificity built-in.

Wendt moves on from his discussion of identity to look at corporate agency, and he argues that ‘states are real actors to which we can legitimately attribute anthropomorphic qualities like desires, beliefs, and intentionality’,¹³⁰ attempting to demonstrate this through his different forms of identity. Perhaps most importantly, the state has a corporate identity due to its material components, that is the people and structures which comprise it and, as social constructivism attests, a state cannot be reduced simply to the collection of individual actors which are contained within it – ‘States are people too’.¹³¹ Once corporate identity at state level has been established, type and role identity and state preferences quickly follow. Within the international system, states gain type identities such as “democratic” (which could in practice cover a vast range of different systems of government) and role identities include classifications such as “friend”, “enemy” and “ally”. While the degree of collective identity between states is widely debated, collective identity is widespread within a state, with the Other regarding nature of nationalist feelings often becoming unconscious, and allowing the possibility of collective action. It should be noted, however, that, despite a widespread acceptance of the state as actor in the international system, Wendt’s claim that ‘states are people too’ is far from undisputed. It has been suggested that Wendt’s location of agency in the state is incompatible with his broader position in the agency-structure debate,¹³² that he marginalises the role of humans in constructing states. This raises practical implications, with Wendt’s claim that states are exogenously given indicating that state identity is beyond his analysis, and ‘the domestic setting is ignored’.¹³³ It is suggested, therefore, that Wendt’s theory neglects an important element of the construction he elsewhere advocates.

Although there are difficulties with Wendt’s individual analogy, I believe that a case can be made for institutions to be classed as actors, which display identities and interests of their own, without neglecting the construction of identity within the institution itself.

¹³⁰ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p.197.

¹³¹ Ibid, p.215.

¹³² Wight, C., ‘They Shoot Dead Horses Don’t They? Locating agency in the agent-structure problematique’ *European Journal of International Relations* 5:1 p.128.

¹³³ Smith, S., ‘Wendt’s World’ *Review of International Studies* 26:1p.162.

Where an institution is sufficiently developed and complex that it cannot be reduced to its constituent parts,¹³⁴ and it has a material base which becomes a ‘locus of thought and activity’,¹³⁵ it gains a corporate identity. I believe that the argument can be made that these conditions are met by the European Union and even the European Parliament, as will be outlined later, and that role and type identities, and even collective identities, can be formed within the international system. Although this idea is not a key component of my empirical research, I will look at this in the section of analysis concerning the role of the European Parliament, and I believe that future research in this area could yield interesting and informative results. The perceived and articulated role of the European Parliament as representing the voice of the people makes the EP an interesting and important locus of study, and the interactions of the institutions of the EU would be profitable in this regard.

Despite this view of identities and their interaction with norms, it remains problematic to identify the action of individual norms on actor choices and behaviour, ‘[w]e must recognise that the activity of human beings consists of meeting a flow of situations in which they have to act’.¹³⁶ This statement is equally true of states and other actors, and a clearer understanding of normative processes can be gained through an investigation of these actions, as outlined above. It is for this reason that an investigation of preferences and attitudes of MEPs in relation to Turkey will play a vital role in understanding identity in the European Parliament. A key concept of social constructivism is the duality of structure which sees agents and structures mutually constituting one another. An important element in this process is normative action, with rules and practices frequently forming stable patterns of behaviour.¹³⁷ ‘Over time, understandings of normative problems and categories of normative arguments become organized into intelligible patterns, traditions or ideologies’,¹³⁸ and it is this idea which inspires the social constructivist belief in the constructed nature of the international system and Wendt’s famous claim – ‘Anarchy is what states make of it’.¹³⁹ The iterated response of actors to normative pressures creates stable practices and institutions, and this stability

¹³⁴ Although, as we have seen, the action of individual human beings cannot and should not be ignored.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p.225.

¹³⁶ Blumer, H., *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, 1969. p.17.

¹³⁷ Onuf, ‘Constructivism: A User’s manual’ p.61.

¹³⁸ Hurrell, ‘Norms and Ethics in International Relations’, p.144.

¹³⁹ Wendt, A., ‘Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Construction of Power Politics’

is important in the generation and transformation of actor identity – ‘the key to such transformations is relatively stable practice’.¹⁴⁰ A social system which is unstable or in a state of flux will not have the normative or socialising power of a stable one, and the presence of institutions further strengthens the power of the norms, exerting influence on the imagination and communication of actors as well as constraining their actions. Within the institutions actors will, in most circumstances, aim to maintain a stable identity and abide by the norms governing them. This provides systemic inertia, inhibiting change and promoting stability.

Despite these factors promoting stability, one key area in which social constructivism differs from rational theories of international relations is that normative change, and therefore systemic change, is possible. ‘New situations are constantly arising within the scope of group life that are problematic and for which existing rules are inadequate’¹⁴¹ and, despite the relatively stable institutions they create, the nature of norms makes them somewhat changeable. ‘Norms are no less effective for being fluid and less real for being negotiable. Both ideally and actually the stuff which binds societies is more like mastic than cement’.¹⁴² The intersubjective nature of norms results in group members engaging in discussion and debate as to the nature, applicability and relative importance of norms in each situation, and this can lead to subtle shifts in the interpretation of the norms and normative processes. Changes of this nature, while appreciable, will generally be small and will not disrupt the stability of institutions and structures. Without threatening the stability of the institution it is possible, however, for appreciable change to occur over time. This change will arise from the accretion of small scale changes, and a process akin to evolution could occur within institutions. When studying institutions such as those within the EU it is, therefore, necessary to have an appreciation of the importance of stability while understanding mechanisms for change, and that the norms studied will only represent a snapshot of the complicated normative picture.

‘Shared ideas, expectations, and beliefs about appropriate behaviour are what give the

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, p.149.

¹⁴¹ Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism*, p.18

¹⁴² Hollis, 1991, ‘Why Elster is Stuck and Needs to Recover his Faith’ quoted in Hurrell, ‘Norms and Ethics in International Relations’ p.146.

world structure, order and stability’,¹⁴³ so while the framework within which the question lies may have changed within social constructivism, the question to be addressed remains the same – how can systemic change be explained? The social constructivist response is to argue that systemic change of an ideational international structure is brought about through shifts in ideas and normative processes. ‘Norm shifts are to the ideational theorist what changes in the balance of power are to the realist’.¹⁴⁴ Even with the identification of this macro-level mechanism, the social constructivist theorising of systemic change is not complete without an examination of idea and norm change at the micro-level because, as we have seen, norms tend to produce social stability and order. Constructivists have attempted to formulate mechanisms through which the systemic inertia of the ideational structure of norms and institutions can be overcome to produce significant shifts in national and international systems and structures. One theory advanced to explain normative change has grown out of the communicative aspect of norms is Risse’s ‘logic of truth seeking or arguing’¹⁴⁵ mentioned earlier. Risse suggests that actors make validity claims of their normative environment in one of three ways, questioning the truth of assertions made in relation to their perception of their normative environment, questioning the moral rightness of norms underlying arguments or questioning the validity and truthfulness of the speaker.¹⁴⁶ It is through validity claims of this nature that actors engage in discourse, attempting to convince others of their point of view, and in turn being willing to be persuaded, with the successful argument being the most convincing one. Crucially Risse asserts that ‘an argumentative consensus has constitutive effects on actors’¹⁴⁷ and as such can in turn produce normative change. For this debate and argument to occur however there must be a great deal of ground shared between the actors engaged in the argument, as it is with reference to shared norms and intersubjective meanings and understandings that validity claims are made. For this reason, despite the strengths outlined, I do not believe that a ‘logic of arguing’ is sufficient on its own to account for large norm shifts, and it does not explicitly contain a mechanism for norm emergence.

One mechanism proposed to explain norm change which does cover the issue of norm

¹⁴³ Finnemore & Sikkink, ‘Norm Dynamics and Political Change’, p.894.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Risse, T., “‘Let’s Argue!’”: p.6.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, pp.9-10.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, p.10.

emergence is Finnemore and Sikkink's "life cycle" of norms, a three stage cycle of 'norm emergence', 'norm cascade' and 'internalization'.¹⁴⁸ Finnemore and Sikkink propose the notion of 'norm entrepreneurs', who play an active role in the emergence and adoption of new norms.¹⁴⁹ Norm entrepreneurs call attention to issues about which they have strong feelings, and "frame" the issues by naming, interpreting and dramatizing them.¹⁵⁰ These issues are brought into the normative processes which are already in place and compete with existing norms and interests. This is one area in which the systemic inertia of the normative system works against the new norms, as while the norm entrepreneurs will be operating with new beliefs and interests, those that they are trying to convince will be conditioned by the existing norms, and this could cause them to be opposed to the effects of the new norms, indeed 'one has to wonder what could possibly motivate norm entrepreneurs'.¹⁵¹ Whatever their motivation (although one might presume it to be the strength of their beliefs), it is the job of the norm entrepreneur to convince those around them of the appropriateness of the new norm, although still working within the confines of the existing norms. I believe that the 'logic of arguing' can add to our understanding of methods employed by norm entrepreneurs in this respect, and relating the new norm to existing, complimentary norms can provide a valuable point of argument. During the American civil rights movement, norm entrepreneurs attempted to show that norms of racial equality were not only compatible with existing norms of equality and freedom, but were actually more acceptable within the ethical normative framework. Of course this was not an easy argument for them to win, but ultimately it proved to be a powerful tactic.

While the mechanism for norm emergence forwarded by Finnemore and Sikkink is phrased specifically in terms of the individual, I believe similarities can be drawn at an international level and the concept of norm entrepreneurs can be extrapolated to state level. Within an international organisation such as the EU, state actors take on a similar role to that of norm entrepreneur because, while their norms may be established at national level, they are, in some cases, new at EU level. In this way actors coming into the European Parliament will bring norms which are established at the national level into the institution of the EP, although they do not come directly from the government

¹⁴⁸ Finnemore & Sikkink, 'Norm Dynamics and Political Change', pp.895-905.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p.896.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p.897.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, p.898.

of the member state. This introduction of new norms will, similarly, be into an established normative environment and the process of argument and persuasion will be a similar one. These changes have served to reduce the importance of the power of a state with regard to norms, and amounts to a substantive change in the nature of norm development in international relations, as in ‘the traditional legal order, dominant norms were created by states and depended directly on the consent of states’.¹⁵² With the increase in ‘global cultural homogenization’¹⁵³ and the rise of complex international bodies and structures, such as the EU, the power to control normative processes has moved away from states, and international organisations have the ability to ‘socialize states to accept new political goals and new values that have lasting impacts on the conduct of war, the workings of the international political economy, and the structure of states themselves’.¹⁵⁴ For this reason a key tactic for norm entrepreneurs is to gain an ‘organizational platform’¹⁵⁵ through which their norms can be promoted. Whether this is a platform with the primary purpose of promoting the norm (such as organisations set up to campaign against landmines or slavery), or whether norm promotion is just one of the functions of the organisation (such as the EU or UN) it is often through the action of an organisational platform that norms are socialised at state level.

The process of arguing, persuading and convincing a state to subscribe to a new norm is a difficult one, but quantitative empirical studies have shown there to be a ‘tipping point’, at which point a norm cascade begins. While empirical work has suggested the presence of a tipping point, ‘[scholars] have not yet provided a theoretical account for why norm tipping occurs, nor criteria for specifying where, when and how we would expect it’.¹⁵⁶ The nature of this tipping point and the time at which it is reached are different in each case, but it is possible to identify factors which will influence when a “critical mass” of actors or states will be reached. One crucial factor which influences the building of this mass is the ‘normative weight’¹⁵⁷ of states which support the norm. The normative weight of a state will vary from issue to issue, but is influenced by the level of compromise required of the state, and the degree to which the norm would be

¹⁵² Hurrell, ‘Norms and Ethics in International Relations’ p.146.

¹⁵³ Finnemore, M., ‘Norms, culture, and world politics: insights from sociology’s institutionalism’ *International Organization* 50:2 p.328.

¹⁵⁴ Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*, p.3.

¹⁵⁵ Finnemore & Sikkink, ‘Norm Dynamics and Political Change’, p.899.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.901.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

compromised without the support of the state. Whenever the tipping point occurs, it marks a pronounced shift in the “life cycle” of the norm.

While the emergence phase of a norm’s life cycle is characterised by norm entrepreneurs creating powerful movements for change at a domestic level, a norm cascade represents the widespread adoption of a norm amongst states or state actors without the necessity for widespread domestic pressure. Once the tipping point is reached, ‘an international or regional demonstration effect or “contagion” occurs in which international and transnational norm influences become more important than domestic politics for effecting norm change’.¹⁵⁸ As at the norm emergence stage, it is difficult to give a complete picture of the pressures which act on states to adopt the new norms, although socialisation pathways have an important role to play in the process. Checkel points to two mechanisms through which norms created by entrepreneurs at the EU can be transferred to, and have an effect at, the national level, societal mobilization and social learning.¹⁵⁹ Social Learning is the process by which norms are internalised (generally by the élite) and shared, societal mobilization takes the form of the power of pressure groups brought to bear in an effort to institute policy change.¹⁶⁰ Within the EU, norms which are created at the EU level will not only exert an influence at state level however, the effects will also be felt at European level, within the institutions of the European Union and on the actors who comprise them. This effect, combined with the high degree of transnational and international normative activity at work within the EU, aids in the process of norm cascade and, as such, makes the EU a good focus of social constructivist study into norms and normative processes.

Alongside the socialisation of norms, Finnemore and Sikkink suggest that a process similar to “peer pressure” may cause states to adopt new norms.¹⁶¹ In a world of global communication and cultural homogenisation, it is increasingly possible for citizens within a state to examine the policies and attitudes of other states and draw comparisons with their own. This means that people will be able to see the adoption of new norms within other groups, and the inaction of a state could compromise its domestic legitimacy. Therefore ‘international legitimation is important insofar as it reflects back

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, p.902.

¹⁵⁹ Checkel, ‘Social Construction and European Integration’ p.57.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Finnemore & Sikkink, ‘Norm Dynamics and Political Change’, p.903.

on a government's domestic basis of legitimation and consent and thus ultimately on its ability to stay in power'.¹⁶² This is one way in which the European Union and its individual institutions aim to foster norm and identity change beyond Brussels, both within member states and within candidate countries such as Turkey. Once a norm has reached a tipping point of support the norm cascade phase of the life cycle begins and pressures at the international level such as socialisation and legitimacy become of primary importance, causing a spread in acceptance of the norm.

At the extreme end of a norm cascade a norm can enter the third and final stage of its life cycle, internalisation. Internalisation occurs when a norm becomes so widely accepted that it becomes "taken for granted" and influences the behaviour of actors with little or no thought on their part. This status is not achieved by every norm which is created and framed by norm entrepreneurs, but some of the most powerful norms which have been created, such as norms against slavery, or those for women's suffrage, are now accepted without debate in large parts of the world. Internalised norms such as these can be very powerful, but the fact that their effects can be hard to discern and they are not controversial means that 'these norms are often not the centrepiece of political debate and for that reason tend to be ignored by political scientists'.¹⁶³ While the nature and origin of many of these "taken for granted" norms has been neglected, the methods through which norms can become internalised has been an area of interest to theorists. When a norm becomes widely accepted and followed during a norm cascade, the behaviour it conditions will be iterated and will form a habit. As this norm following becomes habitual, patterns of behaviour will accrete which will become institutionalised. Iterated behaviour therefore plays a large role in the internalisation of norms and the achieving of "taken for granted" status.

One theoretical field which has grown out of the study of norms, particularly ethical norms, normative change and systemic change is 'normative theory', 'that body of work which addresses the moral dimension of international relations...it addresses the ethical nature of the relations between communities/states'.¹⁶⁴ Normative theory takes as its field of study a society's rules, institutions and practices, that is its normative processes,

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid, p.904.

¹⁶⁴ Brown, C., *International Relations Theory: New Normative Approaches*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1992. p.3.

and attempts to theorise their role in society. All too often however, this takes the form of addressing ‘an ideal world that does not exist as such’¹⁶⁵ and attempting to prescribe changes rather than studying or predicting them. This can be observed in Wendt’s ‘Anarchy is What States Make of it’, where he suggests the possibility of directing change and proposes three possible transformations to the international system.¹⁶⁶ The danger inherent in these attempts to ‘improve’ institutions and situations is that to a large degree our outlook to the particular problem will be conditioned by our normative environment, so notions such as ‘progress’ and ‘improvement’ will be subjective. This problem is picked up on by Finnemore and Sikkink who suggest ‘a bias toward progressive norms’,¹⁶⁷ those which fit with our existing normative frameworks, such as human rights and democracy, and a neglect for norms which are less palatable, such as xenophobia. As such constructivist study of systemic change has not produced substantive hypotheses of which norms will prove influential¹⁶⁸ and ‘the focus on social structures most of us admire has continued’.¹⁶⁹ Issues of morality and the existence of natural human rights and worldwide ethical norms have sparked argument and debate for many centuries and, while they are certainly important questions in many spheres of social scientific study, I do not believe that “normative theory” will provide a useful insight into the study of European integration and expansion, although I believe that it is entirely possible that actors will display attitudes which reflect this viewpoint I will investigate the norms in terms of the effect they have and this will, therefore, be picked up as an influence of the norms.

Despite this bias towards progressive norms, some work has been conducted into which norms prove successful, the conditions within which the norms will thrive and the qualities of the norms which progress right through the life cycle and are internalised. As already discussed, domestic legitimacy has an important role to play in the life cycle of norms, and legitimacy remains an issue in state adoption of norms. Finnemore and Sikkink argue that states which are experiencing domestic turmoil should be more susceptible to pressures and claims based on legitimacy¹⁷⁰ and norms would be more

¹⁶⁵ Jackson, R. & Sørensen, G., *Introduction to International Relations*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999. p.241.

¹⁶⁶ Wendt, ‘Anarchy is What States Make of it’, p. 149.

¹⁶⁷ Finnemore & Sikkink, ‘Constructivist Research’, p.403.

¹⁶⁸ Finnemore & Sikkink, ‘Norm Dynamics and Political Change’, p.905.

¹⁶⁹ Finnemore & Sikkink, ‘Constructivist Research’, p.404.

¹⁷⁰ Finnemore & Sikkink, ‘Norm Dynamics and Political Change’, p.906.

likely to spread during periods of international turmoil and upheaval, where norms, interests and identities are subject to debate and argument. It is possible that this may be observed within the EU, with some actors (primarily “euro-sceptics”) calling the EU’s democratic legitimacy into question, and it could be that norms based on the legitimacy of European identity based in democracy, justice etc. will spread for this reason. This also gives the basis of a counter argument, however, with euro-sceptics arguing the hypocrisy of a body promoting norms of democracy when it does not fulfil them itself.

Alongside the issue of legitimacy is the concept of ‘prominence’, which a norm gains when it is employed by ‘successful’ states, those which are seen as role models.¹⁷¹ Prominence could also be gained by the norms themselves if they are seen as beneficial to a state (or its people, at which point issues of legitimacy would be raised) which has previously employed the norm. Finnemore and Sikkink mirror Risse’s requirement of a ‘common lifeworld’¹⁷² for norm change, by pointing to the relationship between new norms and existing norms as influencing the effect of the new norms. In a similar way to Risse’s actors finding common normative ground around which to argue, ‘[p]olitical scientists also make arguments about adjacency, precedent and fit’.¹⁷³ In this way norm entrepreneurs and activists frame the issues surrounding the emergent norm in relation to, and in terms of, the existing normative framework. This makes it easier for group members to understand the problem and empathise, and can be a persuasive argument in favour of emerging norms. Within the EU this highlights another key role for the European Parliament, which provides an arena for this normative framework, as will be discussed below.

An area of theory which has gained importance in the study of European integration is the concept of “soft power”, which has become a ‘buzz word’, and is now ‘at the heart of discourses on the EU foreign policy’.¹⁷⁴ Olli Rehn, during his tenure as European Commissioner for enlargement, defined European soft power as ‘its power to transform its nearest neighbours into functioning democracies, market economies, and true

¹⁷¹ Florini, A., 1996 cited in Finnemore & Sikkink, ‘Norm Dynamics and Political Change’, p.906.

¹⁷² Risse, T., “‘Let’s Argue!’”, p.10.

¹⁷³ Finnemore & Sikkink, ‘Norm Dynamics and Political Change’, p.908.

¹⁷⁴ Tulmets, E., 2007. ‘Can the Discourse on “Soft Power” Help the EU to Bridge its Capability-Expectations Gap? *European Political Economy Review* 7 p. 196.

partners in meeting common challenges’,¹⁷⁵ and this allies with Nye’s definition of soft power as ‘getting others to want the outcomes that you want – [it] co-opts people rather than coerces them’.¹⁷⁶ This “soft power”, the ability for the EU to influence its neighbours and potential member states is often seen as key to the EU being perceived as a viable actor in international politics, and a consistent commitment to ‘European values’ is seen to underpin this soft power.¹⁷⁷ I believe, however, that this “soft power” could helpfully be viewed in normative terms, and that there is a strong normative component in the relations between the EU and neighbouring states.

Nye argues that ‘the soft power of a country rests primarily on three resources: its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority)’.¹⁷⁸ I believe that the preceding discussion highlights the resonance of these factors with those of normative transmission and diffusion, and I believe that talk of a ‘normative power Europe’¹⁷⁹ can help to shed light in this area. Nye’s reference to culture and political values will, I believe, echo identity within the institutions of the European Union and the EU as a whole, and the requirement for legitimacy and consistency is closely mirrored in Finnemore and Sikkink’s account of norm diffusion. Although this is unlikely to be addressed directly by my empirical work, it is an area which will impact on the relationship between Turkey and the EU, and is another area in which a greater and more nuanced understanding of norms could be beneficial in studying the European Union.

While norms have been a focus of study in the social sciences for a long time, the advent of social constructivism has brought a greater theoretical understanding of norms into international relations. Norms have important constitutive roles to play in the formation of the international system and individual actor’s identities and interests, as well as performing regulative functions on actor behaviour. The inherent sociality of norms is important in their effect, and the construction of institutions and patterns of behaviour which provide a degree of stability to the international system and to the

¹⁷⁵ Rehn, O., ‘Enlargement as an instrument of the EU’s soft power’. Speech delivered 19.10.07

¹⁷⁶ Nye, J.S., 2004. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. Public Affairs, New York, p.5.

¹⁷⁷ Rehn, ‘Enlargement as an instrument of the EU’s soft power’.

¹⁷⁸ Nye, *Soft Power*, p. 11.

¹⁷⁹ Manners, I., 2002. ‘Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?’ *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40:2

socialisation of actors. Despite this stability, it is also through norms and their change that systemic change, a key aspect of social constructivist theory, can be achieved. I believe that these mechanisms for normative and systemic change can shed light on the changes which will take place in relation to identity in the European Parliament with Turkey's application for membership and the change which will be required for the normative adaptation required to be accepted and socialized by member states.

I suggest that the EU is a prime candidate for an investigation into the normative nature of institutions due to its unique structure and an institutional and normative density not found elsewhere in international politics. This is particularly true of the European Parliament, where the role of actors is to be representatives of the people of Europe. For this reason, actors within the European Parliament will experience norms from European and National levels, as well possibly as regional norms, and are free of national governmental constraint.

Institutions and Social Constructivism

As with many other areas of International Relations theory, a rational choice theory of institutions has long prevailed, but social constructivism has, in recent years, allowed for a different, thicker view of institutions building on the enhanced understanding of the role of norms and the prominent position they are afforded within international politics. This alternate theorising can have a profound effect, not only on the nature and effectiveness of the institutions themselves, but also on the identity and interests of the actors who comprise and constitute them. Even within the EU, with the new institutions and polity which have been created, the traditional attitude has been to adopt the thin view of institutions, such as within Moravcsik's 'Liberal Intergovernmentalism', but I believe that an exploration of the alternative, social constructivist, attitude to institutions, utilizing the deeper conception of norms, will allow a better understanding of the European Parliament, and the actors who comprise its membership.

The rational choice, neo-utilitarian, understanding of institutions stems from the key assumptions which underpin the theoretical position. Rational choice theories seek to

explain social systems with reference to individual actors,¹⁸⁰ the individual being the basic unit of social analysis. The individuals who are being studied are attributed 'transitive, fixed, and given (exogenous) preferences',¹⁸¹ which in the case of the European Parliament and the EU would manifest as the preferences of the nations from which the actors are drawn. Alongside this is the optimality assumption, that '[w]hen faced with several courses of action, people usually do what they believe is likely to have the best overall outcome',¹⁸² the eponymous rational choice. These factors combine to form the thin view of institutions which is found within a neo-utilitarian framework, in which the extent of their effect is to influence the strategy of actors and to constrain or enable their behaviour. Actor behaviour can be modelled within the theorised 'thin' institutions, as courses of action will be decided upon based on calculations of consequences, 'in situations of interdependent choice...actors will of necessity behave strategically'.¹⁸³

While rational choice institutionalism views institutions as 'at most...a constraint on the behaviour of self interested actors',¹⁸⁴ historical institutionalism does afford them a slightly stronger role. In the short term, historical institutionalism affords the same limited power to institutions, that of constraining actors, but does concede that 'institutions can have deeper effects on actors as strategies, initially adopted for self-interested reasons get locked into and institutionalized in politics'.¹⁸⁵ Despite the slight increase in institutional 'thickness' which is attributed to historical institutionalism, 'the great majority of contemporary work on European integration views institutions, at best, as intervening variables'.¹⁸⁶ In contrast to these theories is the form of institutionalism which is advocated by social constructivists, one which postulates an explanation of changeable identities and interests of members and groups.

The social constructivist concept of an institution differs markedly from the neo-utilitarian one, and is grounded in the concepts of social facts and shared intersubjective

¹⁸⁰ Coleman, J.S., & Fararo, T.J., 'Introduction' in Coleman & Fararo (eds.) *Rational Choice Theory: Advocacy and Critique*. SAGE, London, 1992.

¹⁸¹ Jupille, J., Caporaso, J. & Checkel, J., 'Integrating Institutions: Rationalism, Constructivism, and the Study of the European Union' *Comparative Political Studies*. 36:1/2. p.12.

¹⁸² Elster, J., *Nuts and bolts for the social sciences*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 1989. p.22.

¹⁸³ Jupille et al. 'Integrating Institutions', p.12.

¹⁸⁴ Checkel, J., 'Social Construction and Integration' *Journal of European Public Policy* 6:4. p.546.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p.547.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p.548.

meanings, '[i]ntersubjective meanings have structural attributes that do not merely constrain actors. They also define their social reality'.¹⁸⁷ In direct contrast to the methodological individualism of rational choice institutionalism, socially constructed institutions cannot be reduced to the actions of individuals. Institutions are also far from structures designed to constrain and frame action. 'An institution is a relatively stable collection of rules and practices, embedded in structures of *resources* that make action possible – organizational, financial and staff capabilities, and structures of *meaning* that explain and justify behavior – roles, identities and belongings, common purposes, and causal and normative beliefs'.¹⁸⁸ This understanding of institutions is so important to constructivists that Checkel argues that constructivism 'is an argument about institutions',¹⁸⁹ and the polity of a democratic system is 'a configuration of formally organized institutions that defines the setting within which governance and policy making take place'.¹⁹⁰ As with all of the concepts formulated by social constructivists, ideas and norms play a key role in the construction and action of institutions. Much as norms and collective understandings among actors create institutions, 'institutions—conceptualized, say as social norms—have deeper effects on core properties of agents (identities and interests)'¹⁹¹ than the rationalist conception of institutions. Institutions do not merely constrain their members, they constitute them. I believe that the social constructivist image of institutions can add to the understanding of the nature of the EU and its constituent bodies and to the identity and interests of actors within the system.

Due to the difference in theoretical positions, the concept of an 'institution' is a fuzzy one, and '[i]nstitutions are often discussed without being defined at all'.¹⁹² I intend to examine the European Parliament within the definition of an institution as 'rules, enforcement characteristics of rules and norms of behaviour'¹⁹³ which manifest as 'a relatively stable set or 'structure' of identities and interests'.¹⁹⁴ While the rationalist approach to institutions has an important role to play in the formal institutions of the EU and the study of the codified and written rules, the largely neglected social constructivist

¹⁸⁷Adler, 'Seizing the Middle Ground' p.327.

¹⁸⁸March & Olsen., *The Logic of Appropriateness*. p.5.

¹⁸⁹Checkel, 'Social Construction and Integration', p.548.

¹⁹⁰March & Olsen, *The Logic of Appropriateness*, p.5.

¹⁹¹Jupille et al., 'Integrating Institutions', pp.14-15.

¹⁹²Keohane, R., (1988), 'International Institutions: Two Approaches' in Der Derian (ed.) *International Theory: Critical Investigations*. Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1995. p.285.

¹⁹³Ibid, p.287.

¹⁹⁴Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it' p.136.

viewpoint can help to understand the identities and interests of the participant actors. The 'rationalistic theories seem only to deal with one dimension of multidimensional reality [and serve to] obscure rather than illuminate the sources of...policy preferences'.¹⁹⁵

While rationalists and social constructivists concur that 'membership matters',¹⁹⁶ the membership of the European Parliament is seen by rationalists as having little or no effect on the nature of the bodies themselves (beyond the scope of rational decisions taken by the members). In contrast, the social constructivist view of institutions as shared understandings and norms means that it is the members who constitute the EP, and that it amounts to more than rules aimed to constrain. While the formation of the EP is set out in intergovernmentally agreed treaties, the constructivist assertion is that, in their current state, the Parliament amounts to more than that. It also consists of agreements, common understandings and iterated practices, which lead to behavioural norms. An example of these can be found in the form of informal decision-making procedures within the institutions, perhaps the most famous example coming from the European Commission, with the preference for unanimity in decision making. The high degree of interaction between actors within the European Parliament can lead to changes in its nature and constitution. The constructivist view of agency and structure views neither as ontologically primitive, and indeed agent and structure are viewed as mutually constitutive. In this way the high interaction density within the EP creates norms which constitute both the institution itself and the actors within it.

While the European Parliament came into existence through treaties and saw members thrust into a 'new' body, there still did not exist a 'normative vacuum',¹⁹⁷ the members brought with them their normative understandings, national and international norms and, possibly norms concerning Europe and the emergence of the EU. Through these norms and the discussion, argument and understandings which followed, the normative framework of the Parliament was created. It is within this framework which new norms would be created and propagated, along the schema outlined earlier. As with the general

¹⁹⁵Keohane, 'International Institutions' p.298.

¹⁹⁶Lewis, 'Institutional Environments and Everyday EU Decision Making' p.98.

¹⁹⁷Finnemore & Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change' .

model, within the EU 'individual agency is central'¹⁹⁸ to norm emergence, with individual actors attempting to turn personal beliefs into common understandings and shared viewpoints. The European Parliament serves as a strong arena for normative action, effect and change due to its nature and composition. The novel nature of the EP when it was created led to the opening of many 'policy windows',¹⁹⁹ where a problem presented itself for which the group had no adequate normative framework and no answer could be found. At this point a new shared understanding is required to address the issue, resulting often in the generation of new norms, but also of communication on normative issues as discussed earlier. While these policy windows were particularly abundant at the genesis of the EU institutions, these windows are still found at EU level, as at all levels, and the expansion of the responsibilities and competences of the European Parliament is a particularly fruitful source of these windows. 'The EU has developed institutional features beyond the original design and certainly beyond the purpose of managing economic interdependence'²⁰⁰ to 'include shared norms, commonly accepted rules and decision making procedures'.²⁰¹ The complex nature of identities and interests mean that actors do not come to new situations with a clear, defined list of preferences, what Wendt refers to as a 'portfolio of interests',²⁰² instead interests and preferences are dependent upon social context. Where a situation is encountered for which an actor does not have a precedent, the meaning of the experiences must be assessed and the resulting interests constructed. This is not to suggest that interests are plucked from the air, an actor will draw upon similar experiences, their identity, and the actions and beliefs of others. Rules and norms 'tell actors where to look for precedents, who are the authoritative interpreters of different types of rules, and what the key interpretative traditions are'.²⁰³ These new experiences afford an opportunity to norm entrepreneurs, who can shape interest and identity in other actors. For this reason the importance of institutions as arenas for actors is not diminished, rather it is built upon drastically in other areas.

One of the key differences between rationalist and social constructivist views of institutions lies in their understanding of the density of the institutional environments.

¹⁹⁸Checkel, 'Social Construction and Integration', p.552.

¹⁹⁹Ibid.

²⁰⁰Christiansen et al, 'The Social Construction of Europe' *Journal of European Public Policy* 6:4. p.539.

²⁰¹Ibid.

²⁰²Wendt, A., 'Anarchy is What States Make of it', p.136.

²⁰³March & Olsen, *The Logic of Appropriateness*, p.7.

While the rationalist model of institutions continues to limit their power to restraining or facilitating action, social constructivists afford a role to norms which extends into the conceptualization and framing of interests within the European Parliament, and Legro advocates an ‘organizational culture’ approach.²⁰⁴ Legro’s approach combines elements of organizational theory and cultural theory through a focus ‘on the way that the patterns of assumptions, ideas and beliefs that prescribes how a group should adapt to its external environment and manage its internal affairs influences calculations and actions’.²⁰⁵ In this way cultural factors, such as norms, shape how organisations and actors within them understand and interact with their environment, and will also influence which decisions and courses of action are deemed appropriate. In this way organizational culture does not only concern itself with the framing and understanding of problems, but extends further into the constitution of agents and structures, ‘organizational culture is important because it shapes organizational identity, priorities, perception, and capabilities in ways unexpected by noncultural approaches’.²⁰⁶ The high density of interaction between actors in the European Parliament combines with the nature of the interactions, sometimes without precedent or even in novel policy areas, to provide fertile ground for norm entrepreneurs and new norms, opening actor identity and interest to challenge and debate. This will not be uniform across all policy areas, however. Areas with the greatest density of normative rich interaction in which normative consensus has yet to be reached will likely prove the most challenging to actor identity, and the debate concerning Turkish accession to the EU fulfils these criteria. It is for these reasons that this is the focus of my study, and I will investigate this effect in detail in a later chapter.

While rationalists and social constructivists agree on the importance of rules within institutions, they differ greatly in their perceived nature and scope. Once again for rationalists the rules of institutions can be reduced to their impact upon the behaviour and strategies of involved actors, while social constructivists afford a much deeper role to rules, in the form of both regulative and constitutive norms. While the distinction between constitutive and regulative norms is not, in practice, always clear,²⁰⁷ the social

²⁰⁴ Legro, J. W., ‘Which norms matter? Revisiting the “failure” of internationalism’ *International Organization* 51:1 p. 35.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 37.

²⁰⁷ Hurrell, A., ‘Norms and Ethics in International Relations’ in Carlsnaes, Risse & Simmons (ed.)

constructivist study of constitutive norms is a vital departure from rationalist approaches.

Constitutive norms do not merely affect behaviour within the game, they define the game itself. These norms, for which rationalist approaches can provide no explanation,²⁰⁸ specify what counts as the activity,²⁰⁹ as well as proscribing actor roles. 'Those engaging in a practice recognize the rules as defining it. Were the rules of a practice to change, so would the fundamental nature of the activity in question'.²¹⁰ Thus the rules do not merely constrain actor behaviour, they define what the actor understands to be acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and, as with all other areas, the social constructivist notion of structure is inherently ideational and based in shared understandings. Tied into the concept of constitutive norms is the idea of systemic change, an idea which is neglected in the thin view of institutions. The ability to put forward explanations for this change, couched in terms of constitutive norms, is a strength of social constructivist approaches to European integration.

While the suggestion that 'integration has led to a fundamental shift in actor loyalty and identity'²¹¹ is perhaps a contentious one, the accompanying changes to the European Parliament and its constitutive norms are more readily apparent. To a social constructivist this can be seen as an indication of identity change, as agents and structures are mutually constitutive. Change has taken place throughout the institutions of the EU, with the expansion of competences, the alterations in structure and focus and in the alteration of voting behaviour. The effect of these norms is felt both within individual institutions of the EU and between the institutions and they produce observable effects. Voting behaviour in the Council of Ministers provides an example where the internal workings of the institution are dictated by more than just the formal rules which constrain actors. In the aftermath of De Gaulle's empty-chair policy in 1965 and 1966, the Luxembourg agreement called for all decisions which covered areas of important national interest to be discussed until unanimity was reached. While the agreement only called for unanimity in cases of important national interest, it paved the

Handbook of International Relations. SAGE, London, 2002. p. 145.

²⁰⁸Ruggie, J.G., 'What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge' *International Organization* 52:4, p.871.

²⁰⁹Ibid.

²¹⁰Keohane, 'International Institutions' pp.287-288.

²¹¹Checkel, 'Social Construction and European Integration' p.50.

way for what became, in essence, a veto which would be respected by the other member states. Despite the wording of the agreement, '[r]ecourse to qualified-majority voting became the exception rather than the norm'²¹² and into the 1980s 'even when the treaties permitted majority votes, the Council normally preferred to proceed on the basis of consensual agreements'.²¹³

In practice the “veto” rarely had to be employed, the Luxembourg compromise was one element in the creation of a norm for consensual decision making within the EU. Although qualified-majority voting is now more common within the Council of Ministers the norm for consensual decision making remains, 'decision-making in the council...usually proceeds on the understanding that difficult and controversial decisions are not imposed on dissenting states without full consideration being given to the reasons for their opposition'.²¹⁴ These norms play an important role in the working of the Council of Ministers, preventing rifts between actors and ensuring that actors behave in a way which allows the continuation of the institution, thus actor behaviour has shaped the institution, and in turn the institution shapes the actors. Beyond the scope of a single institution, norms also play an important role in the decision-making structure of the EU as a whole, acting as 'a sort of constitutional glue'.²¹⁵ While the interplay between the institutions, like the institutions themselves, is formally governed by Treaty provisions, 'their actual functioning and interaction are determined by a range of inter-institutional agreements and practices'²¹⁶ which form a decision-making style, normatively generated and enforced “rules” which govern actor behaviour and shape their identity and interests.

The mechanisms through which institutions affect the actors within them is a key locus of social constructivist study, and socialization is a key concept in this area. While rationalists do allow for a 'thin socialization'²¹⁷ within institutional environments, where ideas of reputation and trustworthiness affect rational choice optimality calculations,

²¹²Craig, P. & De Búrca, G., *EU Law: Text, Cases and Materials*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003. p.13.

²¹³Nugent, N., *The Government and Politics of the European Union*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2003. p.150.

²¹⁴Ibid, p.172.

²¹⁵Westlake, 'The Commission and the Parliament: Partners and Rivals in the European Policy-Making Process' quoted in Craig & De Búrca *EU Law*. p.161.

²¹⁶Craig & De Búrca, *EU Law*, p.80.

²¹⁷Lewis, 'Everyday EU Decision Making', p.105.

social constructivists focus on “thick” socialization, 'going beyond behavior to include cognitive or attitudinal effects witnessed by the internalization of norms and rules'.²¹⁸ For Wendt, 'institutionalization is a process of internalizing new identities and interests, not something occurring outside them and affecting only behavior; socialization is a cognitive process, not just a behavioral one'.²¹⁹ 'Social learning involves a process whereby actors, through interaction with broader institutional contexts...acquire new interests and preferences – in the absence of obvious material incentives'.²²⁰

Socialization, or social learning, occurs within an institution as a result of the interaction between actors and between the actors and the normative structures of the institution, and this affects their identity and interests. The European Parliament, with its high normative and interactional density, provides a good environment for socialization of norms, and thus provides a strong mechanism for affecting actor identities. Finnemore and Sikkink assert that '[s]ocialization is...the dominant mechanism of a norm cascade',²²¹ and ultimately the internalization of norms can lead to 'deep socialization', in which the norms become taken for granted, and compliance becomes almost automatic.²²² While this degree of socialization is observable within some institutions, at least within the social constructivist definition, I hypothesise that it is likely to be found only to a limited degree within the European Parliament. Norms such as those concerning human rights and democracy will, I believe, be taken for granted, these norms predate the European Union and will influence actors before they arrive within the European Parliament. Although the EU does provide a hotbed for normative activity, the relative novelty of the EP, the clash between European and national norms and the normatively charged nature of the issues which are debated in the Parliament all serve to limit the ability of specifically European level norms to become taken for granted. Rather than this deep socialization, actors experience partial socialization, where norms are internalized but do not override existing norms and become taken for granted.²²³ The norms at European level shape actors' roles within the Parliament, and these will in turn shape actor interests and attitudes, but they are unlikely to be complied with automatically. Even while European norms are shaping institutional roles, conflicting

²¹⁸Ibid, p.109.

²¹⁹Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of it', p.137.

²²⁰Checkel, 'Social Construction and Integration', p.548.

²²¹Finnemore & Sikkink,, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change' p.902.

²²²Lewis, 'Everyday EU Decision Making', p.109.

²²³Ibid.

national norms are likely to remain strong, and actors will often perceive themselves to fill different roles, with different identities and interests. The Logic of Appropriateness perspective on human action argues that actor behaviour will be grounded in the normative frameworks in which the actors find themselves, and that actors will behave in ways which are appropriate to their role and the normative rules which govern action. This perspective also allows for the presence of multiple roles and identities, indeed this fact is a major facet of the approach, and March and Olsen argue that '[o]ne of the primary factors affecting behavior...is the process by which some...rules, rather than others, are attended to in a particular situation, and how identities and situations are interpreted'.²²⁴

To understand actor behaviour it is therefore important to have an understanding of the different normative pressures exerted on actors, and the identities that they inhabit. While this degree of socialization will not result in the actors “going native”, 'the difference between partial socialization in the constructivist image and thin rationalist socialization accounts remains stark. Whereas the former predicts that cognition, attitudes, and role conceptions are affected, the latter only sees changes in behaviour as strategies and tactics adapt'.²²⁵ One of the distinctive features of the social constructivist project is the problematization of identities and interests, and a thick view of socialization, particularly partial socialization, allows for a more nuanced view of actor identity within the EU. It is very difficult for actors at a European level to leave behind national roles, even in the European Parliament where MEPs are not national governmental representatives, and national norms will exert their influence at European level. Norms associated with roles at national and European level will be present simultaneously when an actor is interpreting situations and making judgments of appropriateness in individual cases, and an understanding of these cognitive changes will allow a better understanding of interests and identities within the EU. I believe that the European Parliament itself has a role to play in allowing actors to select the appropriate norms for the given situation, prioritising norms associated with the EU and Europe over conflicting norms generated elsewhere, such as national or regional level. This is another area in which the European Parliament and other institutions have an important role to play in the shaping of identity within the European Union.

²²⁴March & Olsen, *The Logic of Appropriateness*, p.9.

²²⁵Lewis, 'Everyday EU Decision Making', p.109.

With the varying degrees of socialization advocated by the different theoretical frameworks comes a different stance concerning debate and argument within the EU. In a model which subscribes to the rational choice assumption 'there is no obligation to justify positions and little evidence where delegations feel compelled to provide explanations of their positions',²²⁶ negotiation is based in cost-benefit analyses, and persuasion requires recourse to threats of exclusion, isolation or veto. One theory which attempts to move beyond these constraints is Schimmelfennig's 'rhetorical action',²²⁷ which he situates within the debate between rationalists and social constructivists. Schimmelfennig begins his investigation into the Eastern expansion of the European Union positively from the point of view of social constructivists, with his assertion that rational choice alone is insufficient to account for the enlargement, 'the decision to enlarge the EU to central and Eastern Europe...cannot be explained as the result of egoistic cost-benefit calculations and patterns of state preferences and power'.²²⁸ Indeed Schimmelfennig examines norms at the EU level, most notably liberal norms of democracy and common identity, and argues that states which adhere to these norms have an increased likelihood of acceding to membership. Where Schimmelfennig differs from mainstream social constructivist thinking is in the mechanism through which these take effect. In place of the constitutive effects of institutionalized, socialized norms, he proposes "rhetorical action" which is the strategic use of norm based arguments. Schimmelfennig asserts that '[i]n an "institutional environment" like the EU, political actors are concerned about their reputation as members and about the legitimacy of their preferences and behavior. Actors who can justify their interests on the grounds of the community's standard of legitimacy are therefore able to shame their opponents into norm-conforming behavior and to modify the collective outcome that would have resulted from constellations of interests and power alone'.²²⁹ While Schimmelfennig acknowledges the presence of norms he affords them little, if any, power to directly influence identity and interest, a central concept of social constructivism, instead they are employed strategically in attempts to influence the cost-benefit analyses of other states. Within this model of normative activity, debate within the EU is extended beyond

²²⁶Ibid, p.106.

²²⁷Schimmelfennig, F., 'The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union' *International Organization* 55:1.

²²⁸Ibid, p.49.

²²⁹Schimmelfennig, 'The Community Trap' p.48.

merely discussions of gains and losses, side payments and concessions, with actors employing rhetorical language to manipulate the preferences of others and to pursue their national interests. While “rhetorical action” provides an interesting, and in some cases persuasive, alternative and supplement to the model of intergovernmental bargaining, I believe that the effect of norms on debate within the European Parliament and the EU runs deeper and has an effect on identity, not merely behaviour. Although I believe norms have a constitutive role in identity, I will remain aware of Schimmelfennig’s model, and examine actor behaviour in this regard so that I can analyse the effect of each in order to draw valid conclusions.

On a first examination Risse's 'Logic of Arguing'²³⁰ shares many aspects with “rhetorical action”, with actors challenging the validity of normative statements, but the “Logic of Arguing” has a much “thicker” normative basis. 'In arguing mode, actors try to convince each other to change their causal or principled beliefs in order to reach a reasoned consensus about validity claims. And, in contrast to rhetorical behavior, they are themselves prepared to be persuaded'.²³¹ While the concept of validity challenges are shared between rhetorical action and the logic of arguing, it is not only the truthfulness of the arguments themselves which are tested within Risse's model, actors also make validity claims concerning identities and interests. '[A]rgumentative rationality appears to be crucially linked to the constitutive rather than the regulative role of norms and identities by providing actors with a mode of interaction that enables them to mutually challenge and explore the validity claims of those norms and identities'.²³² Norms play a crucial role within the logic of arguing, they provide the collective understandings, identities and interests which make the arguments possible and frame which arguments are legitimate, and they also provide the arguments with the power to reconstitute the collective understandings. Risse argues that a high degree of international institutionalization, such as that found within the EU, could lead to the creation of a “common lifeworld”, based on 'a collective identity and shared values and norms',²³³ and that this can provide the basis for argumentative rationality. While I would not suggest that intergovernmental bargaining, and indeed interaction which could be viewed as “rhetorical action”, are absent from the European Parliament, I believe that

²³⁰Risse, T., "Let's Argue!"

²³¹Ibid., p.9.

²³²Ibid., p.2.

²³³Ibid., p.15

the model of the logic of arguing adds an important dimension to the study of actor interaction within the European Parliament, and provides another mechanism through which actor identity and interest can be constituted through participation in the institution.

A further difference between rationalist and constructivist images of institutional bargaining comes in their attitudes towards consensus seeking within institutions. From a rationalist perspective, the requirement for consensus is to be avoided, as it slows and impedes the decision-making process which tends to result in lowest common denominator outcomes. In contrast, social constructivists see consensus seeking very much as a positive, with the possibility of integrative bargaining and win-win outcomes replacing lowest common denominator ones. Lewis even suggests that consensus seeking and other-regarding practices can become a reflexive habit, routinized into durable practices.²³⁴ This fits in with Wendt's image of a collective identity outlined earlier, where actors make 'the generalized Other, part of their understanding of Self'.²³⁵ Once these norms become internalized and the practice becomes habit, the welfare of the group becomes an interest in itself, thus affecting the identities, interests and decision making procedures of actors within the institution. I believe that the nature and history of the EU has led to the possibility of a collective identity being formed. This strengthens the case for a European Union with identity and interests as outlined above, but more importantly for the work at hand will have a real and measurable effect on the identity and interest of actors within the European Parliament

There is a great deal of potential within the social constructivist movement to add value to the study of international institutions and, while there has been a move towards a "thicker" conception of institutions, constructivist study of the European Parliament remains limited. The mutually constitutive nature of structures and agents means that institutions can have a constitutive effect on the identities and interests of the constituent actors, and thus a model which does not cover this effect is in danger of misrepresenting the identities and interests of the actors studied. This effect is likely to be heightened within the distinctive institutional framework of the EU, and as such a social constructivist take on this framework has the potential to add great value to the

²³⁴ Lewis, 'Everyday EU Decision Making', p.106.

²³⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p.337.

current scholarship.

The social constructivist movement is a relatively young one, but in its short life it has come to challenge the dominance of rationalist theorising. The social ontology of constructivism results in markedly different theories being produced from their rationalist counterparts, however the power comes from the commensurability of these theories with the established beliefs. Social constructivism does not require a complete overhaul in international relations theory, it can add value to the existing scholarship. This added value can be seen most acutely in social constructivism's vision of norms, and throughout the history of social constructivism a theory of norms has gradually developed. Theories of the life-cycle of norms have informed social constructivist ideas of systemic change, and it is through the power of norms which institutions and agents constitute each other. For this reason an examination of norms provides an important insight into the changeable and changing nature of identities and interests within the European Parliament, and the dense normative and institutional frameworks can have a profound effect on preferences and outcomes within the EP. I believe that the effect of EU norms within the EP will be real and observable upon the actors within it.

Social constructivism and my research questions

It is clear that a research project investigating European identity cannot be based in an approach to international politics which views identity as exogenously given and fixed. The application of a social constructivist theoretical framework is vital to a coherent approach to identity, norms and institutions, and through the application of social constructivist theory I aim to gain a more nuanced understanding of the identity and interests of actors within the European Parliament, how this affects actor behaviour, and the role played by the EP itself.

My first research question concerns the presence and nature of a European identity, but throughout this chapter I have established that a research question phrased in such a way is not specific enough to generate solid, defensible conclusions, and that greater specificity is required. Actors within the European Parliament will experience and be influenced by a plethora of different norms from different sources, many of which will be in place before entering the Parliament although many others will only be

experienced by those within the institution. For this reason it is very important to be specific as to the identity being studied, talk of a 'European identity' as covering the identity and interests of actors in the EU is insufficient. The identity I will be studying is that expressed by members of the European Parliament when in that context. Despite this I will not limit my research to an investigation of the norms which are generated at EU level because, as mentioned above, these will not be the only norms influencing actor identity. I believe there will be strong overlaps between the norms influencing MEPs and those acting on the population of Europe as a whole, so I will attempt to uncover these norms, but I will remain cognizant of the fact that I am studying the identity of a relatively small group, an élite, and not the identity of the population of the EU as a whole. I believe that these identities will be interconnected but distinguishable.

The norms influencing actors will not be limited to EU norms and broader European norms - I do not foresee actors leaving behind national identity entirely. It is probable that I will find norms from a broad spectrum of levels influencing actors including, but not necessarily limited to EU level, European level, national and sub-national regional level. An important point in my research will be discerning how these norms (or more broadly these identities) interact, and which norms have relevance and importance in a given situation. I believe that the area in which my study focuses, European enlargement and the prospect of Turkish accession, will involve the prioritisation of EU and European level norms, but this will be investigated throughout my research.

A further area requiring caution will be in dealing with the individual nature of identity. If EU level norms are found to exist, it is likely that their influence will not be universally experienced by the actors concerned and, as such, the exact nature and strength of identity within the European Parliament will likewise vary. For this reason it is important to look beyond identity and investigate the norms which underpin that identity, as well as the mechanisms which influence norm acceptance and spread. These will all form key elements in my research and analysis.

Due to the nature of norms and identity outlined above, I will not look in detail at Turkish identity, instead I will investigate the perception of Turkish identity within the EpP I believe that this perception will manifest itself in norms regarding behaviour and attitudes towards Turkey and that it is these norms and discourses which will play an

important role in deciding the fate of Turkey's membership bid rather than a direct impact of Turkish identity. It is for this reason that an understanding of attitudes and discourses regarding Turkish accession will play an important role in understanding identity within the European Parliament. Mechanisms of norm transfer can also provide some indication as to whether these norms can transfer beyond the bodies which conduct negotiations towards other bodies and states, as it is with states that the ultimate decision on enlargement rests. Although this will not be a focus of study it is an interesting area for future research raised by a social constructivist theoretical approach.

As indicated throughout this chapter, it is only possible to gain an understanding of actor identity and normative processes through study of the institutions of which that actor is a part. For this reason a great deal of my research and analysis will deal with the European Parliament, and the role it plays in the constitution of the identity of actors. I will investigate the EP as a "thick" institution, a body which both constitutes and is constituted by its membership. In this way I can generate a much clearer and more nuanced view of actor identity, as well as the role of the European Parliament itself.

I have chosen to study the European Parliament, as I believe the institution will provide a hotbed of norms, the socialisation of norms, and interacting identities, which will form the focus of my research. The European Parliament will provide a particularly interesting focus for research, as there is a high interaction density amongst MEPs, and often matters under discussion are of a normatively rich nature. Alongside this there is likely to be a strong connection to the national identity as well, with each MEP representing an electorate in a way not required of actors within other EU institutions (indeed national sentiment and identity is discouraged in the European Commission). For this reason I believe that the European Parliament will provide a good study for assessing the interplay between norms and the interaction of different identities. It will also allow me to investigate the way in which institutions facilitate norm diffusion and encourage norm compliance. Although the European Parliament is generally viewed as having a small part to play in the overall decision on membership of a new country (although the EP must vote in favour of accession), I believe that the importance of the Parliament lies in the shaping of identity and attitudes throughout the negotiation process and that it is in this way that the influence of these institutions will be exerted. For this reason an understanding of identity in the European Parliament has practical

implications beyond the institution itself, although that is not a focus of this research. Having studied identity within the European Parliament in detail I will then look at the interests and attitudes of actors within the decision-making process. Although it is important for me to identify the norms which are present within the European Parliament, it is also important to assess the degree to which these norms influence behaviour and attitudes. As noted earlier, there are many norms which each actor will experience, generated at a number of different levels and these will all influence the actor to a greater or lesser degree and, for this reason, merely being aware of the presence of norms is not enough to gain a real understanding of MEP identity. To fully understand actor identity requires an understanding of the logic of appropriateness and the outcome of normatively based decisions. In this way I will look closely at the behaviour of actors in relation to the debate over potential Turkish accession, and this will allow me to come to conclusions regarding European identity and the attitude towards Turkey, as well as potentially allowing me to extrapolate identity to other candidate countries and other policy areas. Although I believe this extrapolation will be possible, I will need to remain aware of the context dependent nature of the influence of norms on decision making. This will form another key point in my analysis, investigating the factors which influence the selection or prioritisation of certain norms so that this knowledge can be applied in other areas. I will have to remain aware, however, of the problem of the impermanence of knowledge, highlighted earlier, that I am looking at a particular snapshot of the complex picture of norms within the European Parliament, and that I am looking through a paradigmatic lens.

The case study for the empirical research in this thesis looks at the issue of enlargement of the European Union, with particular reference to the candidacy of Turkey, and the attitudes of actors in this regard will provide an important indication of the norms which exert an influence on identity in the European Parliament, as well as the interplay of different norms. The case of Turkey was chosen because I believe that the negotiations and decisions taken in this area will be particularly useful in understanding normative factors within the European Parliament and highlight the importance of social constructivist theorising in the field of European Union politics. As I have outlined in this chapter, social constructivism argues that the expression of identities and the associated interests are context dependent, that is outcomes are dictated by the norms experienced and the situation encountered. For this reason I believe that the selection of

a single case study will be beneficial in focussing the research. The issue of enlargement, and the case of Turkey, is one in which there is likely to be challenge to a European identity without an associated challenge to national identity. European norms and issues of European identity are likely to be raised and challenged in the European Parliament in relation to Turkish membership, and this will allow for analysis of the mechanisms outlined in this chapter within the broad issue of identity in the European Parliament. Although the EU is in discussion with other candidate countries, I believe that the case study of Turkey is the most appropriate to answer the research questions posed. The Turkish membership bid presents a broad spectrum of issues to be analysed which I do not believe can be found with regards to other candidate countries. The broad spectrum of normative factors (such as culture and religion) alongside more traditional rationalist foci of enquiry (such as demographics and economics) and even questions of geography make the case of Turkey a fascinating and important one. Alongside, and perhaps due to, this combination of factors, Turkey is, arguably, the most contentious of EU candidate countries, and this is likely to be reflected in the nature of debate on the issue in the European Parliament. As this chapter has outlined, communication and debate is key in norm creation and change, so debate and interaction is vital in analysis of identity. ‘The prospect of Turkey’s membership has forced the discussion of controversial issues, including not only ‘the borders of the EU’ and its ‘geographical limits’, but critical questions of European identity, Islam’s place on the continent and its role in European society’²³⁶ and for that reason I believe it is important that it act as a case study for this research.

As already indicated, key to answering the research questions outlined in the previous chapter is collecting and analysing data in a way which is coherent with the theoretical framework of the research. This chapter has set out the theoretical underpinnings of this research project: the importance of a social constructivist approach to identity and interest; the nature of norms, their creation, spread and impact on identity; and the important role of institutions in actor identity. The following chapter will investigate the relationship between social constructivism and methodology in order to generate a programme of empirical research appropriate both to the theoretical outlook expounded in this chapter, and the research questions of the thesis.

²³⁶ Bogdani, M., 2011. *Turkey and the Dilemma of EU Accession: When Religion Meets Politics*. I.B. Taurus & Co Ltd, London. p.159.

Methodology

As previously indicated, a thorough consideration of methodological issues is absolutely vital if valid data is to be gained and defensible conclusions are to be made. If empirical research is to generate data which makes sense within a theoretical framework, the method for the research must take this theory into account in its design. For this reason empirical research into identity within the European Parliament which looks at norms and “thick” institutions and seeks to understand actor identity and interests must be drawn from the social constructivist theories which underpin it. This chapter will discuss the methodological issues involved, and set out the plan for empirical research which has taken these factors into consideration.

As social constructivist study of the European Union is relatively novel, the body of research and literature is notably lacking in some key areas. Although a fair body of work has been conducted in the field of social constructivist theory in the European Union (see the preceding chapter), there has been significantly less empirical research conducted. It has been alleged also that the empirical work is less useful than it could be, with ‘exceptionally low standards of empirical confirmation’¹ which merely ‘select a particular action in world politics, then seek to demonstrate that ideas or norms - often ‘altruistic’ ideas or norms – lie somewhere behind it’.² Indeed Checkel concedes that ‘[i]n all too many constructivist studies of the EU, tough questions of research methodology and operationalization have been neglected’.³ Despite these criticisms some empirical studies of the EU have been conducted,⁴ perhaps the closest in nature to mine being Scully’s investigation of attitudes, behaviour and socialization in the European Parliament.⁵ Scully takes a behavioural approach to his research, analysing voting patterns as well as results of surveys, and he analyses his data statistically. I believe that this quantitative approach to an investigation of identity and norms is

¹ Moravcsik, A., ‘Bringing Constructivist Integration Theory Out of the Clouds: Has it Landed Yet?’ in ‘A Constructivist Research Program in EU Studies?’ Forum Section *European Union Politics* 2:2, 2001. p.229

² Ibid.

³ Checkel, J., ‘From meta- to substantive theory? Social constructivism and the study of Europe’ in ‘A Constructivist Research Program in EU Studies?’ Forum Section *European Union Politics* 2:2, 2001. p.223

⁴ See Checkel, ‘International Institutions and Socialization in Europe’ pp.820-821.

⁵ Scully, R., *Becoming Europeans? Attitudes, Behaviour, and Socialization in the European Parliament*. Oxford University Press, 2005.

problematic, and I will explore the methodological considerations below before arriving at a research programme which I believe is suited to the focus of my research and the theory which underpins it.

As with all areas of academic endeavour, politics and international relations are subject to fundamental debate in two areas. Alongside questions of substance, what might be called “facts” and theories, is the debate over methodological issues, ‘conceptual and philosophical questions that are involved in the way that we carry out research’.⁶

Despite this neat semantic distinction between substantive and methodological issues, it is neither possible nor desirable to separate the two in practice. An appropriate method of research will be mindful not only of the conceptual and philosophical questions of methodology, but also of the substantive issues being addressed. It is with this in mind that Adler advocates a three layered approach to social constructivism, ‘involving metaphysics, social theory and international relations theory and research strategies – of social reality and social science and of their dynamically constitutive effects’.⁷

‘The prestige of the physical sciences has...ensured that the social sciences have tried to adopt their methods.’,⁸ and the view of scientific study as a search for absolute truth is a longstanding one. For a long time the success of the natural sciences in explaining the physical world, and the ability of modern science to manipulate the world, resulted in the belief that naturalism was the only appropriate way forward for social scientific endeavour. This took the form of an empiricist outlook, with the exclusion of areas that could not be subsumed under scientific laws. This dedication to scientific method is demonstrated in the terminology, where the disciplines are referred to as social sciences, even where other epistemologies and methods, and post-modern and discursive analyses are more common. The social scientific method was exemplified by the Vienna Circle, a group of philosophers who met in Vienna in the 1920s and 1930s. The Vienna Circle advocated a positivist and empiricist ‘science world-conception’,⁹ going on to claim that ‘[t]here is knowledge only from experience, which rests on what is immediately given.

⁶ Jackson, R., & Sørensen, G., *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2007. p.280.

⁷ Adler, E., ‘Constructivism and International Relations’ in Carlsnaes, Risse & Simmons (eds.) *Handbook of International Relations*. SAGE, London, 2002. p.96

⁸ Trigg, R., *Understanding Social Science*. Blackwell, Oxford, 2001. p.89.

⁹ *Ibid*, p.3.

This sets the limits for the content of legitimate science'.¹⁰ This approach places perception as the basis of theory, attempting to explain causal connections from objective observations. Reliance on perception proves problematic for theories which do not treat observations as objective, rather they are affected by social constructions, so it is not possible for observations to be made beyond the context of existing theories and those which are to be tested. Within this view there is no absolute truth that can be found through the employment of scientific method, and other approaches to research are required. This is the case when looking at issues such as identity and norms which have a degree of subjectivity inherent to them, so it is important to look at methods which are not drawn directly from the physical sciences.

Methodological issues were brought to the forefront in IR scholarship with the 'behavioural revolution' of the 1950s and 1960s,¹¹ and it was the goal of the followers of behaviouralism to unify the methods employed in IR with those already in evidence in the natural sciences, that is to make IR a true "social science". Behaviouralism holds to the exogenic perspective on knowledge, which 'tends to view knowledge as a pawn to nature',¹² and has a logical, empiricist perspective in the tradition of Locke, Hume and Mills. Eulau states that 'behaviouralism investigates acts, attitudes, preferences and expectations of people in political contexts',¹³ and this investigation takes the form of the rigorous collection of empirical data which is then analysed using a toolbox taken from the natural sciences. Quantitative methods are emphasised, and the focus is on building theories which explain and predict, through the gathering of precise, verified, objective data. Behaviouralism is viewed as a precursor to the most common methodology employed today, positivism, which shares many features with the earlier work performed by behaviouralists.

Positivist methodology in international relations is an important concept to understand, as positivism is the framework within which the majority of accepted theories are based. The positivist methodology underpins the majority of research within the field of European integration and, as such, an understanding of the conceptual and philosophical

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Jackson & Sorenson, *Introduction to IR*, p.281.

¹² Gergen, K.J., 'The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology' *American Psychologist* 40:3 p.269.

¹³ Eulau, H., *The Behavioural Persuasion in Politics*. Random House, New York, 1963. p.21.

issues involved is important when conducting study in the area. As noted, positivism shares many features with behaviouralism, including the belief in an objective knowledge of the world which is gained through observation, and a subscription to empirical research techniques. Vasquez outlines seven criteria of a good positivist theory¹⁴: that it is accurate and limited; that it is non-relativist; that it is able to be falsified (in line with the work of Popper); that there is power in its explanations; that it is open to improvement and refinement; that it is consistent with well-established knowledge and that it is parsimonious. These criteria provide a useful summary for positivist theorising, and highlight the similarities between this social scientific methodology and the methodology of the natural sciences. Alongside its attitude to theory generation, positivists also employ scientific methods of data collection and analysis, and Nicholson asserts that the two general research programmes for positivists consist of quantitative research and rational choice analyses.¹⁵ Despite the important role played by the positivist methodology, it is not universally accepted, with Trigg going as far as to say that '[t]he bright hopes for human progress which were once pinned on science already seem childishly optimistic',¹⁶ and this has led to empiricism being 'put on trial'.¹⁷

Debates over methodology are often divided into questions of ontology, the very nature of the world, and epistemology, the way we know the world. The ontology of positivist research, as we have seen, is one in which there is an absolute truth which is to be strived for through scientific study, one where actions and effects can be reduced to individual agency. This ontology is in marked contrast to the anti-essentialist, social ontology advocated by social constructivists. It is not possible to give a complete, all encompassing definition of an ontology subscribed to by all social constructivists, as I do not believe such a thing exists. While the ontology subscribed to by each social constructivist will vary subtly, it is possible to draw common threads of the social ontology. While the hypothesised extent of their effect varies, social constructivists believe that intersubjective understandings are constitutive of our reality. Constructivists distinguish between 'brute facts', which are true independent of human action, and

¹⁴ Vasquez, J., 'The Post-Positivist Debate' in Booth & Smith (eds.) *International Relations Theory Today*. Polity, Cambridge, 1995. p.230.

¹⁵ Nicholson, M., *Causes and Consequences in International Relations*. Pinter, London, 1996 quoted in Jackson & Sorenson, *Introduction to IR*, p.291.

¹⁶ Trigg, *Understanding Social Science*, p.2.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

‘social facts’. While few constructivist scholars argue that there are no material facts about the world, they do argue that an explanation of the world based on brute facts where ideas ‘do not construct and structure social reality, but only reflect the material world and serve to justify material causes’,¹⁸ is fundamentally flawed. Adler illustrates this point by suggesting that we ‘take a group of people, a nation or various nations and metaphorically toss them in the air. Where they go, how, when and why, is not entirely determined by physical forces and constraints; but neither does it depend solely on individual preferences and rational choices. It is also a matter of their shared knowledge, the collective meaning they attach to their situation, their authority and legitimacy, the rules, institutions and material resources they use to find their way, and their practices’.¹⁹ That is, our understanding of the social world cannot be reduced to ‘brute facts’, nor can it be reduced to the level of individuals within society. To study the social world we must examine ‘social facts’, intersubjective meanings and shared understandings. This social ontology has had profound effects on the research agenda of social constructivism and has led to methodological adaptation from the positivist model in a number of areas.

One consequence of the adoption of a social ontology is the rejection of the concept of absolute truth, and a view of knowledge as impermanent. Where the natural scientific view of the world is one where truth and facts are independent of time and space, this independence is not possible when facts are dependent upon social context for meaning, they are ‘facts only by human agreement’.²⁰ ‘The terms in which the world is understood are social artefacts, products of historically situated interchanges among people’²¹ and, as such, knowledge cannot be permanent or immutable. Because social constructivists do not attempt to discover brute facts, a different approach to study is adopted. Constructivists often move away from issues of mechanical causality favoured by positivists, instead favouring an approach which follows from Max Weber’s notion of Verstehen, ‘interpretive understanding’. Weber’s goal in advocating Verstehen was to integrate ‘the naturalist insistence upon causal explanation, and the anti-naturalist

¹⁸ Stephen Krasner in Adler, E. ‘Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics’ *European Journal of International Relations* 3:3 p.324.

¹⁹ Ibid, p.321.

²⁰ Ibid, p.323.

²¹ Gergen, ‘The Social Constructionist Movement’ p.267.

demand for the interpretive understanding of subjective meanings'.²² In this way social constructivists do not merely strive for what Weber describes as 'direct understanding',²³ but also search for motives. The nature of the concepts I am studying lends itself to this interpretive approach and, as such, I will pursue this form of research programme. Wendt eloquently summarises the social constructivist research agenda in this respect thus, '[w]hen Liberals offer economic interdependence as an explanation for peace, inquire into the discursive conditions that constitute states with identities that care about free trade and economic growth. When Marxists offer capitalism as an explanation for state forms inquire into the discursive conditions that constitute capitalist relations of production. And so on'.²⁴ In this way social constructivists examine the collective, social understandings and discourses which have constitutive effects in an attempt to gain "understanding". 'Each meaning is understood in relation to the overall practice which is taking place, and each practice in relation to a particular discourse. Hence we are only able to understand, explain and evaluate a process if we can describe the practice, and the discourse within which it is occurring'.²⁵ Despite this constructivist emphasis on understanding, the other element of Weber's *Verstehen*, causal explanation, has not been lost, indeed the two cannot be separated. Any 'attempt to understand the inter-subjective meanings embedded in social life is at the same time an attempt to explain why people act the way they do'.²⁶ This acceptance of the continuing importance of causal explanations within social constructivism allows constructivists to retain the power of prediction, while acknowledging that 'causality in social science involves specifying a time-bounded sequence and relationship between the social phenomena we want to explain and the antecedent conditions, in which people consciously and often rationally do things for reasons that are socially constituted by their collective interpretations of the external world and the rules they act upon'.²⁷

Through interpretive understanding, advocates of social constructivism argue that the

²² Keat, R & Urry, J., *Social Theory as Science*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1982. p.145.

²³ Ibid, p.145.

²⁴ Wendt, A., *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999, p.136.

²⁵ Howarth, D., 'Discourse Theory' in Marsh & Stoker (eds.) *Theory and Methods in Political Sciences*. MacMillan, Basingstoke, 1995. p.115.

²⁶ Gibbons, M., 'Introduction: the Politics of Interpretation' in Gibbons (ed.) *Interpreting Politics*. New York University Press, New York, 1987. p.3.

²⁷ Adler, 'Constructivism in World Politics', p.330.

social ontology provides a greater explanatory power to scholarship than is afforded by the rationalist ontology, but with the adoption of a new ontology have come questions concerning the social constructivist epistemology. Alongside the social ontology has come an acceptance of the ‘endogenic perspective’²⁸ on knowledge, where knowledge is a result of human processes. This has led some scholars to suggest that social constructivist study is incompatible with empirical, scientific approaches, with an incommensurability of results between discourses. Despite this suggestion, many scholars of social constructivism believe that the different ontology does not by necessity result in an altered epistemological outlook. Wendt stated explicitly that ‘constructivist social theory is compatible with a scientific approach to social inquiry. Constructivism should be construed narrowly as an ontology, not broadly as an epistemology’.²⁹ These differences of opinion are drawn on by Ruggie, who divides social constructivist theorising into three categories, ‘neo-classical constructivism’, ‘post-modernist constructivism’ and ‘naturalistic constructivism’.³⁰ Within this classification, neo-classical constructivists draw directly from the work of Durkheim and Weber, with a strong commitment to social science but with a greater degree of social analysis than is displayed by rationalists. This form of constructivism has gained some popularity within International Relations in recent years, but due to the similarities between neo-classical constructivism and a positivist, rationalist outlook it has been suggested that it has come to be used by rationalists who acknowledge that social analysis can be beneficial, without entailing any shift in methods.³¹ In contrast to neo-classical constructivism is the post-modernist branch, which does differ markedly from rationalist approaches. Post-modernist constructivists draw inspiration from the work of Nietzsche, Foucault and Derrida and argue that objective analysis is impossible. Within this branch discursive practices form the ontological primitives, with a “regime of truth” replacing social science.³² Ruggie’s ‘naturalistic constructivism’ treads a road between these extremes. Naturalistic constructivism, the branch which most interests me, subscribes to the social ontology, but remains empirical, albeit with a different focus. While notions of ‘ultimate truth’ are rejected, observation of social phenomena still provides us with knowledge of them, and conclusions can be drawn and predictions

²⁸ Gergen, ‘The Social Constructionist Movement’, p.269.

²⁹ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p.41.

³⁰ Ruggie, J.G., *Constructing the World Polity*. Routledge, London, 1998. pp.35-36.

³¹ Brown, C., with Ainley, K., *Understanding International Relations*. Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2005. p.48.

³² Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity*, p.35.

made within the discourses that comprise international politics. Social constructivism views discourses as stable, this is a prerequisite for intersubjective understandings, and stability allows conclusions to be extrapolated. This ability for social constructivist work to form conclusions and make predictions based upon empirical evidence is an important one, as it allows research conducted from this point of view to be commensurable with rationalist work, which overwhelmingly provides the backdrop for IR research. Ruggie suggests that ‘this takes the form of maintaining that constructivist concerns are a useful tool in the context of discovery, but that at the end of the day they do not affect the logic of explanation’,³³ social constructivists can work alongside rationalists and provide commensurable, often competing hypotheses that can be tested through empirical research. For Adler ‘constructivism means, not abandoning reason or rationality, but rediscovering how rational considerations are brought to bear in collective human enterprises and situations’.³⁴ This is the avenue I will pursue with my research programme in order that the data I generate and the predictions I make are commensurable with those which exist already and come from the dominant theoretical framework.

Marsh and Furlong view ontology and epistemology as analogous to a researcher’s skin,³⁵ rather than a sweater which can be removed or even changed at will. Even if not explicitly stated, ontological and epistemological orientations shape theory and method alike. This analogy holds true for social constructivists, and the ontology and epistemology of constructivism has a profound effect on the methods employed in constructivist research. Where a positivist employs quantitative research methods in an attempt to deduce generalised laws of causation, quantitative methods are often viewed as rather blunt research instruments by constructivists, which do not help us gain an interpretive understanding. To gain an understanding of the social world which goes beyond mechanical causation, social constructivists largely employ qualitative research methods. These research methods, which will be discussed in greater detail later, correspond more closely with social constructivist theory, and afford greater power to explain the concepts studied by social constructivist scholars. Although causation

³³ Ruggie, J.G., ‘What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge’ *International Organization* 52:4, p.884.

³⁴ Adler, ‘Constructivism in World Politics’ p. 348.

³⁵ Marsh, D., & Furlong, P., ‘A Skin, not a Sweater: Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science’ in Marsh & Stoker (eds.) *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke, 2002. p.17.

remains important within social constructivism, an understanding of causation is not enough to appreciate the effect of norms and the nature of identity. I believe that these concepts are not quantifiable, so an approach of this nature is not sufficient to understand fully the issues I am studying.

As with everything investigated by social constructivists, interests and identities are seen to be based in shared understandings and intersubjective meanings, and fundamentally ideational in nature. As discussed earlier, social constructivist theory does not view identities and interests as exogenously given and fixed, their ideational nature makes them changeable. This means that while rationalist study is broadly limited to the outcomes generated by these identities, constructivist study focuses on the generation and nature of identities, interests and preferences before theorising on the effect of these factors on international politics. The ideational basis of identity also necessitates a different approach to research. Where exogenous identities remain fixed over time, and it would potentially be possible to establish the nature of these identities through quantitative methods drawing general conclusions, this is not the case from a social constructivist viewpoint. While this approach might go some way to establishing the current 'state of play', results would be influenced by the time and place at which they were collected, and constructivists strive for a deeper understanding of identity. Due to the ideational nature of identities and interests it is important to view them as in process. Through study of intersubjective meanings and norms it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of identities, actors' motives, and the rules that govern practices, refining existing models of causation within the international system. This investigation is only possible through the employment of qualitative research methods, which allow us to view the changing process of identity. This understanding of the ideational and normative processes which underpin the social world will play an important role in the investigation which I will carry out. My investigation of identities and interests within the European Parliament will draw from this understanding of the ideational, changeable nature of these concepts, as will my view of the EP itself. As with identity and interest, the prevailing view of the European institutions attributes them a fixed nature, constraining action and little more. Ideationally constituted institutions are similarly changeable, and an understanding of the normative processes that underlie them is pivotal in understanding the role that they play. An understanding of the role of the European Parliament will be key throughout my research, as it will have an

important role in the creation, spread and adoption of norms and in constituting actor identity. I intend to gain an understanding of these concepts by employing a qualitative research programme.

Despite the traditional, neat distinction between quantitative and qualitative research methods, exact definitions and differences between the two are often blurred, and qualitative research ‘certainly does not represent a unified set of techniques or philosophies’.³⁶ Despite this, it is possible to identify strands which run through qualitative research, and I intend to justify why qualitative methods are applicable to my research, before going on to look at the exact techniques which I will employ. The terminology involved indicates one of the primary differences between quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative research techniques are primarily concerned with numerical analyses and measurement, whereas qualitative work is not concerned with measurement and rely on words as a basis for analyses. While this can be a useful distinction, it is an oversimplification to suggest that this is the sum of the differences.³⁷

One major difference between quantitative and qualitative research is the role of theory and the form of reasoning involved. While quantitative research is often conducted with the purpose of proving a theory, qualitative research is conducted with the aim of generating a theory. For this reason qualitative research often employs deductive logic, with the perspective of those being studied influencing the nature and orientation of the research.³⁸ This allows for a study of identity and interest which is anchored in the viewpoint of the participant, the person whose identity and interests are being studied, rather than being driven by the researcher. A participant focused research programme allows for a more nuanced view of interest and identity than would be afforded by quantitative techniques. This is another difference between quantitative and qualitative research, while quantitative research is seen to give harder, perhaps more precise results, qualitative research gives richer, deeper data.³⁹ The less structured form of research which is generally found within a qualitative research programme is seen to give results which are less clear cut, but with increased precision the researcher loses the capacity for interpretive understanding. Qualitative research is better placed to investigate the

³⁶ Mason, J., *Qualitative Researching*. SAGE, London, 1996. p. 3.

³⁷ Bryman, A., *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004. p.19.

³⁸ Ibid, p.287.

³⁹ Ibid.

collective understandings and shared meanings of social constructivism, allowing study of 'social facts' and affording an understanding not just of behaviour, but of the meanings behind it. This quality also allows qualitative researchers a better understanding of change and the nature of social phenomena as in process rather than static, an important concept in social constructivist study. While quantitative research is primarily aimed at the production of general rules independent of time and space, qualitative research can be context dependent, and this is an important factor for a theoretical approach which disregards the concept of absolute truth in the social world. For these reasons, qualitative methods will have a key role to play in this research programme.

Despite the differences between qualitative and quantitative research there are some similarities. For the social constructivist who broadly shares an epistemology with the sciences, important concepts remain present in qualitative research. Despite the tendency towards less structured research techniques, qualitative research must be systematic and rigorous in the same way that quantitative research is if the data and analysis generated are to be commensurable with those from a quantitative research programme. The research must also meet the criteria of reliability and validity which are applied to quantitative research, although the criteria are expressed differently. The criterion of reliability refers to the requirement for consistency of method, producing consistent, commensurable results, and is important in drawing accurate, viable conclusions. While within quantitative research validity refers to how accurately results mirror reality, it is not simple to assess this within qualitative research. As such, Bryman divides qualitative validity into concepts of credibility and transferability.⁴⁰ For research findings to meet the criterion of credibility, they must be accepted as the most credible account of the aspect of the social work being studied. One prominent tool for achieving this is triangulation, where multiple research methods are employed on the same area of study with the purpose of cross-checking findings. The criterion of transferability also differs within qualitative research from the established concept within quantitative research. The context specificity of qualitative research precludes the transfer of methods into other fields, but it does require that methods are set out clearly so that it is apparent how conclusions were reached, and it is possible for other theorists to examine

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.273.

the evidence and test the conclusions. This also affords transparency of method, allowing the researcher to demonstrate that good practice has been followed and that they have acted in good faith.

A further area of overlap is the requirement for an ethical research programme. Ethical questions in research can be broken down into four broad categories: harm to participants; lack of informed consent; invasion of privacy and the use of deception.⁴¹ Many ethical issues are more prominent in conducting qualitative research than the quantitative counterpart because the qualitative researcher is often closer to the subject being studied, and experiences a greater degree of human interaction. An understanding of ethical concerns is vital to the formulation of a viable qualitative research strategy, and the ethical issues of individual techniques will be discussed later. The requirement for ethical approval relating to research originating in a university environment is not only important, it was also very helpful in the creation of both the interview guide and the questionnaire.

It is through the employment of a qualitative research strategy that I intend to address the research questions that I have formulated. I propose to investigate the founding ideology of the European Union and the process of evolution it has undergone to create a modern European identity. The Treaty of Rome, one of the founding documents of the European Union, called for unity based on shared ideals, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and called for all other nations with shared ideals to join the signatories of the Treaty.⁴² This ideological basis for unity is continued with much subsequent EU literature and, at least to this degree, the concept of a European identity remains present. The ideological and ideational nature of this research necessitates use of qualitative research techniques that will allow me to identify the makeup and expression of European identity, I do not believe that this would be possible through the employment of a quantitative approach to research.

The founding ideology of the EU dates back 50 years, and the change and evolution of the identity is an important focal point of my research, necessitating an approach which

⁴¹ Ibid, p.509.

⁴² European Communities 'Treaty Establishing the European Community: as amended by Subsequent Treaties' ("Treaty of Rome"). Signed 25.03.1957.

allows a view of identity as a process rather than a static concept and sets identity in the appropriate historical context. Due to the historical nature of the research into the founding ideology of the EU, documentary research will be conducted, focusing on Treaties and documents of the EU, with further evidence provided by scholarship on the issue. Documentary research will also provide an insight into the changing nature of European identity, but I intend to ally this with semi-structured interviews with, and questionnaire responses from, officials and members of the European Parliament to clarify the picture of the present nature of European identity and the factors that influenced its evolution.

Once I have established the nature of the European identity, I intend to evaluate the strength of the identity within the European Parliament which, as indicated in the preceding chapter, I believe to be an important focus of research concerning identity within the EU. As one of the central institutions of the EU, one would expect the European Parliament to be a point of genesis for European level norms, and an arena in which European identity is felt most strongly, if not by all constituent actors.

I believe that the most appropriate and informative way to study the strength of the identity, and the forces that contribute to it, is through an analysis of European Parliament debates in combination with semi-structured interviews with actors within the European Parliament who may be influenced by the norms and identity; a questionnaire which can be filled out by those members of the institutions it is not possible for me to speak to, and an analysis of official documentation. An analysis of documents generated by the European Parliament, especially transcripts of debates, will be a key resource in this research. As well as allowing me to understand and represent the views of a broader spectrum of actors, transcripts of debates will allow me to analyse one element of actor interaction which plays such an important part in the action of norms. Debates analysed will focus on the issue of enlargement and the case of Turkish accession, but not to the exclusion of other debates involving and invoking issues of identity. In practice this will cover an array of topics, reflecting the broad spread of issues which relate to the issues of Turkish accession. Cognizant of the dynamic nature of identity, analysis will focus on contemporary documents and debates in understanding contemporary identity.

The focus of the interviews and questionnaire will be identity in the European Parliament, how this relates to broader European identity, and the issue of Turkish accession to membership of the EU. As indicated in the previous chapter, Turkey has been chosen as the case study for this research due to the potential for this area to highlight different facets of identity. The issue of enlargement of the EU will challenge the established European identity, so it is an issue which is likely to see this identity invoked and debated. The issue of Turkish accession is a long-standing one within the EU and a good deal of documentation has been produced by the bodies of the EU, I will examine these historical data to improve my analysis and to help me achieve valid conclusions. Although, as indicated above, the dynamic nature of identity necessitates an analysis of contemporary sources, I believe that it is also important to place this debate within its historical context. The length and intricacy of the historic relationship between Turkey and the EU makes a thorough investigation of this matter infeasible in this thesis, but I believe that an understanding of attitudes from within the EU towards Turkey will be beneficial to the analysis. For this reason I intend to look at the attitudes of EU actors towards Turkey, particularly in the years preceding the acceptance of Turkey as a candidate for membership. This will be achieved by examining and analysing documents and reports relating to the Turkish application for membership of the EU, and will provide an historical basis for analysis of contemporary identity.

Although it is not possible to validate the opinions of actors within the European Parliament through the use of other sources, I believe that an approach which combines documentary evidence from within the EP and primary data collected from actors will provide me a broad spectrum of views, and from different contexts. This will provide me with a greater variety and depth of data, as well as ensuring the accuracy of data.

Alongside the issue of European identity lies the issue of Turkish identity, and this will also prove important to a social constructivist reading of Turkey's application to join the EU. The degree to which Turkey's membership bid will challenge the established European identity is to a large degree dependent upon how compatible the Turkish identity is with the European identity, and perhaps more importantly, how compatible it is seen to be. An analysis of Turkish identity is beyond the remit of this thesis and would, arguably, add little to an understanding of identity in the European Parliament. I do believe, however, that an examination of how Turkish identity is viewed by those

within the European Parliament would be beneficial to understanding identity in the EP. The concept of the “Other” is an important one in understanding identity, and areas where similarity and difference between European identity and Turkish identity are highlighted will be indicative of the European identity experienced. Alongside this, I hope to assess how much importance the Turkish government and negotiators place on issues of identity within the membership bid, as the effect of identity on the negotiation process will provide further evidence of the strength of that identity. This data collection will also be conducted through the examination of documentary evidence relating to the negotiation procedure, and the statements of those involved.

Once I have looked at the nature of European identity within the European Parliament, I intend to research how this identity is expressed in relation to Turkish accession. I believe a great deal can be learnt regarding identity in the European Parliament by looking at the attitudes and interests of actors within the EP with regards to Turkey. Although I believe that it may be possible to establish the existence of European level norms without employing the case study of Turkish accession, the real strength of this case study will be in accessing the degree to which European level norms influence the identities and interests within the European Parliament. Through an analysis of European Parliament debates (focussing on those relating to enlargement and Turkish accession), semi-structured interviews and questionnaires, I aim to gain an understanding of which norms of European identity are experienced and expressed within the European Parliament, and how these normative factors interact with factors more associated with rationalist approaches.

Important to the view of identity and interest I have laid out is their ideational nature and their ability to change. I therefore intend to investigate the possible effect of the debate over Turkish accession on European identity. With the view of identity as in process rather than static, I believe that there is the possibility for the debate over Turkish accession to clarify and change the normative structures and processes within the European Parliament and, as a result, the European identity itself. This analysis will be carried out using the data collected in interviews in conjunction with official publications of the EU and statements made by the actors involved.

Although my research focuses on the nature and strength of European identity, viewed

through the lens of the debate over Turkish accession, I believe that identity and normative arguments could play a role throughout EU policy making and decision making. An understanding of European identity as it stands, and the way in which it is shaped and moulded, will help to shed light on the ability of the EU to frame and direct the preferences of member states on contentious issues and create a coherent body of policy.

As outlined above, my research plan relies upon the use of semi-structured interviews. This is because I believe that the semi-structured interview, in conjunction with documentary analysis, will be the most appropriate technique for the collection of data from those I will be talking to. Where fully structured interviews, often employed within quantitative research, help researchers to focus on the key concepts of their study, and is seen to maximise the reliability and validity of measurement, a qualitative interview takes the form of 'a conversation with a purpose'.⁴³ What the qualitative interview lacks in specificity and exactitude, it makes up for in its flexibility. Because there is a less rigid format and less set content to the interview there is a greater possibility of discovering the point of view of the interviewee as they are allowed a greater degree of flexibility in their responses. The ability of the interviewee to set the agenda of the interview and, to a degree, decide what is talked about, allows the interviewer to focus on what the interviewee believes to be relevant and important rather than what the interviewer might think. I believe that this will be important in my research into identity, allowing the interviewee to express in their own way the factors which influence identity and how this identity in turn manifests itself, rather than being bound by a rigid interview structure along lines I conceive in advance. I believe that this will also be beneficial with the group from which my interviewees will be taken, with the members of the institutions of the EU more likely to be responsive to a conversational style of interviewing than the more mechanical form of structured interviews. Another result of the flexible interview technique is the ability to follow up answers given by interviewees and ask questions dependent on answers received. While this would be excluded in quantitative research as it would affect its standardised nature, this might allow me to explore areas which I had not considered before the interview or to adjust the emphasis of the interview to address more thoroughly issues which are

⁴³Kahn & Cannell, *The Dynamics of Interviewing*, John Wiley, New York, 1957. p.149. Quoted in Marshall, C. & Rossman, G, *Designing Qualitative Research*. SAGE, London, 1999.

raised by the interviewee. Although the data generated from structured interviews is easier to codify and analyse numerically, I believe that the employment of a less structured interview technique will allow me richer, more detailed data focusing on factors of an ideational nature, and allow me to study better the changing nature of European identity.

Despite the advantages associated with less structured interviews, outlined above, I do intend to have some degree of structure to the interviews. Unstructured interviews really do follow the model of a conversation, and would allow maximum flexibility, but I believe that a certain degree of structure is justified. As I have concepts and issues which I intend to address, as outlined above, I believe that a broad structure which will ensure that I address these concepts will be beneficial, while allowing me to follow up individual answers or themes as they arise in the interview. Through the employment of an 'interview guide', a list of topics I wish to cover,⁴⁴ I can ensure that all the pertinent points are covered while ensuring I retain the flexibility afforded by qualitative interviews. The interview guide can be found in Appendix A.

In order to take all possible data from interviews it will be necessary to record the events of the interview as accurately as possible. Ideally this will take the form of an audio recording of the conversation, but this must be done openly and, due to the wishes of the interviewee or circumstances, this may not always be possible. Whether it is possible to audio-record the conversation or not, it is important to make a record of everything which has been said, as well as how it is said and the order in which it is said. This will allow a greater insight into the thought process of the interviewee, which is important due to the ideational nature of the concepts being studied. If it is not possible to record the interview, or the interviewee does not wish me to, I will ask the interviewee if it is possible to take notes during the interview or, failing that, take notes of the discussion after the event. In all cases the wishes of the interviewee will be paramount, although due to the nature of my research interviewing élites within the European Parliament I would anticipate the majority of interviewees being happy for me to record the interview. Nevertheless, ensuring that all available data is taken from the interview will require competence in the use of recording equipment and note-taking, as

⁴⁴Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, p.321.

well as a high level of organisation.

Sample size is an important tool in ensuring the accuracy of gathered data and, despite the ideational nature of the concepts studied, I will need to ensure that my sample is large enough for the conclusions I draw to be significant. Although a lot of my questioning will be focused on personal opinions and attitudes, my research is intended to discover about social constructions, shared understandings and intersubjective meanings, and an appropriate sample size is important. Although size of sample is important, my sample will not be randomly selected, I intend to employ 'purposive sampling'.⁴⁵ The choice of interviewees will be strategic, those within the institutions of the EU who are involved in the area of study, Turkish accession, and the selection of interviewees is likely to follow a snowball model. A similar model will be followed if interviews with Turkish officials take place, selecting those involved in negotiations with the EU and those with a role in policy making in the area. The size of my sample will be limited by the strategic selection of interviewees and the percentage who are willing (and have the time) to be interviewed, but a minimum sample size of total respondents is suggested to lie somewhere between 20 and 60.⁴⁶ I do not believe, however, that it is necessary for me to interview this number of respondents for my data and conclusions to be valid. My programme of interviews will not be my sole source of data, being employed alongside an examination of documentary evidence. Although it is my hope to conduct a sizeable number of interviews, it will be possible for me to understand and represent the views of actors not included in this primary research, through reference to debates within the European Parliament.

It is important that my interviews are conducted in an ethical and open manner, as outlined earlier. A major factor in this is ensuring that I received informed consent from those participating in the interviews. I will ensure that every participant in the interviews fully understands the nature of my research and how the data from their interview will be utilised in my research. Along with this I will need to be mindful and respectful of the wishes of the interviewee with regards to recording of the interview, whether they are happy for audio recordings to be taken and whether there is anything they would prefer I didn't use in my analysis, that is how much of the data generated

⁴⁵Ibid, p.333.

⁴⁶Quoted in Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, p.335.

from the interview they are happy for me to use. It will also be necessary for me to ask the interviewee whether they are willing to let me attribute data to them by name, informing them that they have the option for all the data from the interview to be analysed and reported in an anonymous manner. Another facet of an ethical research agenda is the avoidance of all forms of deception. My questioning should be as clear as possible, without the employment of trick questions or attempts to induce the interviewee to say things which they do not wish to. It is also important that I should not deliberately misrepresent the views or responses of interviewees or misuse data collected in any way. If necessary this may involve asking for clarification from the interviewee, and this is another advantage of the semi-structured approach to interviews. The use of semi-structured interviews brings many strengths to my research programme, not least is the collection of large amounts of in-depth data in a relatively short period of time.⁴⁷ It will also allow me to gather data from those who might be unresponsive to questionnaires or rigidly structured interviews. The interviewing of EP élites will also provide me with access to extensive and valuable data which would not be available from other sources. There are, however, weaknesses and limitations to the semi-structured interview method. The technique relies on having access to those who are to be interviewed, in this case primarily MEPs. This can be a difficult prospect, as they will be under a great deal of time pressure, and may be difficult to gain access to. The amount of data gathered during an interview is also dependent upon the level of cooperation granted by the interviewee, so the volume of data gathered from each interview is not guaranteed. Alongside the question of interviewee cooperation is the information that they give. It may not be in the interviewees' interest to provide the interviewer with the information they require, indeed it may be in their interest to actively withhold information. Even the information provided should not be regarded as infallible, the interviewees may have reasons to provide information which is not entirely accurate and may, in fact, be untrue. While the subject of many of the questions within my interviews will be opinion, and some answers will be subjective, the nature of the concepts I am studying will require me to analyse responses alongside other sources such as European Parliament debates, which will play a similarly key role in the research. This will ensure that conclusions drawn are valid and defensible.

⁴⁷Marshall, C. & Rossman, G, *Designing Qualitative Research*. SAGE, London, 1999. pp.109-110.

While I believe the best method for me to gather deep and rich data to analyse concerning individual identity is through use of semi-structured interviews, I intend to complement this approach with the use of a questionnaire, a set of questions which will be sent to potential respondents to be self-administered (see Appendix B). One of the major weaknesses of the semi-structured interview approach is the high cost of data collection, and the large investment of time in each interview. These facts, combined with the unwillingness of some subjects to be interviewed, will serve to reduce my sample size, and I intend to use a questionnaire to help negate these effects. Through the use of a questionnaire I believe I can have a larger sample size than would be possible using only semi-structured interviews, reaching those I wish to talk to who are unwilling or unable to speak to me in person. If I have problems arranging meetings with individuals it may be possible to send them a questionnaire for them to fill in in their own time. A questionnaire will also allow me increase my sample size, as sending questionnaires to potential respondents requires a smaller investment of time than interviews. Although the data generated from completed questionnaires is likely to be less deep and rich than the data collected through interview, the greater quantity of data will be useful for my analysis. One perceived weakness of the questionnaire is the inability of the researcher to clarify any misunderstandings or to follow up pertinent points.⁴⁸ While this will be a weakness of the questionnaire, if important points are raised but not fully covered it might be possible to follow them up outside the format of the questionnaire. This could also help to improve the focus of my interviews.

As is the case with interviews, an understanding of the concepts of reliability and validity is important in questionnaire design. A questionnaire which produces reliable data is one which would prompt the respondent to give the same answers each time they would (hypothetically) take the questionnaire.⁴⁹ While not all factors are within the researcher's control, such as the state of mind of the respondent, it is important that questions are easy to understand and that the way of answering them remains consistent and is well explained, as this will increase the reliability of the data. The validity of questionnaire responses is a multi-faceted issue, but can be largely thought of as whether the data collected represents what the researcher believes it represents. This is

⁴⁸ Oppenheim, A.M., *Questionnaire Design, Interviewing and Attitude Measurement*. Continuum, London, 1992. p.102.

⁴⁹ Punch, K.F., *Survey Research: the basics*. SAGE, London, 2003. p.42.

an important concept to bear in mind while designing a questionnaire, as validity will be maximised by ensuring that the questions asked and, by extension, the answers received, are addressing the desired issues and variables. Even where questionnaire design is mindful of issues of validity, problems can be raised by the possibility of dishonest or incomplete answers.

Alongside the validity of individual questionnaire responses is the issue of the validity of generalisations drawn from the data. This is tied into the questionnaire response rate, the percentage of completed questionnaires returned. For a mailed questionnaire response rates of 30-40% are not uncommon,⁵⁰ although I would anticipate my response rate being slightly higher. I will have had previous contact with those to whom the questionnaire is sent, and all recipients will have a high level of interest in the subject of the questionnaire. The problems generated by a low response rate are not ones of numbers, as indicated earlier it is possible to send many questionnaires out, and 30% could still constitute a sizeable sample. The problems come from the potential for bias in the data generated. The recipients of the questionnaire who choose not to complete and return it are very unlikely to represent a random sample of the overall recipients. Those who feel strongly about the issues addressed in the questionnaire are more likely to respond than those who have little or no interest in the subject. For this reason it is important for a researcher to maximise response rate, while being aware of the effect a low response rate will have on the validity of any generalisations to the population of any generated data. I will attempt to maximise my response rate by targeting recipients who will be interested in the subject of the questionnaire, having contact with the recipients prior to sending a questionnaire, and ensuring that the questionnaire is clearly explained, well set out, professional looking and of an appropriate length. The frame of mind of the respondent and their attitude to the questionnaire can have a profound effect on the data gathered, and indeed whether the questionnaire is completed at all. This is, of course, a difficult variable for the researcher to control, but a potential respondent is more likely to look favourably on a questionnaire when the approach is inviting and professional; when the questionnaire itself looks professional and clear, and when it is demonstrated that all ethical considerations have been taken into account.⁵¹ I intend to contact all potential respondents, generally by e-mail, asking for their participation in

⁵⁰ Punch, *Survey Research*, p.42.

⁵¹ Ibid.

my research before sending them a questionnaire, not sending any out to those who have not agreed to complete one. With the questionnaire I will send a cover letter outlining the use the data will be put to, reiterating the anonymous analysis of questionnaire data and outlining my ethical research programme. In this way I hope to maximise questionnaire completion and aim to get accurate, reliable data.

Vital to generating reliable, valid data is a well designed questionnaire. The phrasing of questions can have a profound effect on the answers received. Even with apparently open questions, it is possible to alter the answers received through the phrasing and tone of the question.⁵² For this reason it is important that questions are phrased in a neutral manner to avoid influencing responses. There is also some evidence⁵³ that the order of questions can influence answers, with the possibility of preceding questions altering a respondent's attitudes to, or interpretation of, a question. While this is a difficult issue to remove entirely, it is one of which a questionnaire designer needs an awareness. Although these issues can affect reliability and validity, a well designed questionnaire can reduce these problems and the questionnaire has the advantage that there is no possibility of interviewer bias.

Schuman and Presser⁵⁴ assert that social surveys are generally based on closed, fixed-choice questions, but when designing a questionnaire it is important to understand the strengths and weaknesses of each question type. There are many benefits to the closed question format: they provide the most efficient method of asking questions with a finite number of possible responses; they are easier to analyse and evaluate, as they afford some degree of uniformity of response; there is less need for interpretation by the questioner; and they require less effort on the part of the responder, with the possibility of increasing response rate. Despite these advantages, if the number of ways the individual can respond is finite while there are an infinite number of possible answers, it may restrict possible responses and bias data. This can also have the effect of inadvertently misleading or frustrating the respondent. Open questions provide a greater degree of flexibility to the respondent, allowing them to answer however they like. By allowing the respondent to identify their own answer it is possible that some answers

⁵² Schuman, H., & Presser, S. *Questions & Answers in Attitude Surveys: Experiments on Question Form, Wording, And Context*. SAGE, London, 1996. p.276.

⁵³ Ibid., p.23.

⁵⁴ Schuman & Presser, *Questions & Answers in Attitude Surveys*, p.79.

will emerge which the designer of the questionnaire had not considered. This also precludes the possibility of the available answers influencing the respondent's answer. This advantage, however, requires the appropriate phrasing of the question, as a poorly phrased open question is still capable of biasing the response. I believe that the nature of the issues I am aiming to address is such that a mixture of open and closed questions will be the most appropriate technique for data collection. The questionnaire will require some questions which can be addressed by closed questions, such as the strength of certain feelings and values, for example how strongly a European identity is felt by the respondent. In other situations, however, open questions will be more appropriate, such as asking for the factors which contribute to this identity. When asking this question it is important to allow as much flexibility as possible in the answer, as order of answer could be as important as the answers themselves.

There are two forms of closed questions which are typically employed by questionnaires, those which allow dichotomous response, and those which allow continuous responses. Dichotomous questions allow two fixed responses (eg. yes/no or male/female), whereas continuous responses generally take the form of rating scales (eg. how strongly the respondent agrees with a statement). Continuous response questions allow for more data, and a greater depth of data, resulting in better analysis, and will be useful for measuring attitudes as I intend to do in my questionnaire. I will use dichotomous questions only for basic factual information. For a question which elicits continuous response to be useful it must be phrased so that an appropriate scale can be used, and the scale must be 'straightforward and stable'⁵⁵ to produce reliable and valid data.

To ensure that my research is conducted in an ethical manner there are a number of issues with questionnaire research which I need to take into account in the design of my questionnaire. While interviewees will have the option for their responses to be anonymised, all data generated from questionnaires will be anonymised before being analysed and presented, and kept in a confidential manner. At the beginning of the questionnaire I will state, in writing, that the data will be anonymised, as well as stating the nature and purpose of my research. I will also make clear the voluntary nature of the

⁵⁵Punch, *Survey Research*, p.57.

questionnaire and the ability of the participant to withdraw from the research. These issues will be addressed in the initial e-mail contact and in the cover letter accompanying the questionnaire.

The analysis of documents, many coming from the EU itself, will allow me to add context and depth to my analysis of interview and questionnaire data. The body of literature created by the EU is extensive, and documents are produced detailing the day to day activity of the institutions of the EU and covering negotiations and decision making procedures. Unlike interviewing, document analysis is entirely unobtrusive and can convey rich data of the values and beliefs of the participants within the context.⁵⁶ Many of the official documents of the EU which I will be studying will be produced, at least in part, by the subjects of my interviews, so the data will be used to corroborate the findings of my interview programme. Where it is not possible to interview members of the EU institutions or the Turkish government, and I am unable to generate data through questionnaires, it may be possible to find documents which they have had a hand in creating, and this could provide an insight into attitudes and beliefs. One area in which document analysis could provide information unavailable through interview is in examining arguments used within the context of the European Parliament itself, and could provide a better overview of the subject than the highly specialised data provided by interviews. These documents will prove particularly important in understanding the European Parliament, a key focus of my research, as many of the documents will be generated within the EP itself. In this way documentary evidence will help me to analyse the impact of the Parliament in European identity, as well as analysing the behaviour of actors in context – an important factor in the application of norms. In this way I will be able to study norms and argumentation in action which is not possible from interviews and questionnaire responses from individual actors. Particularly useful in this regard will be transcripts of meetings and debates within the institutions where this argumentation is likely to be pronounced, but I will also look at press releases and statements by those within the institutions of the EU as this will corroborate other evidence concerning the presence or absence of norms and identity. I will also look at other sources such as eurobarometer, which will be less use in understanding the identity of the élites I am studying, but will provide an interesting and useful point of

56 Marshall & Rossman, *'Designing Qualitative Research'*, p.116.

comparison in establishing the effect the institutions have on the identity of those actors within them.

As I have indicated, one of the real strengths of an analysis of sources other than personal interviews and questionnaires is the ability to analyse the arguments and behaviours of actors within the context I am studying, rather than removed from that in an interview environment. For this purpose, verbatim transcripts of European Parliament debates will prove an invaluable source of data. Unlike corporate press releases, the statements made within debates are the personal contributions of MEPs and are a very valuable indication of the identities of those actors, the norms acting on them and their understanding of “appropriate” behaviour. Where the interviews afford me the possibility of guiding conversations and exploring specific areas with actors, analysis of debates will afford me greater insight into the outworking of identity in context. For this reason it is my intention that neither data source be used merely to corroborate or triangulate data gathered elsewhere, but each will play an important role in the empirical research programme.

The official documents I will be looking at are published by the EU and the Turkish government and are freely available, but it is still important to be mindful of the context in which the documents were created. I am unlikely to be using any documents of a sensitive or private nature, but these documents should be used sensitively and within the bounds of the permission granted by the writer or owner. The use of documentary analysis, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires will allow me to build up as complete a picture as possible of the nature and strength of identity within the European Parliament, the role of the EP itself, and the factors which influence and change norms and identity.

My research is grounded in the ontological and epistemological assumptions which underpin social constructivism, and it is important that my research strategy reflects these viewpoints. In this chapter I have outlined the importance of a qualitative approach to research in understanding the concepts which I am investigating - identity, interest and preference – which are ideational in nature and are not static, but in process. For this reason, I believe that a quantitative research method would be unsuited to studying these concepts, and I believe the best and most appropriate approach to

studying identity within the European Parliament, and the way this identity is expressed in relation to the Turkish membership, is through the employment of a qualitative research strategy, making use of semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and document analysis.

This chapter has outlined the multi-faceted approach to research I intend to employ, which is informed and shaped by both the issues to be studied and the social constructivist theory which underpins the research. This method will provide me with valid, useful and coherent data which can be used to answer the research questions outlined earlier. In this way I will be able to produce meaningful analysis within a social constructivist theoretical framework which is commensurable with data generated by those adhering to competing theories.

Identity in the European Parliament

The starting point for my empirical research is gaining an understanding of the identity of actors within the European Parliament and elucidating the norms which underpin that identity. In this chapter I will address the first two research questions set out earlier in this thesis – whether it is useful to talk of a European identity within the European Parliament; what form this identity might take and, if an identity is found to be present, I will start to look at how this identity interacts with other, pre-existing identities and norms. In this chapter I aim to gain an understanding of the identity of actors within the European Parliament which will form an important basis for later analysis of the role of the Parliament itself and the strength of normative factors in actor behaviour within the EP.

As I have indicated in the preceding chapters, the identity of actors within the EP will be unique to those actors due to the effect the Parliament itself has on norms and actor identity. Despite the unique nature of identity within the European Parliament I believe that this identity needs to be set in its appropriate historical context, and will be based on many of the same norms as other identities, such as a broader European identity, so highlighting similarities and differences will form an important element of my analysis. In this way I will be able to draw out the norms which shape identity within the European Parliament and identify where these norms originate. The presence of a European identity formed my first research question, as well as underpinning the later questions, and as such it was the starting point for my documentary research, and the way I began my interviews and questionnaires.

When asked whether there is a European identity all but one interviewee, eleven out of twelve, responded that there is a European identity, although what this actually amounted to varied greatly, and all but one questionnaire respondent, two out of three, agreed. Of those who did not agree that a European identity existed, neither stated that there was no commonality within the institutions of the EU. While Martin Callanan MEP stated that he did not believe that a European identity existed he did suggest that there are those in the European Parliament who would express a European identity,¹ and

¹ Callanan, Martin (MEP). Personal interview (12th October 2009).

this perception was certainly echoed by evidence from debates within the Parliament. The questionnaire respondent who does not believe in a European identity pointed out that there was a common feeling within the European Parliament that was based on the work being done, ‘shared goals, shared physical space, shared facilities, shared socialising’ rather than on identity.

Although two responding MEPs argued against the presence of European identity there are many more who believe that such a thing does exist. This is reinforced by numerous references to European identity within the European Parliament itself², as expressed by Italian MEP Debora Serracchiani who points to ‘the gelling of a European identity that is able to express the common values of our new Europe while incorporating, rather than glossing over, the individualities of its many occupants’.³ Although a neo-utilitarian understanding of the international system points to states as the actors within the system, MEPs play a clear role in the international politics of Europe. This acknowledgement of the existence of European identity amongst MEPs points to a more complex and nuanced view of identity, interest and decision making than traditionally favoured by neo-utilitarian theorists of International Relations, that of exogenously given identity, and this view of identity will be explored throughout this analysis. The former President of the European Parliament Hans-Gert Pöttering summed up his views on European identity, and those of social constructivists; ‘European identity relies on strong and intangible values and norms’.⁴

Despite the broad agreement on the fundamental presence of European identity, each respondent has differing suggestions as to the nature and source of the identity, and I will investigate these issues. There is also disagreement as to the relationship between European identity and the European Parliament. Although I will look in detail at the role of the European Parliament itself in the next chapter, it is important to appreciate the view of actors themselves concerning the relationship between European wide norms, EU specific norms and actor identity.

² See, for example, Traian Ungureanu MEP during EP ‘European Neighbourhood Policy debate’ 13.12.11; Ernst Strasser MEP, Francisco José Millán Mon MEP, Mirosław Piotrowski MEP during ‘Situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion (debate)’ 19.01.2011. European identity is also referenced many times in EP ‘Explanations of vote’.

³ Statement during the European Parliament ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’ 10.02.2010

⁴ Pöttering, Hans-Gert, MEP + former EP President (Personal correspondence).

The Nature of European Identity

There is not universal agreement about the relationship between the EU and European identity, even though for some people the terms ‘Europe’ and ‘European Union’ are used interchangeably. ‘Europe can no longer be seen as a great pool of financial resources for resolving economic, social and infrastructural problems but as an institution to which everyone must offer an original contribution in order to establish a policy built on shared values’.⁵ Here Europe is used to refer to the institutions of the European Union and to shared European values. Indeed in conversation regarding enlargement of the EU, Philip Claeys MEP suggests that ‘Europe should remain European’⁶, a tautology unless the term “Europe” is used to refer to the European Union, and this further conflates the concepts of Europe and the EU. Indeed Bahar Rumelili argues that ‘the EU discourse currently constitutes the EU not as one among several institutions that make up the broader European international society, but as *the* defining institution of European identity, norms, and values’⁷. This association between European and EU identity was echoed by those respondents who believe that a European identity exists, the majority of whom pointed to this link and suggested that shared European norms are also the norms of the European Union. Although some respondents suggest that some norms on which European identity is based are equally applicable to other countries such as the United States and Australia⁸ a large majority believe that the European identity is felt within the institutions of the European institutions. Godfrey Bloom⁹ also questions whether someone from an EU member state would feel any more ‘European’ than someone from Switzerland which is a valid question but one which is beyond the scope of this research. I believe that MEPs will be subject to European norms and placed in an environment where these norms are expressed and debated. Due to this widespread acceptance of a European identity within the European Parliament, I will look at the nature of this identity as it is felt by those within the institutions before examining the role of institutions in European identity in the next chapter.

⁵ Pöttering, Hans-Gert, MEP + former EP President (Personal correspondence).

⁶ Philip Claeys MEP, ‘Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)’ 28.03.2012

⁷ Rumelili, B ‘Turkey: Identity, Foreign Policy, and Socialization in a Post-Enlargement Europe’ *Journal of European Integration* 33:2, pp.235-249.

⁸ Purvis, John (former MEP). Personal interview (21st October 2009)

⁹ Bloom, Godfrey (MEP). Personal interview (4th February 2010)

‘[T]he idea that the central values of Europe – democracy, human rights, solidarity – should encompass all the states of Europe has been, and will remain, at the heart of Europe’s identity’.¹⁰ From the very beginning of European integration there has been a normative underpinning to the process and the values on which the European Union¹¹ are based are stated clearly in the preamble to the Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community.¹² The preamble states that ‘the six’ are ‘[d]etermined to lay the foundations for an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe’ and that they will ‘engage in common action to eliminate barriers which divide Europe’, ‘pooling their resources to preserve and strengthen peace and liberty’.¹³ These founding values of the EU are concisely stated in Title I Article 2 of the Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union:

The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.¹⁴

Article 3 goes on to state that:

The Union’s aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples.

In its relations with the wider world, the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. It shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child, as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law¹⁵

Although there is no explicit mention of identity within the Treaties of the EU,

¹⁰ György Schöpflin MEP, ‘Enlargement strategy 2009’ debate.

¹¹ I use European Union to refer to the various bodies which subsequently became the European Union.

¹² ‘Treaty of Rome’, Signed 25.03.57

¹³ Preamble, ‘Treaty Establishing the European Community: as amended by Subsequent Treaties’.
[hri.org/docs/Rome57/Preamble.html]

¹⁴ Consolidated version of the TEU

[eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0013:0045:EN:PDF]

¹⁵ Ibid.

references to this ‘founding ideology’ occur regularly and prominently and the evidence of subsequent documents of the EU suggests that, to echo Schöpflin, these values and the associated norms remain at the heart of European identity. Within the ‘Declaration on the Future of the European Union’¹⁶ Europe is painted as

The continent of humane values, the Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, the French Revolution and the fall of the Berlin Wall; the continent of liberty, solidarity and above all diversity...The European Union’s one boundary is democracy and human rights. The Union is open only to countries which uphold basic values such as free elections, respect for minorities and respect for the rule of law.

These values and norms provide a sound base for identity within Europe, but they were originally set down by the six founding members of the European Union over 50 years ago when war within Europe was a recent memory and the Cold War a reality. Given the context of the creation of the EU it is little surprise that peace and security were stated as two of the overriding priorities of the fledgling integration process. What is less clear is whether this founding ideology remains relevant to a modern European Union of 27 members in which the Second World War is a distant memory and the Cold War also in the past.

Unlike many of the more established theories of International Relations, social constructivism does not view identity as fixed, allowing for the possibility of identity change. While identity is grounded in norms which are, by necessity, relatively stable, the change in context and situation would result in an evolving identity rather than making the founding ideology obsolete. ‘Europe is on its way to becoming one big family, without bloodshed, a real transformation clearly calling for a different approach from fifty years ago, when six countries first took the lead’.¹⁷ If the social constructivist approach to identity formation and change is true I would expect to see a changing European identity in the modern EU.

When asked whether European identity is changing, there was unanimous agreement amongst respondents who believe in European identity that the identity is dynamic. In

¹⁶ ‘Laeken Declaration’ 15.12.2001, produced after the European Council meeting in Laeken.

¹⁷ Ibid.

line with the social constructivist view of identity Hans-Gert Pöttering and Bill Newton-Dunn¹⁸ point to strong norms and values which underpin European identity while emphasising the dynamic nature of the identity itself. Although I will investigate in detail the effect of the European Parliament on European identity, I believe that it is clear from the empirical research conducted that European identity within the European Parliament has changed since the creation of the EU. John Purvis, who was an MEP from 1979 to 1984 and again from 1999 until 2009, stated that the identity had changed noticeably during his time in the Parliament with the founding values of the European Union becoming stronger and more important. I believe that this effect can be anticipated within a social constructivist framework of identity with the years of social interaction and normative debate which has occurred in the European Parliament. Fiona Hall points to the specific effect on European identity of Eastward expansion, with an increased sensitivity to what is happening in Russia.¹⁹ Although there is a rationalist explanation for greater awareness of one's new neighbour than when one didn't share a border with it, Fiona Hall points to a 'visceral fear' of Russia amongst the Eastern European member states of the EU and bringing these states into the normative debate of the European Parliament will have a socialising effect on these norms. The social constructivist concept of the dynamic nature of identity, and the evidence of my respondents leads me to conclude that an investigation of the founding ideology of the EU, while useful for establishing the presence of certain European norms, is insufficient to provide a comprehensive view of European identity as it currently stands. I will continue my analysis of European identity by investigating its current state, while aware that this identity is also subject to change and evolution. I believe that identity as it stands will be vital to understanding actor preference and behaviour within the European Parliament, but it will not remain static any more than did the founding ideology.

In his hearing in front of the European Parliament on the 12th January 2010, Commissioner-designate Füle (now Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy) stated that:

The Europe I believe in is built on shared values: a clear commitment to democracy,

¹⁸ Newton Dunn, Bill (MEP). Personal Interview (9th March 2010)

¹⁹ Hall, Fiona (MEP). Personal interview (16th October 2009)

diversity and the rule of law; an economy that should provide opportunities and prosperity for all, and a general respect of the fundamental rights of its citizens. These are conditions for lasting peace and stability; stability at our borders is Europe's stability.

These are the basic values that all current Members of the Union share and respect every day. I will work with all the partner countries willing and able to fully implement these values and to actively promote them.²⁰

Commissioner Füle indicates that the values present in the founding ideology are still important, and indeed he has subsequently reasserted this importance in his new role. Commissioner Füle subsequently stated that 'our shared values of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights will be at the heart of the revised Neighbourhood Policy'²¹. This view is supported by the evidence of my primary research, with both questionnaire respondents who believe in a European identity ranking democracy as a 'vital' component of that identity, and this is echoed by some interviewees. Alongside this stands Eurobarometer research into public opinion in which members of the public in EU member states rated democracy as the joint most important value representing the EU (along with human rights).²² In the same poll, Turks ranked the importance of democracy as an EU value significantly lower. The importance of democracy within European identity is highlighted by Bill Newton-Dunn who stated that 'it's a *sine qua non*. If you're not democratic you're not even in the Union...if you want to join our particular family then you've got to be democratic',²³ and this appears to be the assumption which underpins many debates with the European Parliament. Debates concerning enlargement are littered with references to the requirement for democracy amongst member states, 'there is no question of a compromise in this area'.²⁴ This requirement led to a 'Democratisation in Turkey' debate within the European Parliament, 'a matter directly related to the Union...bearing in mind that Turkey is a

²⁰ Füle, Š., *Verbatim Report of Hearing* 12.01.2010

[<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/hearings/static/commissioners/cre/fule.pdf>]

²¹ Štefan Füle speaking in the EP during 'Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy - Eastern Dimension - Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy - Southern Dimension (debate)' 06.04.2011.

²² Eurobarometer 66: Public Opinion in the European Union [ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb66/eb66_en.pdf], p.28.

²³ Newton Dunn, Bill (MEP). Personal interview (9th March 2010)

²⁴ Elmar Brok MEP, 'Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)'.

candidate country'²⁵ which saw Turkey criticised for the role of the military in the political process²⁶ and for the treatment of opposition politicians.²⁷ 'Turkey has turned into a graveyard for political parties. Thirteen parties have been buried by Supreme Court judgements. Recently the DTP was banned; 200 party members, nine mayors, six former mayors and two former party leaders are in jail'.²⁸ 'Turkey holds elections but it is not a democracy in the accepted Western sense'.²⁹ While this statement sets out the separation of Turkey from one of the fundamental principles of the EU it also suggests that the form of democracy practiced in the EU is based on particular Western norms, perhaps European in origin. This highlights the importance of norms of democracy which go beyond the implementation of the system of government itself. The form of democracy practiced within Europe has created norms which have become embedded within actors and influence identity.

Alongside the norms of democracy are those of human rights and minority rights, '[t]he litmus test of any civilisation is not how it treats its majority, but how it treats the minorities that make up that majority'.³⁰ It is not just public opinion which places human rights on a par with democracy in importance, it is also rated as a 'vital' component of European identity by those questionnaire respondents who believe a European identity exists. It has been argued within the European Parliament that the issue of human rights 'is a symbol of European identity',³¹ and that '[t]he defence of fundamental human rights forms the basis of our Union's principles and values'.³² Despite this agreement, there is not unanimity amongst respondents with one suggesting that although there is a stronger commitment to human rights now 'torture was the normal means of working out justice in the 16th-17th Century [and] slavery went on until the mid-19th Century',³³ while another suggested that human rights were an important

²⁵ Diego Lopez Garrido, President-in-Office of the Council at the time of the debate, European Parliament 'Democratisation in Turkey (debate)', 20.01.2010.

²⁶ Eg. Charles Tannock MEP.

²⁷ Eg. Jürgen Klute MEP.

²⁸ Takis Hadjigeorgiou MEP, 'Democratisation in Turkey (debate)'.

²⁹ Gerard Batten MEP, 'Democratisation in Turkey (debate)'.

³⁰ Michael Cashman MEP, '2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)'

³¹ Izaskun Bilbao Barandica MEP, 'EU accession to the European convention on Human Rights (debate)' 19.04.2012.

³² Mariya Nedelcheva MEP, 'EU accession to the European convention on Human Rights (debate)'

³³ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

element of European identity without any direct link to the European Union.³⁴ Despite these arguments there does seem to be a broad consensus that norms of human rights do have an important role to play in the constitution of European identity, and the broader applicability of human rights norms does not make them any weaker in the constitution of European identity. Marie-Christine Vergiat asserts that ‘there are quite a few of us in this assembly who believe that human rights are fundamental values, not only for the European Union and its citizens but also for humanity as a whole’.³⁵ This is born out in European Parliament debates relating to Turkey – ‘there are still restrictions on fundamental freedoms, human rights violations...and discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities – all of which are problems that Europe clearly cannot ignore’.³⁶ ‘For the good of Turkish society, democracy needs to be pluralist, secular and built on a bed-rock of respect for human rights, including those of its Kurdish minorities’.³⁷ The central importance of human rights within the European Parliament is demonstrated by the assertion in the chamber that, despite the words of Commissioner Füle, ‘the European Neighbourhood Policy is wrong to tolerate thirteen countries which have failed to either sign or to ratify the UN Protocol against Torture’ before going on to single out the United Kingdom ‘which has shamefully obstructed EU ratification of the EU Convention on Human Rights’.³⁸ Indeed, it could be argued that the importance of human rights is demonstrated by the mere existence of the annual debate in which these words were spoken, the ‘Human rights in the world and the European Union’s policy on the matter (debate)’.

A third pillar of the founding identity which is still relevant today is the rule of law. Rule of law was, once again, rated as vital to European identity by questionnaire respondents who professed belief in European identity, and was rated the fourth most important value of the EU by members of the public.³⁹ Within European Parliament debates, and those regarding enlargement in particular, the principal of *pacta sunt servanda* is mentioned often and, while candidate countries are expected to live up to

³⁴ Bloom, Godfrey (MEP). Personal interview (4th February 2010).

³⁵ Marie-Christine Vergiat MEP, ‘EU accession to the European convention on Human Rights (debate)’

³⁶ Mara Bizzotto MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

³⁷ Charles Tannock MEP, ‘Democratisation in Turkey (debate)’.

³⁸ Richard Howitt MEP and EP human rights rapporteur ‘Human rights in the world and the European Union's policy on the matter (debate)’ 17.04.2012

³⁹ Eurobarometer 66 p.28.

their obligations this principal appears to be most stringently applied to the EU itself. ‘[B]oth sides...must meet their obligations and undertakings...*pacta sunt servanda* applies’,⁴⁰ ‘if we ask Turkey to comply with EU standards, we must make sure to meet those standards ourselves’.⁴¹ Similarly it is suggested that ‘the European Union’s credibility as regards its foreign policy is measured in terms of how well it keeps to its fundamental values, which are human rights, democracy, the principle of legality, and freedom of religion’⁴². ‘After all, the basis of European integration is the saying *pacta sunt servanda*; that is, agreements must be adhered to’.⁴³

These fundamental values of the European Union were set down as precursors to joining the EU in the ‘Copenhagen Criteria’ in 1993, and the Presidency conclusions from the Copenhagen European Council state that:

Membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.⁴⁴

These criteria for entry into the EU give pride of place to consideration of the values of the Union, before going on to refer to economic factors. Although there are normative forces present in these criteria it can be argued that their function is a rationalist one, as Monica Luisa Macovei pointed out ‘the Union’s objective has always been to export stability and not to import instability’.⁴⁵ The presence of a functioning, stable democratic system of government within a candidate country goes a long way to

⁴⁰ Wolfgang Kreissl-Dörfler MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

⁴¹ Sophia in ‘t Veld MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

⁴² Mitro Repo MEP, ‘Situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion (debate)’.

⁴³ Johannes Cornelis van Baalen MEP, ‘Iceland’s application for membership of the European Union (debate)’ 07.07.2010

⁴⁴ Presidency Conclusions: Copenhagen European Council 21-22 June 1993
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/ec/pdf/cop_en.pdf]

⁴⁵ Monica Luisa Macovei MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

securing the stability of the country once it becomes a member of the EU. If Turkey were to join the EU before members of the institutions were satisfied that the military would not be involved in the political system it could cast doubt on their ability to implement EU policy and legislation and spread instability and uncertainty throughout the EU. The compatibility of legal systems is also important in a country fully implementing the *acquis communautaire* before acceding to the EU and in its ability to remain harmonised with other member states. The rule of law is important not only for the citizens of member states (and candidate countries) but also goes some way to realising implementation of EU legislation at a national level. Interactions between member states will be more stable, and the states themselves will have more confidence in them, if all these factors are realised. In this vein Bill Newton Dunn puts European integration and cooperation down to ‘hard-headed reality, Europeans have to work together, so not sentiment or affection or feeling or anything, it’s we’ve got a great peace, we’ve got to learn to trade together, we’ve got to get our act together. It’s hard-headed reality in every case.’⁴⁶ While Mr. Newton Dunn expresses an ostensibly rationalist viewpoint of European integration I do not believe that it is incompatible with a social constructivist notion of identity which does not see actions guided by feelings but by norms which are, in many cases, subconscious. It is this concept of identity which can go some way towards explaining who the ‘Europeans’ are who must work together and why it is this grouping who cooperate.

Concepts of democracy, human rights and rule of law are frequently mentioned in the European Parliament, often within debates which are ostensibly far removed from these issues,⁴⁷ and they are often phrased in normatively rich ways. This is in part due to the arena in which the debates take place and the efforts to persuade other participants of an individual’s point of view, which will be looked at later in the analysis, but I believe that it is indicative of a normative basis to the concepts.

Turkey...must implement those reforms that are necessary to guarantee democracy, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights and the rights of minorities. In particular, cultural, religious and political pluralism are the foundations of a democratic society, but recognising them is a difficult process which is intertwined with historical, ethnic

⁴⁶ Newton Dunn, Bill. Personal interview (9th March 2010).

⁴⁷ Eg. ‘Third-country legislation and EU data protection laws (debate)’, 15.02.2012; ‘European Heritage Label (debate)’, 15.11.2011.

and religious considerations.⁴⁸

I believe that documentary data from the European Parliament, supported by the primary research I have undertaken, suggests that the values of democracy, rule of law and human rights provide a normative basis for a component of identity of some members of the European Parliament. As a result of these norms, the actions of those MEPs is influenced by the logic of appropriateness and the appropriate way to respond to the norms rather than sentiment, feeling or affection. I believe that this is suggested by Konrad Szymański's comment in the European Parliament that 'ideology and human rights do not mix',⁴⁹ an intriguing argument within an institution which counts human rights as a fundamental value. This suggests that norms of human rights have become such an integral and taken-for-granted part of European identity that they have become ubiquitous and are seen to transcend ideology. Within the same debate fellow MEP Jelko Kacin asserted that 'We will strengthen pro-European forces only if we adopt a realistic approach and behave appropriately...Let us be fair, let us be correct and let us be credible'.⁵⁰ Taking up this theme Jaroslav Paška asserted that 'we must act correctly and honourably and speak openly about all the problems'.⁵¹ Although the concepts of democracy, rule of law and human rights do have a rationalist underpinning within the EU my research has suggested that for some of the members of the European Parliament adherence to them also represents an appropriate way to act, to the extent that acting against them would be unthinkable. The presence of these norms throughout the history of the EU has, to use the terminology of Reus-Smit, limited the imagination of MEPs to exclude the possibility of actions which contravene them.

The stated aim of the EU at its inception, and another of its fundamental values, is peace. Establishing and maintaining peace was a difficult process at the inception of the EU in the years after the Second World War, the EU is comprised of states which 'hated each other for centuries and now...live happily together', 'you realize what a miracle it

⁴⁸ Barbara Matera MEP, 'Democratisation in Turkey (debate)'.

⁴⁹ Konrad Szymański MEP, '2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)'.

⁵⁰ Jelko Kacin MEP, '2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)'.

⁵¹ Jaroslav Paška MEP, '2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)'.

is'.⁵² Othmar Karas argues that peace is the primary goal of the European Union, 'the European Union...is a project that will integrate the continent, overcome the violent division of Europe, introduce peace, freedom and responsibility for one another instead of conflict',⁵³ and Mitro Repo describes the European Union as a "peace movement".⁵⁴ Similarly, peace is rated as vital to European identity by questionnaire respondents and as the third most important value representing the EU by the public in member states, narrowly behind human rights and democracy.⁵⁵ Turkey is seen by members of the European Parliament as not conforming to European standards of peace, 'persisting in its occupation of a large part of Cyprus',⁵⁶ 'with the *casus belli* in the Aegean',⁵⁷ threatening Greek frontiers. There is, of course, a clear rationale for those countries threatened to insist on a more peaceful outcome, and indeed these points are most often made by Greek and Cypriot MEPs. There is also a clear link between peace and international stability but again there is a normative link. There is a view amongst some MEPs that 'the project of bringing peace and progress to what was once a volatile part of Europe is set to continue'.⁵⁸ The link between peace and progress is an important one, indicating that there is a normative as well as rational motivation for seeking peace, and a component of European identity.

Linked to the founding ideology of the EU is the drive towards enlargement. Since its inception the EU has grown from 6 to 27 member states, with one acceding country and five more candidate countries. It is easy to see how early enlargement served the rationalist goals of improved European security and greater prosperity for member states with the expansion of the free trade area. It has, however, been called into question whether subsequent enlargements can be explained in rationalist terms. In his article 'The Community Trap: Liberal norms, rhetorical action, and the Eastern enlargement of the European Union' Frank Schimmelfennig argues that the enlargement in question could not be adequately explained by rational intergovernmentalist

⁵² Newton Dunn, Bill. Personal interview (9th March 2010).

⁵³ Othmar Karas MEP, 'Accession Treaty : Treaty concerning the accession of the Republic of Croatia - Application of Croatia to become a member of the European Union (debate)' 30.11.2011.

⁵⁴ Mitro Repo MEP, 'Situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion (debate)' 19.01.2011

⁵⁵ Eurobarometer 66, p.28.

⁵⁶ Charalampos Angourakis MEP, 'Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)'.

⁵⁷ Charalampos Angourakis MEP, '2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)'.

⁵⁸ Ivo Vajgl MEP, 'Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)'.

approaches to European integration.⁵⁹ While Schimmelfennig attributes this enlargement to rhetorical action, the deliberate use of normative arguments to entrap opponents, I intend to argue that identity plays an important role in enlargement, and indeed that norms to enlarge the EU form part of a European identity.

Although enlargement of the EU is not listed amongst the values of the Union, the founding ideology, in the Preamble to the Treaty of Rome the founding members of the EU call for ‘the other peoples of Europe who share their ideal to join in their efforts’.⁶⁰ While this does not set out a normative commitment to enlargement it does indicate that from the outset of the Union the conditions of membership have been ideological in nature, in tandem with the rationalist approach of the individual member states. The Preamble also states that the EU will engage in ‘common action to eliminate the barriers which divide Europe’⁶¹ and the Council of the European Union confirmed in 2002 that ‘The Union remains determined to avoid new dividing lines in Europe’.⁶² In the same document the Presidency of the European Council report that the ‘European Union and the acceding States agreed on a joint declaration “One Europe” on the continuous, inclusive and irreversible nature of the enlargement process’.⁶³ The phrasing of these statements suggests that there is a normative drive towards enlargement and that decisions on applications are not taken using a pure logic of consequentialism. This accords with the statements of a number of MEPs within European Parliament debates, and the suggestion that ‘we wish to renew, in principle, the commitment towards continuation of the process of European Union enlargement and towards enabling all the states of our continent to develop under the aegis of Union membership’.⁶⁴ MEP Cătălin Sorin Ivan highlights the normative basis of enlargement explicitly, arguing that ‘The EU is like a building under construction and therefore, the notion of halting its enlargement would run counter to the very principle it is based on.’⁶⁵

⁵⁹ Schimmelfennig, F., ‘The Community Trap: Liberal norms, rhetorical action, and the Eastern enlargement of the European Union’ *International Organization* 55:1 pp.47-80.

⁶⁰ Preamble, Treaty Establishing the European Community.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Council of the European Union, ‘Copenhagen European Council 12 and 13 December 2002: Presidency Conclusions’ Brussels, 29.01.2003.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ivo Vajgl MEP, ‘European integration process of Montenegro (debate)’ 08.03.2011.

⁶⁵ Cătălin Sorin Ivan MEP, ‘Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)’.

Although enlargement does not gain universal support,⁶⁶ ‘there is a strong commitment by the European Parliament to enlargement’.⁶⁷ Hans-Gert Pöttering points to the existence of a ‘European family’ existing of member states, but also other European states,⁶⁸ and this concept is taken up by Wojciech Michal Olejniczak who welcomes the Eastern European countries into the European family but warns that ‘the accession of these countries cannot be thought of as the end of European Union enlargement’.⁶⁹ The concept of a European family is one which is frequently mentioned in the European Parliament and, heightening the conflation of Europe and the EU, this is often used to refer to members of the European Union or those who should be accepted into membership.⁷⁰ Although the process of enlargement of the EU is a conditional one which requires political will on the part of the acceding country and of the EU, there appears to be a normative drive towards enlargement which is closely entwined with the EU’s founding ideology. ‘Enlargement has enabled the EU to bolster basic values such as democracy and human rights on our continent and put the conditions in place for the rule of law based on independent courts and legal authorities with a functioning market democracy – a stable and peaceful Europe’,⁷¹ and former MEP John Bowis, reflecting on Viscount Grey’s comments of the lights going out across Europe compared the Eastern enlargement of the EU to the lights finally coming back on for those states.⁷² Conversely, ‘When we close the door, we are running the risk of new problems and new threats to European values; we should underline the need to go forward together in order to achieve a better European enlargement based on the criteria we fully support’.⁷³ As this quotation confirms, the criteria for membership of the EU remain important, but I believe norms within the European Union, and specifically the European Parliament, result in the appropriate behaviour for the European Parliament to be looking towards enlargement. John Bowis conceded that ‘there’s a lot of pressure to enlarge further’.⁷⁴

⁶⁶ Eg. Barry Madlener MEP, see ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

⁶⁷ Ulrike Lunacek MEP, ‘Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)’.

⁶⁸ Pöttering, Hans-Gert, MEP + former EP President (Personal correspondence)

⁶⁹ Wojciech Michal Olejniczak MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

⁷⁰ Eg. Valdemar Tomaševski MEP, ‘Accession Treaty : Treaty concerning the accession of the Republic of Croatia - Application of Croatia to become a member of the European Union (debate)’ 30.11.2011; Marietta Giannakou MEP, ‘Explanations of vote’ 29.03.2012.

⁷¹ Ollie Schmidt MEP, ‘Democratisation in Turkey (debate)’.

⁷² Bowis, John. Personal interview (2nd September 2009).

⁷³ Gunnar Hökmark MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

⁷⁴ Bowis, John. Personal interview (2nd September 2009).

Article 49 of the TEU states that ‘Any European state which respects the values referred to in Article 2 [see earlier] and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the Union...The conditions of eligibility agreed upon by the European Council shall be taken into account’.⁷⁵ This means that any ‘European’ country which fulfils the Copenhagen Criteria is eligible for membership, although there is no specific mention of what constitutes a European country. Perhaps the most obvious condition for a European country is a geographical one, and indeed the argument for a geographical component was substantiated with the refusal of membership to Morocco in 1987. Along the same lines the geographical argument is, on occasion, used against Turkey. William, The Earl of Dartmouth, argued in the European Parliament that ‘only 3% of the land mass of Turkey is in the continent at all, and this proposition that Turkey should become a full member of the European Union is, on geographical grounds, completely bizarre’.⁷⁶ Similarly Magdi Cristiano Allam suggests that ‘If you consider Europe merely as a geographical entity, you should realise that Turkey is not Europe, given that 97% of Turkish territory is in Asia’,⁷⁷ and Hans-Gert Pöttering suggests that Turkey would ‘overburden the EU geographically’.⁷⁸ Despite these arguments there appears to be widespread acceptance that, with the opening of accession negotiations, Turkey was judged to be sufficiently geographically European, indeed Richard Corbett, former MEP and member of the Cabinet of the President of the European Council, argues that Turkey was accepted as European as far back as 1949 when she joined the Council of Europe.⁷⁹ Conversely Russia, which also bridges Europe and Asia, is not supported for membership.⁸⁰ Stretching the geographical argument to its extreme Silvio Berlusconi has stated that ‘we consider Israel one of the European countries’ and that ‘my greatest dream is to include Israel among the European nations’.⁸¹ While this is not official EU policy it is indicative of the ambiguity of the term European and that, for some at least, it is not purely a geographical criterion. Instead the borders of what is considered Europe are identity based, and this is an important distinction in the field of EU enlargement.

⁷⁵ Consolidated version of the TEU.

⁷⁶ William (The Earl of) Dartmouth MEP, ‘Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)’.

⁷⁷ Magdi Cristiano Allam MEP, ‘Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)’.

⁷⁸ Pöttering, Hans-Gert, MEP + former EP President (Personal correspondence).

⁷⁹ Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010).

⁸⁰ Newton Dunn, Bill. Personal interview (9th March 2010).

⁸¹ Silvio Berlusconi, Quoted in Rettman, A., ‘Berlusconi ‘dreams’ of Israel becoming an EU member’ *euobserver.com*, 02.01.10. Available at [<http://euobserver.com/?aid=29387>] (Accessed 02.01.10)

In describing Israel as a European country Berlusconi speaks of a ‘Judeo-Christian culture that is the basis for European culture’, a ‘Western civilisation’⁸² and this ‘civilisation’ is an important constituent of European identity. This basis for identity is echoed by Franz Obermayr, paraphrasing Theodor Heuss, who states that ‘Europe...is built on three hills: on the Acropolis for Greek humanism, on the Capitol in Rome for the concept of the European state and on Golgotha for the Christian Western world’.⁸³ This inclusion of a location in Jerusalem for the foundation of European identity again belies the geographical argument for the boundaries of the EU, but does bring in new elements of identity.

For many the values of the EU are inextricably tied to its culture and history. Indeed the preamble to the TEU states that the signatories of the treaty were ‘drawing inspiration from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law’.⁸⁴ Some respondents also point to a link between historical and cultural aspects of European identity and the founding ideology of the EU. Hans-Gert Pöttering suggested that the values of the EU are ‘the result of geographical, historical and cultural bonds’,⁸⁵ and other respondents point to classical Greece, the renaissance and the wars in Europe as shared historical factors which contribute to shared values. John Purvis pointed to the invention of democracy in 4th Century BC Greece, although he notes that ‘they haven’t always been very good exemplars of democracy in more recent times’, while going on to observe that ‘I think [European identity] is much more cultural and possibly religious’.⁸⁶ When looking at the possible accession of Turkey to EU membership Peter van Dalen remarked that ‘Turkey is not geographically part of Europe, nor is it part of European history, whose religious, cultural and political landscapes have been defined by Christianity, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the democratic nation state’.⁸⁷

An historical basis to identity recurs throughout many debates in the European Parliament, and culture came to the fore in a debate concerning the “European Heritage

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Franz Obermayr MEP, ‘Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)’.

⁸⁴ Preamble, consolidated version of the TEU.

⁸⁵ Pöttering, Hans-Gert, MEP + former EP President (Personal correspondence).

⁸⁶ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

⁸⁷ Peter van Dalen MEP, ‘Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)’.

Label”, a label for culturally and historically important sites.⁸⁸ Within the debate Marco Scurria asserts that ‘we are here because we believe in the European Union and we believe in certain values that the Union has established and has seen emerge. These values are the fruits of a common history created by so many individual components in our own nations, in our own cities and in our own lands, but which have then shaped a common civilisation, history, identity and tradition’.⁸⁹ This draws a clear link between the culture and history of Europe and the EU and European identity, and the importance of interaction, a key focus of social constructivist study, is also emphasised in looking at ‘a European heritage that transcends the history of each nation, reflecting the intense interaction and rich exchanges that have linked us for centuries’.⁹⁰ These themes were echoed in a number of the answers given by interviewees, with some suggesting that the cultural and historical basis to identity goes beyond the creation of shared values. Many of the respondents point to particular aspects of shared European culture. Godfrey Bloom highlights the architectural similarities between cathedrals throughout Europe suggesting that ‘[i]t’s difficult for that not to seep into the pores’ and pointing to a ‘cultural bond’.⁹¹ John Bowis points to ‘a feeling of the culture of Europe, which is literary, it’s music, it’s fashion, it’s all sorts of things’,⁹² while Richard Corbett speaks of ‘an awful lot of cultural overlap and affinity, and shared history’.⁹³

Despite these suggestions of shared culture the opinion is not held unanimously. Fiona Hall talks of the cultural diversity of the EU, particularly after the Eastern expansion, pointing instead to regional cultural similarities,⁹⁴ while Bill Newton Dunn points out that ‘we don’t say to the Turks or the Croatians or the Icelanders or anybody “do you like classical music?”’, we don’t say that at all’, going on to reiterate the criteria of equal rights, democracy, rule of law and the separation of powers.⁹⁵ Although this is a valid point I would suggest that the relationship between culture and identity is a more subtle and nuanced one than this suggestion would allow. The shared history and culture, amplified by the high level of interaction within the European Parliament, creates and

⁸⁸ ‘European Heritage Label (debate)’, 15.11.2011.

⁸⁹ Marco Scurria MEP, ‘European Heritage Label (debate)’

⁹⁰ Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid MEP, ‘European Heritage Label (debate)’

⁹¹ Bloom, Godfrey. Personal interview (4th February 2010).

⁹² Bowis, John. Personal interview (2nd September 2009).

⁹³ Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010).

⁹⁴ Hall, Fiona. Personal interview (16th October 2009).

⁹⁵ Newton Dunn, Bill. Personal interview (9th March 2010).

transmits norms of appropriate behaviour to MEPs and others within the EU, going some way to determining interests. The effect of these norms would be exerted subconsciously, so there would be no element of asking candidate countries how similar their culture was to a perceived European one.

In the case of Turkey, concerns relating to factors of culture have been raised in the European Parliament. Monika Flašíková Beňová argues that Turkey does face difficulty in relation to ‘differences compared to European culture, tradition and values’⁹⁶, while Barry Madlener goes as far as to claim that ‘a backward Islamic culture has no place in Europe’.⁹⁷ Interviewees point back to the fall of Constantinople in 1453⁹⁸ and ‘the Turks at the gate in the Ottoman days’⁹⁹ as being in the minds of people within Europe and ideas like these would cast Turkey in the role as the “Other” compared to a Europe with shared history and culture. This again does not go uncontested, with MEPs arguing that ‘Turkey’s historic affiliation with Europe is undeniable’¹⁰⁰ and that Turkey ‘took the first steps to adopting European values almost 100 years ago and, despite the various historical winds, it did not go off the road’.¹⁰¹ Richard Corbett points out that:

Turkey has been part of European history for 400 years or so, a large part of Southeastern Europe was part of Turkey, Istanbul is still Europe’s largest city. It’s been integrated into the European context from the Council of Europe to its charter of human rights which is a set of common values.

One of the most contentious issues within the field of European identity is religion. It is often mentioned that ‘[t]here is no religious yardstick to evaluate a candidate country’¹⁰² and that Article 49 of the TEU does not have religious criteria, and this is true but for the ambiguity of the term ‘European’. It is clear from my research that for some of those within the European Parliament religion has a role to play in European identity, indeed Barry Madlener’s comments above clearly demonstrate that religion is inseparable from identity in the minds of some. Although it appears to be a minority

⁹⁶ Monika Flašíková Beňová MEP, ‘2010 progress report on Turkey (debate)’, 08.03.2011.

⁹⁷ Barry Madlener MEP, ‘2010 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

⁹⁸ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

⁹⁹ Bowis, John. Personal interview (2nd February 2009).

¹⁰⁰ Pavel Poc MEP, ‘Democratisation in Turkey (debate)’.

¹⁰¹ Justas Vincas Palckis MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

¹⁰² Pavel Poc MEP, ‘Democratisation in Turkey (debate)’.

view, there are some within the European Parliament for whom Christianity still forms an important component to identity, for Mara Bizzotto, European ‘unity depends, above all else, on the spirit of Christianity’.¹⁰³ Mirosław Piotrowski argues that ‘Christianity was, and still is, a fundamental value of the European Union. Based on this value, the European Union was built by Christian democrats’,¹⁰⁴ while Simon Busuttil describes Europe as ‘the cradle of Christianity’.¹⁰⁵ Although this viewpoint is clearly present within the European Parliament it appears to be a minority one, Victor Boştinaru urges the European Parliament ‘not to let our prejudgement based on religion, ethnicity and clichés to speak’,¹⁰⁶ while Richard Howitt goes further, stating of those who oppose Turkish membership of the EU that ‘many of you are motivated by religious intolerance against Islam and seeking your own political advantage by deliberately creating false fears about immigration. These arguments are loathsome and repellent and so are you’.¹⁰⁷ This argument is echoed by a questionnaire respondent who talks of Islamophobia and suggests that Turkey has a very low chance of becoming a member of the EU due to prejudice against Muslims. While it is clear from these statements that a direct religious component of European identity is not a universally held view, it is undeniably present.

An alternative viewpoint is suggested by Richard Corbett who argues that far from being a religious base to identity, it is pluralism of religion and the separation of religion from state which is important in European identity. Similarly, Birgit Schnieber-Jastram expresses her ‘shock’ at religious arguments being employed against Turkey, suggesting that ‘Members have called into question the fundamental rights of the European Union, including the right to freedom of religion and of expression’.¹⁰⁸ From this viewpoint the fact that Turkey is a secular state would bring it towards European identity, but questions remain regarding Turkey’s commitment to religious pluralism. It is widely noted in the European Parliament that freedom of religion is restricted in Turkey and

¹⁰³ Mara Bizzotto MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

¹⁰⁴ Mirosław Piotrowski, Commissioner Designate Füle’s hearing before the EP.

¹⁰⁵ Simon Busuttil MEP, ‘Situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion (debate)’.

¹⁰⁶ Victor Boştinaru MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

¹⁰⁷ Richard Howitt MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

¹⁰⁸ Birgit Schnieber-Jastram MEP, ‘Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)’.

that rights for the Christian minority are restricted.¹⁰⁹ Tunne Kelam observes that ‘I could feel comfortable with Turkish accession when it is as easy to build a Christian church in Ankara as it is to erect a mosque in Brussels’.¹¹⁰ The importance of religion, religious practice and pluralism within the EU and European identity are keenly debated but it is clear that there is a role to play for religion in debates on identity and, at least for some, religious norms will have a role to play in decision making.

Although the degree to which religion directly influences European identity is debated and highly contentious there is more widespread support for a historical and cultural influence of religion on European identity. It is argued that ‘the European values of solidarity, subsidiarity and freedom are unthinkable without a foundation in Christianity and in the Judaeo-Christian understanding of religion’,¹¹¹ and that ‘Europeans today, as never before, need to draw on the traditions of our continent – Europe was built on Judaeo-Christian foundations, and these became, and were for centuries, the basis of the continent’s cultural strength’.¹¹² Godfrey Bloom tentatively agrees with the description of the EU as a “Christian club” but relates it to ‘the Christian ethos’,¹¹³ and points to the importance of religion, but not ‘with a capital R’. For John Purvis ‘the Christian religion...is a very basic element of European identity. Even if you’re an atheist or a humanist you’re probably still basically Christian by culture’.¹¹⁴ This viewpoint of a religious basis to European culture and the founding ideology and values of the EU recurs throughout debates in the European Parliament, with the implication that the percentage of the population who actually practices irrelevant to the cultural legacy and inheritance of Christianity within the EU. In the 15th Century Europe became synonymous with Christendom,¹¹⁵ and for some that association has continued into viewing Europe as a modern Christendom. Although there has been a strong Jewish presence in Europe for a long time, and there are a large number of members of many

¹⁰⁹ Eg. Diego López Garrido MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’; Ria Oomen-Ruijten MEP, ‘2010 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

¹¹⁰ Tunne Kelam MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’; Ria Oomen-Ruijten MEP, ‘2010 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

¹¹¹ Manfred Weber MEP, ‘Defence of the principle of subsidiarity - Display of religious and cultural symbols in public places (debate)’, 15.12.2009.

¹¹² Boguslaw Sonik MEP, ‘European Heritage Label (debate)’.

¹¹³ Bloom, Godfrey. Personal interview (4th February 2010).

¹¹⁴ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2010).

¹¹⁵ Den Boer, P., ‘Essay 1 – Europe to 1914: the making of an idea’ in Wilson and van der Dussen (ed.) *The History of the Idea of Europe*. The Open University, Routledge, London, 1995. pp.34-35.

other faiths, including Islam, living in Europe, the association between Europe and Christianity is reflected strongly by respondents, and this is indicative of the continued importance of Christian norms.

The religious element of European identity is not only comprised of these Christian norms, but has served to establish in the minds of some an “Other” on religious grounds. Throughout debates in the European Parliament are references to the distinction between European identity and the ‘Islamic world’, with Europe referred to as ‘Christendom’.¹¹⁶ Charles Tannock cites concern over ‘Turkey’s membership of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), where such common Western values as we all share in the European Union are not evident because the OIC cites Sharia law as a basis for human rights in the Islamic world’.¹¹⁷ For others this distinction appears to be subconscious, Lorenzo Fontana argues against Turkish membership of the EU on the grounds that ‘Turkey is becoming more and more Islamic and Ankara is actually a leading member of the largest international pan-Islamic organization, the OIC’,¹¹⁸ while Andrey Kovatchev recounts feeling ‘deeply uneasy about the risk of Turkey’s domestic and foreign policy taking an Islamic slant’.¹¹⁹ Although both these MEPs express concern relating to the Islamic nature of Turkey, neither explains how this undermines the Turkish application. The historical aspect of religion is once again emphasised, with references to a Judaeo-Christian basis for European values and identity, although it is acknowledged that this originated within the Middle East but has been ‘taken over by Europe’.¹²⁰ It is interesting to note that when asked about the values which best represent the European Union, only 3% of the public in member states chose religion, while 10% of the public polled in Turkey believed that religion represented the EU.¹²¹ Although this will not influence decision making in the European Parliament it could perhaps be viewed as a perception in Turkey that it is seen as the “Other” by those in Europe.

Carl Bildt, President-in-Office of the European Council at the time of the European

¹¹⁶ Newton Dunn, Bill. Personal interview (9th March 2010).

¹¹⁷ Charles Tannock MEP, ‘Democratisation in Turkey (debate)’.

¹¹⁸ Lorenzo Fontana MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

¹¹⁹ Andrey Kovatchev MEP, ‘2010 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

¹²⁰ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

¹²¹ Eurobarometer 66, p.32.

Parliament's debate on the 2009 enlargement strategy summed up opposition to Turkey by paraphrasing its opponents: 'Turkey is too large, too complicated and too Muslim' before restating that Article 49 of the TEU has no religious criteria. He goes on to rebut the arguments of opponents on these grounds, saying:

I listened to the moving words on the Christian heritage, and there is much truth in that. All the Catholics and Orthodox or Protestants and Anglicans might interpret that in very different ways, but I would caution against defining the Jewish heritage out of Europe. They are not Christians, but they are, with all of the problems in our history, also part of our Europe of the past, the present and the future.

I would also argue that it would equally be a mistake to define citizens of Muslim faith, be they inside our existing Member States, be they in Bosnia, be they somewhere else or be they in Turkey.¹²²

This is a well reasoned and rational argument, but the results of my research point to the perception of a shared European history based on Christianity, or on occasion Judaeo-Christianity, and very little mention of any other religions is made. Despite the sizeable and ever-growing population of Muslims within the EU, the perception appears to be of a European identity founded in Christianity.

While there is broad agreement that a European identity exists and that issues of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, peace and justice form an important basis of this identity, my research suggests that this is not the limit of European identity. For many MEPs, there is an unbreakable link between history, culture and these fundamental values, and this is supported by the evidence of my primary research. History and culture are intertwined with the founding ideology of the EU, and are important facets of European identity. Similarly religion is seen by many as inextricable from history, culture and the values of the European Union, irrespective of the reducing number of practicing Christians in Europe and the removal of church from state which abounds in Europe. Exactly how these norms are felt will vary from person to person, but there is a European identity based on values, culture and history in the broadest terms and this identity will influence the behaviour of those who experience it.

¹²² Carl Bildt, 'Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)'.

The Expression of Identity

My research indicates that a European identity and European norms are present within the European Parliament, but there is little evidence that a European identity supersedes or replaces a national identity, or that European politicians “go native”. Mikołaj Dowgiewiciz describes as ‘eurosceptic nonsense’ the idea that European integration and enlargement leads to the loss of national identity or ‘the end of values; the end of Christianity – all that nonsense’.¹²³ Katarína Neved’alová argued that it was perfectly possible to ‘promote the common cultural heritage of the Member States while respecting national and regional diversity’.¹²⁴ In a personal interview, Richard Corbett recounted how ‘When I was an MEP people would ask me “Do you feel British or European?” and I said “It’s not either/or, it’s both”’,¹²⁵ and for those who expressed belief in a European identity this was always the case. Bill Newton Dunn explained ‘I suppose my identity is partly what we would call locally yellow-belly, that’s the term for somebody in Lincolnshire. I’m partly British, I’m partly European, I’m partly World’. For each respondent the degree to which each identity is felt and expressed is dependent upon context. Many reported feeling more European when in countries outside Europe or outside a ‘business-cultural Anglosphere’.¹²⁶ This is due to the more pronounced and obvious differences of culture, and the similarities within European cultures and European identity, moving into the realm of the “Other”, us against them. Richard Corbett employs a sporting example, ‘I support England in football, Britain in the Olympic Games and Europe in golf when we play the Americans in the Ryder Cup. Those gut loyalties, they’re not contradictory, they’re just different dimensions’.¹²⁷ While the given examples relate to other differences, I believe that this is indicative of why the case of Turkish membership prompts MEPs to invoke and challenge identity, because differences are perceived between Turkish and European identity. Although a view of identities from different levels coexisting is expressed by an overwhelming majority of respondents, Stephen Hughes suggests that his party, the Labour Party, ‘regarded [him] as going native many years ago’ and that there are ‘individuals who,

¹²³ Mikołaj Dowgiewiciz, President-in-Office of the Council, speaking in the EP during the ‘Accession Treaty : Treaty concerning the accession of the Republic of Croatia - Application of Croatia to become a member of the European Union (debate)’.

¹²⁴ Katarína Neved’alová MEP, European Heritage Label (debate).

¹²⁵ Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010).

¹²⁶ Bloom, Godfrey. Personal interview (4th February 2010).

¹²⁷ Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010)

when it comes to the love of the idea of Europe would express very similar views to me, although they come from different political backgrounds'.¹²⁸ He does concede that for some actors within the European Parliament multiple identities can exist, and suggests that there has been a blurring of his national identity with 'regional, local [and] national ambiguities',¹²⁹ which could be viewed as the expression of norms from multiple bases within one identity, and he argues that the European Union has a role in clarifying this identity.

In the same way, within the European Parliament itself norms of European identity interact with those of national identity in a complex way. There is broad agreement that the degree to which European identity is felt is based on context, as well as varying from individual to individual.

I think I can be...Scottish, British, European, there's probably a scale, everybody has their own scale. Possibly someone who is actually working in the European Commission or something actually feels more European than they do British or Scottish, someone in Scotland, working on a building site in Edinburgh probably thinks of themselves more Scottish than they do British or European. So it's really a rather personal thing, but I think there's an element in one's total identity as being part European.¹³⁰

The indication from my research is that the behaviour and interests of those working together at a European level, such as in the European Parliament, are more greatly influenced by norms of European identity than those working at national level. Even the questionnaire respondent who answered that there was no European identity suggested that there was a commonality amongst MEPs' researchers and advisors based on their work. The effects of the European Parliament itself will be discussed in more detail in a subsequent section but, as a social constructivist approach would anticipate, identity is perceived by those within it to be felt more strongly in the European Parliament than by the general public in EU member states. This is to be expected given the high degree of interaction with those from other nations amongst actors operating at the European level who will be subject to socialization within the institutions of the EU. This will be

¹²⁸ Hughes, Stephen (MEP). Personal interview (21st May 2010).

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

examined in greater detail in the following chapters.

As anticipated, the degree to which identity is felt within the European parliament varies depending on the competence and the issues under discussion. Although, as pointed out earlier, arguments of identity do permeate into debates within areas where it might not be anticipated, an analysis of debates within the European Parliament shows clearly that arguments of identity are raised more often within debates concerning, or requiring the generation of, a common European Parliament position. The issue of enlargement certainly fits this criterion, and arguments relating to identity are prevalent in debates in this area. Fiona Hall points to the level of cooperation in a particular policy area influencing the strength of identity in that area,¹³¹ and that is consistent with a social constructivist framework for identity. She suggests that ‘there will be some issues in which everybody is working together with a very strong sense of European identity’,¹³² and issues which require a collective European position, such as climate change, dealing with international organised crime and terrorism, are regularly commented on as being areas in which identity is felt particularly strongly. It is also argued that this close cooperation and the need for a single, coherent European voice in the international system are driving forces to the construction and amplification of European identity throughout the European Union. John Bowis suggests that ‘increasingly with things like the Lisbon agenda I think it seems Europe has more of a common interest vis-à-vis the emerging nations, like India and China, as much as America and Australia’,¹³³ while Bill Newton Dunn stated that ‘we’re all tiny countries in Europe. Germany may have 70 million [inhabitants] but that’s peanuts compared to the BRIC countries as they’re put, and the Americans. So hard-headed reality, Europeans have to work together’.¹³⁴ While, as Mr. Newton Dunn points out, working together in Europe can be ‘hard-headed reality’, there is also a normative component, and the evidence of my research is that this cooperation strengthens European identity, as well as increasing the relative importance of European norms when compared to national norms. Mr. Newton Dunn goes on to assert that:

I’d love to come back in 100 years time and I hope by then Europe will have its own

¹³¹ Hall, Fiona. Personal interview (16th October 2009).

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Bowis, John. Personal interview (2nd September 2009)

¹³⁴ Newton Dunn, Bill. Personal interview (9th March 2010)

President...an Obama figure for Europe who will speak for Europe and say ‘we’re 500 million people and you guys had better listen to us’ and it doesn’t matter if he’s a Turk or a Frenchman or a Brit.¹³⁵

Although analysis of European Parliament debates suggests that this comment is not representative of MEPs in general it is indicative of the presence of a European identity dictating the boundaries of who can cooperate and making even the thought of such cooperation a possibility. Without shared norms and identity working together would be very difficult, if not impossible, and the EU has served to highlight important norms which constitute identity and define which countries can cooperate based on the presence or absence of such norms. This will be an important factor when assessing the application of Turkey to join the EU.

Another way in which European identity and norms are influenced by policy area is the degree to which identity is invoked and challenged. ‘[I]dentity is not fundamental to your consumer protection legislation or your environmental standards for instance, which accounts for a good chunk of EU legislation, but is perhaps more of an issue when you’re discussing home affairs issues, in particular immigration and asylum law...and arguably foreign policy from time to time’.¹³⁶ Debates over issues of this nature draw heavily on norms of identity as there is challenge to the identity and the possibility of normative change, as can be seen from the debates over EU enlargement. In addition to explicit reference to European identity, MEPs often phrase arguments in such debates in terms of “values”, or with specific reference to the components of identity outlined above. In some cases there are areas of debate and decision making for which a novel normative consensus is required, and these areas will provide particularly dense normative environments, in accordance with the mechanisms outlined in the literature review chapter.

European Parliament debates on the enlargement of the EU fulfil both the criteria above, a common position is required, and it is also a policy area in which identity is invoked and challenged. The degree to which norms of European identity influence actor preference and behaviour in the enlargement process will form a later section of my

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010).

analysis, but I believe enlargement is an area in which norms are strongly felt and expressed. Unanimity amongst member states, and a successful vote in the European Parliament are required for any country to become a member and, while a member state will have its own reasons for supporting or opposing a country's accession a common position for the EU is required for the accession process to succeed. For the challenge to identity of enlargement it is only necessary to look at previous enlargements. All the respondents who believed that there was a European identity agreed that the identity was dynamic. The most cited reason given for the identity change which has occurred was the accession of new member states. Even those countries which are most similar to the established European identity will influence it, and the view the EU has of itself changes with each enlargement. The perceived challenge to European identity will be felt particularly acutely in those countries which are furthest removed from the European identity as it stands, and so debate will be highly normatively charged in relation to these countries, especially in the areas of the greatest perceived difference. The Christian component of European identity has not been greatly discussed in the preparation for previous enlargements as this was not deemed to be under challenge, but it has greatly increased in prominence in the case of Turkey, a Muslim country. An example of this is found in this statement by Zoltán Balczó during the European Parliament debate on the 2009 progress report on Turkey:

With regard to the accession of Turkey, there is a fundamental question to be clarified: what do we consider the European Union to be? Do we consider the values, the shared European values, important? These values are based on the teachings of Christianity, irrespective of the proportion of actively religious people. Do we deem the cultural heritage of Europe important as a cohesive force? If the answer is 'yes', Turkey has no place in the European Union.¹³⁷

This statement accords with other statements recounted earlier, and references to religion are much more prominent in European Parliament debates relating to Turkey than those concerning previous enlargements or other candidate countries.

Having established that a European identity existed, at least in the eyes of some of those

¹³⁷ Zoltán Balczó MEP, '2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)'

involved in the European Parliament, I have looked at the way this identity is felt and expressed. I have found very little evidence for MEPs going native, or completely adopting a European identity at the cost of their own national identity, in the same way as a national identity does not replace a local identity. Each member of the European Parliament, as with everyone else, has multiple identities which coexist and are not themselves contradictory. Each identity has certain norms of appropriate behaviour associated with them which comprise the decisions, actions and interests of each individual actor. Where the individual norms are not the same, or indeed contradict each other, the strength of each norm and, therefore the outcome, will be dependent upon context, what has been termed a sliding scale of identity. Interactions within the European parliament go some way towards bringing European norms to the fore, but the strength of the European norms is based also on the policy area involved. The common action and challenge to identity of enlargement mean that it is an environment in which norms of European identity are likely to at their strongest and could influence the course of action which is seen as appropriate by actors within this field.

Throughout this section I have looked at Turkish identity and how it is perceived to complement and contrast with European identity. There is disagreement amongst MEPs as to how compatible the identities are, and there appear to be two competing discourses. One discourse views Turkey as part of a separate civilisation, although this is not always used to its detriment, and the other views Turkey as part the 'European family'.

The first discourse owes much in its language to Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' theory. Huntington argued that, in the wake of the end of the cold war, conflict in the world would be framed not in terms of ideology as the cold war had been, but in terms of 'civilizations' – 'A civilization is...the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species'.¹³⁸ Although Huntington points to the cultural basis of civilization, he affords particular importance to religion, indeed in a later article he argues that '[i]n the modern world, religion is a central, perhaps *the* central, force that motivates and

¹³⁸ Huntington, S.P., 'The Clash of Civilizations?' *Foreign Affairs* 72:3 p.24.

mobilizes people'.¹³⁹ This is particularly pertinent in relation to Islam, with Huntington unequivocally asserting that 'Islam has bloody borders'.¹⁴⁰ Although Huntington's analysis has gained notoriety, and the language is widely employed beyond the academic field,¹⁴¹ I exercise caution in employing it.

Huntington produces a list of seven or eight major civilisations and, although he concedes that 'the lines between them are seldom sharp',¹⁴² he does assert that 'they are real'.¹⁴³ I believe that a distinction between "western" and "Islamic" civilisations does not hold in the case of Turkey, a secular state with close ties to Europe and the Arabic world. Although Huntington briefly addresses the role of Turkey as a 'torn country',¹⁴⁴ I do not believe that his model allows for the nuance necessary for an understanding of Turkish identity and its relation to European identity. Indeed more broadly, I believe that it is problematic to provide such clear cut boundaries between groups. Huntington's definition of a civilisation as 'the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have' does not take into account the context dependent nature of identity, in that this could bring together different civilisations concurrently given different stimuli. Indeed Kirkpatrick suggests that Huntington's suggestion of civilisations is 'a strange list',¹⁴⁵ while Said goes as far as to suggest that 'the problem with unedifying labels like Islam and the West [is that] they mislead and confuse the mind, which is trying to make sense of a disorderly reality'.¹⁴⁶ In a similar way Huntington does not directly address the issue of Muslims living within Europe, and the possible coexistence of conflicting civilisational identities.

With Huntington's argument of the growth in importance of civilisations comes the implication that the nation state will reduce in importance. This is countered by Ajami who states 'let us be clear: civilizations do not control states, states control

¹³⁹ Huntington, S.P., 'If Not Civilizations, What?' *Foreign Affairs The Clash of Civilizations? The Debate*. New York. p.63

¹⁴⁰ Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations' p.35.

¹⁴¹ References to this language are clear in the 'United Nations Alliance of Civilisations', and the phrase 'Clash of Civilisations' has been used on multiple occasions within the European Parliament.

¹⁴² Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations' p.24

¹⁴³ Ibid

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p.42.

¹⁴⁵ Kirkpatrick, J.J., 'The Modernizing Imperative: Tradition and Change' *Foreign Affairs The Clash of Civilizations? The Debate*. New York. p.50.

¹⁴⁶ Said, E.W., 'The Clash of Ignorance' *The Nation* 22.10.01 [<http://www.thenation.com/article/clash-ignorance?page=0,1>] Accessed 21/05/2011.

civilisations'.¹⁴⁷ I am cautious of both extremes of this argument. Although I am looking at the concept of European identity within the European Parliament, I do not argue that the nation state ceases to be important in International Relations, rather that social constructivist concepts have an important role to play within international institutions.

Although I do not agree with Huntington's analysis, and I believe that his treatment of Islam is unhelpful, he does bring an element of identity into his model. Indeed Huntington argues that the 'European Community rests on the shared foundation of European culture and Western Christianity'¹⁴⁸ and, although I believe this is again an over simplification of a complicated picture, Huntington has influenced the debate on Turkish membership of the EU. Through the construction of places outside Europe, particularly the Muslim world, as the "Other" there is a move towards the 'Clash of Civilizations' hypothesis, with the differences being emphasized, often with similarities downplayed and it is within this discourse that the vast majority of Turkey's opponents subconsciously position themselves. References to a "European civilisation" can be found within European Parliament debates, particularly regarding enlargement¹⁴⁹, and Jaroslav Paška stated in the European parliament 'I believe that the process of convergence of civilisations will be complicated and lengthy and it will be simple neither for us nor for Turkish society',¹⁵⁰ although he did not rule out Turkish accession. For many others Turkey is a 'non-European and Islamic state'.¹⁵¹ As well as the talk of a clash of civilisations between Europe and the Muslim world, the concepts of East and West are raised. In areas where Turkey moves away from Europe, it is described as 'de-Westernising Turkey'¹⁵² and European values are sometimes referred to as Western values.¹⁵³ Before taking up his role as President of the European Council Herman van Rompuy argued that 'Turkey is not part of Europe and will never be part of Europe'.¹⁵⁴ This discourse is not entirely negative towards Turkish accession however, as it is seen

¹⁴⁷ Ajami, F, 'The Summoning' Foreign Affairs *The Clash of Civilizations? The Debate*. New York. p.34.

¹⁴⁸ Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?' p.27.

¹⁴⁹ Eg. Tadeusz Cymański MEP, 'Enlargement report for Serbia (debate)' 28.03.2012; Chrysoula Paliadeli MEP, 'European Heritage Label (debate)'.
¹⁵⁰ Jaroslav Paška MEP, '2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)'.
¹⁵¹ Philip Claey's MEP, '2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)'.
¹⁵² Mario Borghezio MEP, 'Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)'.
¹⁵³ Charles Tannock, 'Democratisation in Turkey (debate)'.
¹⁵⁴ Herman van Rompuy quoted in Phillips, L., 'Van Rompuy: 'Turkey will never be part of Europe' *euobserver.com*, 18.11.2009. Available at [<http://euobserver.com/?aid=29016>] Accessed 18.11.2009.

by some as a way of bridging the gap between civilisations and avoiding the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ hypothesised by Huntington. ‘Turkey is the most Western of Eastern states and the most Eastern of Western states, so its unique role is not only European but global’,¹⁵⁵ and Olli Rehn, former European Commissioner for Enlargement, argued that ‘Turkey plays a key role in...the dialogue between civilisations’,¹⁵⁶ a viewpoint shared by Enikő Győri.¹⁵⁷ Although these viewpoints are backed up by similar norms, those positioning Turkey as the outsider, it is through the interaction of different norms that appropriate action is decided, and so similar norms can produce markedly different results in different actors.

The alternative discourse sees Turkey as part of the European family, and this discourse downplays the differences between the Turkish identity and European identity. Although this is outlined less often than the ‘Clash of Civilisations’ discourse it appears to be tacitly accepted by a number of MEPs. There is broad agreement within the European Parliament that, subject to strict conditions, Turkey is eligible for membership of the EU. This discourse is obscured somewhat by a confusion of terminology, not least the use of Europe and European Union interchangeably by some MEPs. Marietta Giannakou claims that ‘It is a fact that Europe can and has the right to continue to enlarge’,¹⁵⁸ when presumably she refers to the enlargement of the European Union and terms like ‘European family’ are used by some MEPs to mean the member states of the EU and by others in reference to all the ‘like minded’ countries of Europe. For some, accession marks entry into the European family,¹⁵⁹ while for others membership of the EU is not a necessary condition of being in the family.¹⁶⁰ Wojciech Michal Olejniczak talks of the fall of the iron curtain and the accession of Eastern European countries as the time when ‘the countries of Central and Eastern Europe came into the European family’,¹⁶¹ although it is not clear whether, for him, the joining of the family came at the

¹⁵⁵ Justas Vincas Paleckis MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

¹⁵⁶ Olli Rehn, ‘Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)’.

¹⁵⁷ Enikő Győri, President-in-Office of the Council, speaking during the ‘2010 progress report on Turkey (debate)’

¹⁵⁸ Marietta Giannakou MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

¹⁵⁹ Eg. Franziska Katharina Brantner MEP, ‘Enlargement report for Serbia (debate)’.

¹⁶⁰ Eg. Andreas Mölzer MEP, ‘Implemented reforms and developments in the Republic of Moldova (debate)’, 21.10.2010.

¹⁶¹ Wojciech Michal Olejniczak MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

moment of enlargement or with the move away from Soviet values towards the European identity. In the same debate Rovana Plumb stated that she ‘support[s] the request made to Ankara to make more effort in the reform process so that it can join the European club’,¹⁶² and there is a similar ambiguity here. It is not clear from this statement whether membership of this European club comes directly through the reform process or if it is only achieved through accession.

Perhaps the clearest statement of the latter discourse comes from Cristian Dan Preda who asserts unequivocally that ‘Turkey is clearly a member of the European family’, although he then goes on to say that it ‘is an important partner in the dialogue between civilisations’.¹⁶³ The degree to which European identity corresponds with Turkish identity is debated within the European Parliament and this is reflected in different discourses on Turkey’s relationship with the EU. For a clear, common position to emerge will require the ongoing debate over these discourses and, ultimately, for one discourse to prevail. The effect of arguments of identity, and of these discourses, on attitudes towards the Turkish membership bid will be discussed in a later section, but it is clear that different individuals have different ideas as to how similar the identities are. This will to a large degree depend on the strength of European identity felt and the relative strength afforded to different norms.

The analysis of European Parliament debates, supported by the primary research I have conducted, has indicated the presence of a European identity within the European Parliament which has widespread, but not universal, acknowledgement. Although European identity is not universally recognised it is sufficiently prevalent amongst MEPs to make it an important factor within the EP and, I believe, justifies an investigation of its scope and influence. Even if norms associated with European identity are not felt by all members of the European Parliament a significant number influenced by the norms will have an observable effect on actor interest and attitude. The fact that some members of the European Parliament do not recognise a European identity does not preclude the possibility of their actions being influenced by norms as well, social constructivist notions of identity and normative action afford the possibility

¹⁶² Rovana Plumb MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

¹⁶³ Cristian Dan Preda MEP, ‘2009 progress report on Croatia – 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

of norms working at a subconscious level and, as such, they would not necessarily be noticed by those influenced by them. I argue that ideas such as democracy and human rights which are, I assume, supported by all members of the European Parliament have a normative basis, so even those MEPs who do not believe in identity will be influenced by these norms.

It is clear that although reference is made to a single European identity the actual expression of that identity varies from individual to individual. There are basic elements which comprise the identity, the founding ideology of the EU, the drive to enlargement, culture and religion but the norms associated with these factors vary in strength and so the 'Logic of Appropriateness' dictates that this would produce different behaviour and preferences in the actors. I have found no evidence that a European identity overrides all previously held norms from national or regional level, but that an actor can experience and be influenced by multiple levels of norms simultaneously and indeed can have multiple identities concurrently. In any given situation norms of regional, national and European identity will be present and the applicability and strength of the norms of each identity will vary depending on the situation. The strength of European identity and norms vary in relation to other identities by policy area, with European norms at their strongest in areas which challenge European identity, require a novel normative response or require the greatest cooperation and speaking with a single European voice. I believe that this justifies an investigation of European enlargement, which fulfils all of these criteria, and particularly the membership bid of Turkey where these factors will be at their strongest.

I have found support amongst members of the institutions of the EU for a dynamic European identity and for one which is different now from the 'founding ideology' of the EU. For this reason I have attempted to get a 'snapshot' of identity as it stands now within the EU in the knowledge that this will not remain static, but will give me an indication of the influences on decision making at the present moment. The concept of a dynamic identity also justifies looking at the challenge of Turkish identity to European identity, how European identity might change with Turkish accession and how both European and Turkish identity change in the negotiation process.

In his hearing before the European Parliament Commissioner-Designate Füle claimed

that in the field of enlargement ‘the time of zero-sum games is over, and that what we are looking for is a win-win situation for everyone’, and this reflection of social constructivist theory is indicative of the European identity expressed in the field. Hans-Gert Pöttering explained that:

The European dimension has always been an important component of identity-building processes in Europe especially since the beginning of the post 1945 integration process. We should nevertheless keep in mind that most of the national identities developed over centuries. Hence it is natural that this development is an equally continuous process on the European level and that it is, of course, not finalized after 60 years.¹⁶⁴

This is an eloquent explanation of European identity and the degree to which it is challenged within the European Parliament. Although European identity is built on relatively stable norms, after just 60 years of debate within the EP it can still be challenged and reformed as it is in the face of the negotiations for Turkish accession. Although the treaties of the EU do not speak specifically of a European identity, this statement by the European Commission describes the foundation, ambiguity and dynamic nature of European identity: ‘The term ‘European’ combines geographical, historical and cultural elements which all contribute to European identity...[which] is subject to review by each succeeding generation’.¹⁶⁵ This is of particular relevance in the field of enlargement where membership is restricted to ‘European’ countries.

It has become clear throughout my research that specificity is required when looking at identity in the European Union. Although I have highlighted issues of identity within the European Parliament, it is apparent that the terms ‘European identity’, ‘European Union identity’ and ‘European Parliament identity’ are not necessarily synonymous, despite the ambiguity of terms used by actors. While similarities certainly exist amongst these identities, indeed I believe that it is possible for one actor to express these different identities in different situations, they are not exactly the same. For this reason, and in accordance with social constructivist theory, it is very important to study the institutions themselves, in this case the European Parliament, when addressing the

¹⁶⁴ Pöttering, Hans-Gert, MEP + former EP President (Personal correspondence).

¹⁶⁵ European Commission, quoted in Rettman, A., ‘Berlusconi ‘dreams’ of Israel becoming an EU member’ *euobserver.com*, 02.01.10. Available at [<http://euobserver.com/?aid=29387>] (Accessed 02.01.10)

identities of the actors which comprise them. Similarly, as indicated in the methodology section, it is problematic to attempt to quantify or measure identity. Identity and the influence of norms are personal things which will vary from individual to individual and they are also highly context dependent, so it is difficult to put into figures the strength of norms. It is therefore necessary for me to assess the relative strength of norms and the resulting identity in relation to interests, attitudes and outcomes, and this will be achieved through an analysis of the degree to which norms and interests influence the behaviour and preferences of actors in enlargement. To this end I will focus on the institution of the European Parliament and its influence on identity (the following chapter), and look at the issue of EU enlargement and Turkish accession (the penultimate chapter).

This chapter has addressed the first two research questions set out earlier. The research has established the presence of European identity within the European Parliament and the nature of that identity. The European identity experienced by MEPs is dynamic and, although based in the founding ideology of the European Union, this is not a sufficient basis for understanding contemporary identity. An analysis of European Parliament debates, supported by interviews and correspondence, have indicated that identity is based in norms of democracy, human rights, rule of law and peace, but that culture, and religion also play an important role in identity. Crucially this chapter has also pointed to the role of European identity and norms as being experienced alongside other norms, highlighting the need to analyse the behaviour and attitudes of MEPs in order to understand the strength and applicability of different norms.

The European Parliament and Identity

In the literature review chapter I indicated the importance attached to institutions within social constructivist theory, and a thorough understanding of identity within the European Parliament requires an investigation of the institution itself. In this chapter I will analyse the role of the European Parliament in the creation and spread of norms, and in actor identity. The European Parliament has a number of different but complimentary roles to play in the constitution of MEP identity, and it is important that these are stated and analysed in order fully to understand how norms influence the identity of actors within the European Parliament. The move away from viewing institutions as intervening variables means that, although I believe general theories can be established, there is a degree to which every institution is unique. This results in a specificity of normative frameworks and identity, which will be addressed through this analysis.

Earlier in this thesis I established my definition of an institution as “rules, enforcement characteristics of rules and norms of behaviour which manifest as a relatively stable set or structure of identities and interests”,¹ and this is the definition I intend to apply to the European Parliament and, more broadly, to the European Union as a whole. Although it appears tempting, and at first glance simpler, to demarcate the European Parliament based on what is set out in the Treaties of the European Union; it quickly becomes clear that within a social constructivist framework those boundaries are insufficient. The rules and regulative norms in the Treaties which govern the EU institutions form only one part of the normative rulebook, and it is in shedding light on the rest of these rules that social constructivism has value to add in study of the European Parliament and, ultimately, when studying institutions elsewhere in the international political sphere. While social constructivists do not dispute the presence of material facts relating to the European Union and its constituent bodies, it is the social facts surrounding them which give the institutions meaning. The history of the EU has resulted in the creation of intersubjective meanings and the social generation of knowledge which form the broader, social constructivist image of EU institutions. ‘[T]he fairly elaborate development of the internal organization of the EP – which is entirely under the control of the MEPs themselves – helps to underscore the general point that this institution is

¹ Drawing on the work of Keohane and Wendt.

more than just a “talking shop”².

Alongside, and inextricably linked to, the theoretical challenges social constructivism brings to looking at the institutions of the EU, I will be looking at the strength of identity within the European Parliament particularly. There is a widespread belief amongst my interviewees and questionnaire respondents that European identity is felt more strongly within the institutions of the European Union, and the European Parliament particularly,³ than in the population of EU member states as a whole, although whether this is a positive or negative is debated.⁴ Although this is, of course, something which is very difficult to assess through an analysis of European Parliament debates, there does seem to be a greater recourse to European identity in the EP than with the population at large. It would not be accurate to suggest that all MEPs subscribe to the idea of a European identity, but statements made during EP debates regularly refer to and invoke European identity, a 2010 Eurobarometer survey found that European identity meant ‘a lot’ to just 18% of those surveyed,⁵ while the European Union fairs worse, with Gerard Batten suggesting that ‘the European Union is becoming increasingly unpopular with citizens across the continent’.⁶ Through the employment of a social constructivist research framework I intend to ascertain why identity is felt more strongly within the institutions of the EU and this will lead on to an investigation of the effect of European norms on the identity and interests of actors.

As I outlined above, social constructivists and rationalists have greatly different interpretations of international institutions. The “thin” view of institutions subscribed to by rational choice scholars affords institutions the role of arenas for bargaining and constraints on agent actions, a strategic context for rational choices. As Checkel puts it ‘In this thin conception, institutions are a structure that actors run into, go ‘ouch’ and then recalculate how, in the presence of the structure, to achieve their interests; they are

² Bowler, S & Farrell D. M., 1999. ‘Parties and Party discipline within the European Parliament: A Norms-Based Approach’ in Bowler, Farrell & Katz (eds.) *Party Discipline and Parliamentary Government*. Ohio State University Press, Columbus. p.209.

³ Dr. Libor Rouček, MEP from the Czech Republic, vice-President of the European Parliament and member of AFET. Personal interview (6th May 2010).

⁴ Some MEPs (eg. Stephen Hughes, John Bowis) talk of the European Parliament being a driving force towards greater European identity and cooperation, while others (eg. Godfrey Bloom) point to a democratic body out of touch with its electorate.

⁵ Eurobarometer 73.3:New Europeans (Report)
[http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_346_en.pdf]

⁶ Gerard Batten MEP, ‘European Heritage Label (debate)’.

an intervening variable'.⁷ Although a view of the European Parliament in these terms is largely refuted by my research, Martin Callanan MEP does see the Parliament in this way. For him, 'people talk about the great European project and ploughing on and taking in more countries, but when it comes to the difficult decisions, they always err on the side of caution and look towards their national interests...when it comes down to the nitty-gritty of what these policies mean in terms of the individual member states everybody is fighting for their own country and their own interests and it always breaks down into nationalistic arguments'.⁸ Although this view is present, when he sees this attitude emerge, Ioan Mircea Paşcu feels the need to point out that '[a]lthough each country is free to pursue its national interest, let us not forget that there is no integration without a minimal solidarity and that the bad feelings accumulated today might burst out tomorrow',⁹ suggesting not only that this behaviour is rare, but that it is ultimately counterproductive. Far better represented is the view expressed by Richard Corbett that 'the very interesting thing about the European Parliament is that of course it doesn't sit in national delegations, it sits by political affinity, party political groups. That's interesting because it means that the main way of looking at things is not necessarily, first and foremost, looking at the national interest, and trying to find the national angle...but to look at things more politically',¹⁰ and this is more in line with a "thicker" view of institutions subscribed to by social constructivists.

The "thick" view of institutions is at the other extreme of the spectrum from the rational choice understanding of institutions, affording institutions the power to constitute the participant actors, and are both composed of and provide intersubjective understandings. Where institutions are merely an intervening variable in the eyes of a rational choice scholar, to a social constructivist 'as variables, institutions become independent – and strongly so'.¹¹ The composition and function of the European Parliament is set out in the EU treaties, but under the definition of institutions which I am using, a social constructivist definition, the EP amounts to a great deal more than this. The social facts which comprise the reality of actors within the institutions are based on intersubjective knowledge and ideas, and the institutions themselves are

⁷ Checkel, J. 'Social Construction and Integration' *Journal of European Public Policy* 6:4, 1999. p. 546.

⁸ Callanan, Martin (MEP). Personal interview (12th October 2009).

⁹ Ioan Mircea Paşcu MEP, 'Accession of Bulgaria and Romania to Schengen (debate)' 12.10.2011

¹⁰ Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010).

¹¹ Checkel, 'Social Construction and Integration' p. 547.

embedded social practices and routines which regulate the behaviour of actors and comprise the “rules of the game”. John Bowis OBE described the European Parliament as ‘a living organism’¹² and throughout the majority of debates in the European Parliament MEPs use “we” to refer to the European Parliament, a sentiment echoed by interviewees. Practices have also changed and evolved within the European Parliament without a change in written, regulative norms. Although the right of legislative initiative was originally held by the Commission there has been a move towards the Commission responding to the European Parliament’s recommendations in this area, leading former President of the European Parliament Hans-Gert Pöttering to suggest that the Parliament now has a *de facto* right of initiative.¹³

Further evidence of these shared understandings is seen within the political parties of the European Parliament, ‘15 years ago, PES as an idea was a bit of a joke quite frankly because we would deliberate endlessly, not on policy formulation, but every 5 years on the formation of the manifesto. The process would take anywhere up to a year and at the end of the process practically every national delegation would have a whole list of footnotes, caveats, “everybody except us agrees...”. That’s not the case now. The last manifesto we all signed up to, the language was nuanced but the footnotes were gone, so it’s a lot better.’¹⁴ While there is a utilitarian advantage to having a coherent manifesto and policy base, this was also true 15 years ago, and I believe it is through shared understandings and socialisation within the institution that this has become possible. Stephen Hughes agrees, going on to state that ‘even with the more reluctant national parties it’s a lot better, there’s a real willingness to try and work together and to pool our best ideas on the way we move forward’.¹⁵ During an EP debate concerning rules regarding the funding of European political parties it was argued that ‘when European elections take place, political parties are generally considered to pursue the interests of their national state and not the interests of Europe as a whole’,¹⁶ where actually ‘[p]olitical parties at the European level have...been in existence for a long time

¹² Bowis, John (former MEP). Personal interview (2nd September 2009).

¹³ Quoted in ‘Pöttering defends Parliament’s role at EU summits’ Williams, M., theparliament.com 24.06.08 [<http://www.theparliament.com/latestnews/news-article/newsarticle/poettering-defends-parliaments-role-at-eu-summits/>] accessed 15.06.10.

¹⁴ Hughes, Stephen (MEP). Personal interview (21st May 2010).

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Carlo Casini MEP, ‘Political parties at European level and rules regarding their funding (debate)’, 05.04.2011.

now. They are not just federations of national parties. They have their own agenda, a European agenda, and they are an integral part of European political life'.¹⁷ Although this viewpoint does not gain universal support within the EP, notably from many of those opposed to European integration, it does form the majority viewpoint.

Key to the social constructivist conception of institutions is the mutual constitution of agent and structure, taking the mantra "membership matters" to its extreme. As an institution is formed by and comprised of the intersubjective understandings of its members, the form of the institutions, and its normative frameworks, are dependent upon the actors which comprise it. Similarly, however, the actors within an institution are subject to the normative pressures exerted by the institution and these norms and shared understandings constitute the interests and identities of the actors. In this way neither the actor nor the structure is ontologically primitive. Giddens claims that '[a]nalyzing the structuration of social systems means studying the modes in which such systems, grounded in the knowledgeable activities of situated actors who draw upon rules and resources in the diversity of action contexts, are produced and reproduced in interaction', and this leads to his claim that 'the structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organise'.¹⁸ This duality of structure forms the beginning of an explanation for why European identity is felt more strongly within the European Parliament than within the wider populace of Europe. The very institution in which the actors are situated is constituted by the shared understandings of Europe and the European identity and this in turn constituted the MEPs. Stephen Hughes speaks of 'the love of the idea of Europe' within the European Parliament, and suggests that '[i]nside the European Parliament it's not surprising that that should be in the vanguard because...we are in the business of trying to build consensus that involves rich variation of historical traditions'.¹⁹ This constitutive power is also acknowledged by opponents of European Union, although it is spoken of in different terms, of a Eurocracy, removed from ordinary members of the European Union. Gawain Towler speaks of 'third generation eurocrats', born to parents of different nationalities in a third country, surrounded by other Eurocrats they are, quite

¹⁷ Monika Flašíková Beňová MEP, Political parties at European level and rules regarding their funding (debate)'.

¹⁸ Giddens, A., *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. Polity Press, Cambridge, 1984. p. 25.

¹⁹ Hughes, Stephen. Personal interview (21st May 2010).

naturally “European”, he goes on to state that ‘I’m not saying they’re bad people but they’re so removed from the people in pubs in London or in any other member state there’s no way they can represent these people’,²⁰ and this is a point echoed by Godfrey Bloom MEP. This rare point of agreement between two polarised positions could, perhaps, be seen as indicative of a widespread acknowledgement of the impact of norms within the European Parliament, if not of all actors, of a sizeable number.

While the mutual constitution of agents and structures in the institutions of the European Union allows a more nuanced view of the European Parliament and MEP identities and interests, it is important to be aware that, as discussed with identity earlier, this means that a view of EU institutions can only represent a “snapshot”. Although social constructivist theory emphasises the relative stability of institutions, the normative basis affords the possibility of evolution and institutional change without treaty change, so to treat my findings concerning the institutions as definite and unchanging would be a mistake.

Socialisation in the European Parliament

Key to the social constructivist notion of identity change (and, by extension, interest change) is the concept of socialisation. Checkel defines socialisation as ‘a process of inducting actors into the norms and rules of a given community. Its outcome is sustained compliance based on the internalization of these new norms. In adopting community rules, socialization implies that an agent switches from following a logic of consequences to a logic of appropriateness; this adoption is sustained over time and is quite independent from a particular structure of material incentives or sanctions’.²¹ Although I broadly follow Checkel’s definition I do not believe, certainly in the case of socialization of European norms, that the socialisation results in a switch from a logic of consequences to a logic of appropriateness. The initial adherence to a logic of consequences implies that before the norms were socialised there were no pre-existing norms, or that they were not strong enough to influence actions. I believe that actors entering the EU institutions are already subject to norms, that is they are not a

²⁰ Towler, Gawain (UKIP Press Officer). Personal interview (7th September 2009).

²¹ Checkel, J., ‘International Institutions and Socialization in Europe: Introduction and Framework’ *International Organization* 59, 2005. p.804.

“normative vacuum” and the European norms are socialised in addition to those norms. In this way MEPs are subject to different norms, and the “appropriate” action will be based on these norms. For those who have been strongly socialised with the European norms, the institution of the European Parliament will result in these norms dictating appropriate behaviour and European identity being expressed. Some interviewees speak openly and explicitly about socialisation in the European Parliament, Richard Corbett states that ‘within the institutions you do get, of course, quite naturally, a degree of socialisation. You’re working in a multi-cultural, multi-national environment, working together to make the system work to the benefit of its members and citizens’.²²

The idea of institutions socialising norms is now well established within social constructivism, but as Moravcsik points out, ‘without explicit theories of socialization, it is difficult for constructivists to develop, empirically confirm, or generalize any distinctive concrete claims about world politics’.²³ Checkel’s response to this is to specify five propositions for conditions within which argumentative persuasion would be effective, and therefore socialisation and preference change would be likely.²⁴ They are (1) ‘when the persuadee is in a novel and uncertain environment and thus cognitively motivated to analyse new information’; (2) ‘when the persuadee has few prior, ingrained beliefs that are inconsistent with the persuader’s message’; (3) ‘when the persuader is an authoritative member of the in-group to which the persuadee belongs or wants to belong’; (4) ‘when the persuader does not lecture or demand, but, instead, ‘acts out principles of serious deliberative argument’²⁵ and (5) ‘when the persuader-persuadee interaction occurs in less politicized and more insulated, in-camera settings’. I argue that to a large degree all of these factors are present within the European Parliament, and as such, in many cases, the possibility for identity change is strong.

The European Union is unique in world politics, ‘Europe’s degree of integration, level

²² Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010).

²³ Moravcsik, A., ‘Bringing Constructivist Integration Theory Out of the Clouds: Has it Landed Yet?’ in Checkel, J. & Moravcsik, A., ‘Forum Section: A Constructivist Research Program in EU Studies?’ *European Union Politics* 2:2, 2001. p. 229.

²⁴ Checkel, J., ‘From meta- to substantive theory? Social constructivism and the study of Europe’ in Checkel, J. & Moravcsik, A., ‘Forum Section: A Constructivist Research Program in EU Studies?’ *European Union Politics* 2:2, 2001, p. 222.

²⁵ Jorgensen et al. ‘Rhetoric that Shifts Votes’, 1998, p.297, quoted in Checkel, ‘From meta- to substantive theory? Social constructivism and the study of Europe’.

of political community, and pooling of sovereignty far outstrip those seen anywhere else'²⁶ and, in the social constructivist understanding is an international institution itself comprised of institutions. For these reasons, the potential for the socialisation of norms within the EU is great, as outlined below.

(1) *'when the persuadee is in a novel and uncertain environment and thus cognitively motivated to analyse new information'*

From their beginnings, the institutions of the EU have presented novel challenges to those involved in them, and it is often argued that the institutions of the EU are *sui generis*. On election as an MEP, an actor largely leaves national institutions behind and joins a strong, thick institution in the form of the European Parliament. As such the normative environment, as well as the physical environment, is different and novel situations must be faced and new, appropriate, actions must be decided upon. Within Wendt's four-levelled description of identity,²⁷ this shift can result in a change of "type" identity and "role" identity, each of which influence personal identity, which Wendt describes as a 'site or platform for other identities'.²⁸ Fiona Hall explained that 'the work I'm doing day in day out, week in week out is very much that we've got a problem and we're working together to find a solution and in that sense we do very much have a European identity',²⁹ and John Purvis suggests that 'the bulk of the membership who are seriously, positively working in that organisation [the EP] think about themselves...representing a European identity of sorts'.³⁰ These arguments are certainly supported by the evidence of European Parliament debates, where recourse to European identity is common, and reference is made to a collective Parliamentary voice³¹ and collective responsibility.³² Socialisation within the European Parliament has the ability to alter "collective" identity, altering concepts of self and other, hence the description of the European Parliament as 'we', although this leads to the question of who or what becomes the "Other".

²⁶ Checkel, 'International Institutions and Socialization in Europe', p.801.

²⁷ Wendt, A., *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp.224-233

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.225.

²⁹ Hall, Fiona (MEP). Personal interview (16th October 2009).

³⁰ Purvis, John (former MEP). Personal interview (21st October 2009).

³¹ Eg. Piotr Borys MEP, 'Freedom of movement for workers within the European Union (debate)', 14.12.2011.

³² Eg. Jean-Luc Bennahmias MEP, 'Explanations of vote', 29.03.2012.

Alongside and concurrent with the move into the institution of the European Parliament is the move into European political parties. This again provides novelty and uncertainty to actors, and the level of interaction is high, as seating in the European Parliament is arranged by party rather than by nationality.

I think politicians, when they first go into the European Parliament, have the usual political tribal mentality. “it’s my national delegation, then my political group”. That breaks down very quickly. Within six months even British politicians who are perhaps among the more confrontational and tribal in European politics take on more of a European identity. We will, in votes in the European Parliament, circulate separate whips now and again, but very infrequently. We usually take...the Social and Democrat group line, and that usually involves cross party debate, discussion and the negotiation of compromises. So there’s very much a European perspective rather than a national or even regional perspective. That certainly exists within the institutions...but it also exists increasingly in the party structures that underpin the operation of these institutions.³³

We have already seen the growing importance and improved functioning of European political parties perceived by MEPs, and as this importance increases, and with it the level of genuine cooperation, so will the degree of socialisation. This theme is taken up by Graham Watson who states that ‘within the European Parliament we sit by political groupings rather than national blocks. Many of us recognise that to tackle trans-national problems like the environment and international terrorism, we must work closely together’,³⁴ and Richard Corbett agrees that this helps build European identity.³⁵

(2) *‘when the persuadee has few prior, ingrained beliefs that are inconsistent with the persuader’s message’.*

As I outlined earlier, I do not suggest that any member of the European Parliament enters the institution in a “normative vacuum”, many norms and beliefs would already be present and the actor would, of course, have had an existing identity. For this reason every actor entering the European Parliament would react slightly differently to the new norms, and this reaction would be based on these ‘prior, ingrained beliefs’. MEPs are

³³ Hughes, Stephen. Personal interview (21st May 2010).

³⁴ Watson, Graham. MEP (Personal communication, 12th August 2009)

³⁵ Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010)

drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds, national political parties and political ideologies, and each would have a different normative framework and, indeed, attitude towards the European Parliament and European Union in general. Within the United Kingdom, an MEP from the Labour Party would have very different prior beliefs to a member of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). Once within the European Parliament strength of European identity is seen to vary 'by political ideology and party, perhaps even country',³⁶ so there is a clear suggestion that prior norms influence the adoption of new norms at the European level. Stephen Hughes says of MEPs 'we all have a European perspective but we're looking at it through different facets, we have different visions of where Europe should go'.³⁷

My research also indicates that different norms are socialised into actors within the European Parliament depending on pre-existing identities and norms. As I indicated above, MEPs join the overarching institution of the European Parliament but also the smaller institutions of political groupings and parties. These groupings will, to a large extent, be founded on the 'prior, ingrained beliefs' of the actors and shape identity. While members of UKIP and other, similar parties throughout Europe have ingrained beliefs against European integration and are thus much less likely to accept the socialised norms, their identities, particularly role identities are still shaped by interactions within the European Parliament. Stephen Hughes describes how 'on any formal occasion the Ode to Joy will be played and we'll all stand up and the European flag will be behind the President and it drives UKIP and the others apeshit, I mean they just go completely berserk, hooting and whistling'.³⁸ I believe this role and these actions, which are deemed appropriate within the European Parliament would not be deemed such elsewhere, and are an indication of the socialisation of new norms at European level, even though they are not the norms which the majority of actors experience.

³⁶ Rouček, Libor. Personal interview (6th May 2010).

³⁷ Hughes, Stephen. Personal interview (21st May 2010).

³⁸ Hughes, Stephen. Personal interview (21st May 2010).

(3) *'when the persuader is an authoritative member of the in-group to which the persuadee belongs or wants to belong'*

This factor is a difficult one to examine when studying norms, identities and interests within the European Parliament as a whole, as actors are members of the institution by the time they are a focus of study. The behaviour of members of UKIP outlined above could certainly result from the desire of new members to be accepted into an in-group, in this case of the euro-sceptics in the European Parliament, but this would have to be studied in more detail to provide definitive results.

There is an indication from interviewees that longer standing members, who have been exposed to the socialising power of the European institutions for the longest display the greatest degree of European identity and the greatest adherence to EU norms. While experience does not necessarily lead to authority and power, these experienced members of the European parliament will often represent the 'authoritative member of the in-group' and as such may promote socialisation in new and less experienced MEPs. The findings of my primary research are supported by Beauvallet and Michon, who point to a 'Europeanization of the Parliamentary elite',³⁹ with leadership positions within the European Parliament requiring 'the progressive acquisition of a real practical sense of Europe [which gives] individuals a fraction of this institutional charisma that is necessary for laying claim to the exercise of internal power'.⁴⁰ This gives an idea of the presence of an authoritative in group, supporting the presence of a European identity and the socializing power this exerts in the Parliament. Although there is some indication of these facts in my research, there is insufficient evidence to conclusively support this point. It would, however, make for an interesting future research project.

(4) *'when the persuader does not lecture or demand, but, instead, 'acts out principles of serious deliberative argument''*

The requirement for actors to engage in 'serious deliberative argument' is echoed by my interviewees, who point to strong European identity in areas where actors within the

³⁹ Beauvallet, W & Michon, S, 2010. 'Professionalization and socialization of the members of the European Parliament' *French Politics* 8:2, p.161.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

European Parliament are not confrontational, but work together, and work to understand better each other's point of view.⁴¹

As in all areas of my research my data indicates that the degree to which this principal is followed varies greatly amongst my respondents and is closely linked to proposition (2), and the presence of prior norms. In a given situation where an actors' identity is closely aligned with, and accepting of, European identity, and therefore there are few opposing norms, there appears to be a willingness to engage in serious deliberative argument. In these instances, language tends to be collectivist and encouraging.⁴² Conversely, where an actors' existing identity is opposed to the European identity and European norms there is less willingness to search for compromise, language becomes more lecturing and demanding, often appearing fierce or aggressive towards those who display the European identity.⁴³ Bowler and Farrell interpret these different understandings of appropriate behaviour, highlighted in their quantitative study of MEP attitudes, as an indicator that 'in the EP we have found an example of a legislature that seems to function without norms'.⁴⁴ Not only is this statement problematic within the definition of institutions I outlined earlier, I believe that it does not take into account the sub-groups within the EP, whose differing views would cloud a quantitative study looking for unanimity of 'norms of parliamentary courtesy'.⁴⁵ This polarity of opinion will prove problematic for statistical analyses of this nature, but also for the creation of a consensus regarding behaviour. As the above points have shown, even if the persuader acts out principles of serious deliberative argument, if the persuadee disagrees with the principles which form the foundation of the argument the persuasion is unlikely to prove successful.

(5) 'when the persuader-persuadee interaction occurs in less politicized and more insulated, in-camera settings'

Although the focus of this chapter is the role of the European Parliament in European

⁴¹ Eg. John Purvis, Fiona Hall.

⁴² Eg. Maria Badia i Cutchet MEP, 'European Heritage Label (debate)'; Kent Johansson MEP, 'Women and climate change (debate)', 20.04.2012.

⁴³ Eg. Nick Griffin MEP, 'Iceland's application for membership of the European Union (debate)'; Barry Madlener MEP, 'Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)'.

⁴⁴ Bowler & Farrell, 'Parties and Party discipline within the European Parliament'. p.219.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p.212.

identity formation, amplification and change, my data have indicated that it is not primarily in formal debates in the Parliament that normative factors are addressed, indeed the more euro-sceptic among my respondents argue that ‘there is no room for debate’ in the European Parliament.⁴⁶ The suggestion being that the way debates are structured and the time divided results in MEPs having the opportunity to speak for ‘one and a half or two minutes, and there is no opportunity to respond or question’,⁴⁷ meaning there is little opportunity in plenary sessions for interaction which would allow persuasion and argument. As I have outlined earlier, however, I do not believe that the institution of the European Parliament begins and ends with plenary sessions and committee meetings, and my interviewees agree that it is largely in the ‘less politicized’ elements of the European Parliament that European norms are experienced and transmitted.

Fiona Hall explains that ‘the Parliament is ahead of the people that the MEPs represent in terms of feeling a European identity because we work with other people from other countries, speaking different languages, coming from different cultures on a daily basis’, before going on to suggest that ‘many colleagues from other countries would never come into a room without shaking hands and greeting everybody who’s already there, you can see how you can get a reputation for standoffishness if you don’t pick up some of the cultural norms of other people. So in that sense, just because we’re exposed on a day-to-day basis to working with other people then we do develop more of a European identity’.⁴⁸ Although this seems removed from argumentative persuasion it is clear that an identity based partially on cultural norms could be strengthened and spread in this way. This viewpoint is supported by John Purvis, who suggests that the people working within the European institutions will have a greater sense of European identity than people working exclusively within their own member state.

Interaction in the European Parliament

Having looked at the “specialness” of the European Parliament, it is clear that the level of interaction within the institutions, specifically the European Parliament, is of a very

⁴⁶ Towler, Gawain. Personal interview (7th September 2009).

⁴⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸ Hall, Fiona. Personal interview (16th October 2009).

dense nature. MEPs spend much of their working lives in close proximity in Brussels and Strasbourg, in formal and informal environments, and this density of interaction provides an arena for socialisation of European norms. Although it could be argued that this density of interaction could perhaps be matched by a national (or indeed regional) parliament, this density of interaction combines with an increased frequency of situations faced which require a new normative agreement. Along similar lines to Checkel's work on argumentative persuasion is Risse's proposed "logic of arguing", in which identities and interests are challenged through their normative underpinning. Risse specifically identifies when norms are in conflict, '[t]he more the norms are contested, the less the logic of the situation can be captured by the statement "good people do X" than by "what does good mean in this situation?" or even "what is the right thing to do?" But how do actors adjudicate which norm applies? They argue'.⁴⁹ As I outlined earlier, those entering the European Parliament would not be doing so in a state of normative vacuum, there would be many pre-existing norms. In addition to this it is very likely that there would be multiple competing norms at the European level. In situations which actors have not faced before, and there is no established role or "appropriate" behaviour for the given situation a precedent must be decided upon, and argument plays a major role in this decision-making process. In this way Risse's logic of arguing is similar to Checkel's argumentative persuasion, and the "ground rules" for the logic of arguing are similar to those outlined above. Where there is likely to be pre-existing normative precedents in national parliaments this is less likely within the European Parliament, and debate will have the power to shape these normative understandings.

Where Checkel argues that persuasion will be most likely to succeed when there are few contradictory prior norms, Risse approaches the problem from the other end. Risse draws on the work of Habermas to argue for the requirement of a "common lifeworld" for successful argumentative behaviour.⁵⁰ This common lifeworld, ideally 'provided by a high degree of international institutionalization in the respective issue-area',⁵¹ allows a basis for argument drawing on pre-existing shared values, norms, experiences and identities. Within the international political arena there can be few areas where there is

⁴⁹ Risse, T., "'Let's Argue!': Communicative Action in World Politics' *International Organization* 54:1, 2000, p.6.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p.14.

⁵¹ Ibid, p.19.

such a strong common lifeworld as within the institutions of the European Union. Although, as we have seen, there are some differences between national identities, there is certainly a common lifeworld within Europe built upon the values of the European Union, the culture and history of European states and the norms of the European Union and constituent institutions. As such the European identity experienced within the institutions of the EU makes normative argumentation possible, and affords the possibility of normative change, refinement and amplification. In addition, recourse to shared norms is likely to reinforce and prioritise these norms, strengthening their influence. This is an example of how agent and structure can mutually constitute one another, and goes some way to explaining why European identity is felt significantly stronger within the European Parliament than within the populace of the EU at large.

Risse joins Checkel in pointing to the importance of ‘dense interactions in informal, network-like setting’, and the ‘[u]ncertainty of interests and/or lack of knowledge about the situation among the actors’,⁵² but points to another crucial component if norms influencing attitudes and identities are to change, that at least one participant in the argument is genuinely willing to have that identity changed based on the better argument. ‘If everybody in a communicative situation engages in rhetoric – the speaker, the target and the audience – they can argue strategically until they’re blue in the face and still not change anyone’s mind’.⁵³ One example of this informal, network-like setting which is not found in plenary, is in Parliamentary committees, and in the creation of reports. This is an area in which a high degree of interaction takes place, with the possibility of argument, persuasion and compromise.⁵⁴ Different political groupings within the European Parliament are required to come together in committee to draw up reports, and this can be an arena for normative interaction. Corbett, Jacobs and Shackleton assert that within committee meetings ‘there is a greater informality than in plenary sessions’,⁵⁵ while ‘assuming a central role in the establishment of the institution on the whole range of issues, legislative and non-legislative, that come before it’.⁵⁶ Corbett, Jacobs and Shackleton go on to say of committee meetings that ‘the relationship between Groups in the committees is marked by a subtle mixture of conflict

⁵² Ibid., p.19.

⁵³ Ibid, p.8.

⁵⁴ Metin Kazak MEP, ‘Trade and economic relations with Turkey (debate)’, 20.09.2010.

⁵⁵ Corbett, R., Jacobs, F. & Shackleton, M., 2011. *The European Parliament* (8th ed.). John Harper Publishing, London. p.153.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p.170.

and cooperation. Disagreements can be profound and can be expressed very forcibly but equally, there is often a strong *esprit de corps* which enables members to find a degree of consensus, particularly when the treaty provisions require absolute majorities in plenary that no Group alone can deliver.⁵⁷ Crucial to this understanding and *esprit de corps* developing is, they argue, ‘a degree of informality and openness within which relations of trust can develop that transcend political divisions’.⁵⁸ This highlights not only the importance of informal interaction within the process of socialization in the European Parliament, but also the method of persuasion, building trust rather than demanding or lecturing.

These claims of Risse and Checkel, supported by evidence from within the European Parliament, that points and arguments are more likely to be persuasive if they are genuine normative arguments, indicates why Schimmelfennig’s ‘rhetorical action’ is incapable of effecting identity change. While rhetorical action is capable of influencing the behaviour of actors, for example by normatively entrapping them into performing certain actions, neither the persuader nor the persuadee within this scenario is willing to allow their normative framework to be influenced by the better argument. It is, of course, very difficult in practise to ascertain whether statements and claims made by MEPs within the environment of the European Parliament constitute them engaging in truth finding discourses, or whether they are merely employing rhetoric. From the evidence of European Parliament debates and personal contact with actors, I believe that it is quite possible that some of the claims relating to promises already made by the EU to Turkey backed up by references to the principal of *pacta sunt servanda* are instances of rhetorical action, but my data also demonstrate that for some members of the EU norms are brought to the table, debated, and compromises found. In this way I believe that the “logic of arguing” has a role to play in the formation and strengthening of European identity within the European Parliament.

My data have supported the work of Checkel and Risse in suggesting that the density of interaction is important in socialization and norm change, but they also indicate that the quality of interaction is of great importance. My analysis of debate in the European Parliament has indicated that amongst the broad spectrum of policy competences

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

addressed, there are some areas in which debate is more likely to concern normative factors, values and identity, while others have little or no normative component. This view is supported by the MEPs interviewed. ‘I guess identity is not fundamental to your consumer protection legislation or your environmental standards for instance, which accounts for a good chunk of EU legislation, but is perhaps more of an issue when you’re discussing justice and home affairs issues, in particular immigration and asylum law, things like that, and arguably foreign policy from time to time’.⁵⁹ My research indicates that there are two broad areas in which issues of identity come to the fore in the European Parliament, issues which require or are facilitated by collective action, and issues which challenge identity in some way. Fiona Hall states that ‘there will be some issues in which everybody is working together with a strong sense of European identity, of wanting Europe to take the lead on something, like on climate change’.⁶⁰ In these policy areas the norms which dictate appropriate action appear to be primarily those housed within the EU institutions and concerning a European identity, at least for those who are receptive to European norms. As discussed earlier, there is likely to be a variation in the strength of European identity expressed, largely based on prior norms and political ideologies, but for many, European identity is felt strongly. Although debates in these areas in which identity is felt strongly are unlikely to produce great shifts in European norms, the search for consensus and compromise within such a dense normative environment will be capable of refining the norms, ‘an argumentative consensus has constitutive effects on actors’,⁶¹ and increasing their applicability in the wider context of the European Parliament. The need for unanimity amongst member states for a new country to accede to membership means that a single European voice is required within the institution of the EU in its broadest sense, and this filters down to the European Parliament, which is also required to vote in favour of a new member (although unanimity is not required). My research indicates the belief amongst MEPs that the European Parliament has the ability to shape the debate and discourse over Turkey’s accession negotiations, and that momentum can be built during the negotiations which would make it more difficult for member states to refuse entry to Turkey. In this way the European Parliament is seen to be taking a lead on the issue, and European identity becomes an important factor. During debates references are made to

⁵⁹ Corbett, Richard. Personal interview (19th March 2010).

⁶⁰ Hall, Fiona. Personal interview (16th October 2009)

⁶¹ Risse, “‘Let’s Argue!’”, p.10.

the role of the EP in the promotion of European identity and values in the broader world⁶² as well as for citizens of the EU and candidate countries,⁶³ and this is likely to heighten the perceived importance of finding a common European Parliament voice.

The second area in which factors of identity become important in the European Parliament is where issues challenge existing identity in some way, whether national or European. Richard Corbett identifies immigration, asylum law and foreign policy as competences in which European identity is particularly important, and all challenge established norms and identity. Immigration and asylum policy, although perhaps affecting European identity, will primarily be seen to challenge national or even regional identity. The foreign policy debated within the European Parliament will be European foreign policy however, and, as such, will be of greatest challenge to European identity (although perceived loss of sovereignty could affect national identity). The role of the European Parliament in foreign policy is relatively small, but debates concerning enlargement fall within this bracket and, therefore, present a challenge to identity. Debates concerning enlargement are certainly a focus for identity and normative based arguments, although not always phrased in terms of the identity as a whole. It is of no surprise that arguments concerning religion and the disputed basis of European identity in Christianity are common within debates concerning Turkish accession, but much rarer when debating the progress of other candidate countries. Hans-Gert Pöttering argues that Turkish accession to EU membership would have ‘a profound effect’ on European identity,⁶⁴ and this viewpoint is backed up by a questionnaire respondent who suggests that the effect would be great. Similarly Geoffrey Van Orden argues that ‘the European Union would be very different with a country like Turkey as a member’.⁶⁵ When there is a challenge, or potential challenge, to established norms and identity these norms are brought to the forefront, contested and debated, and there is scope for norm change. When this challenge to European identity is perceived the “rules of the game” result in a shift towards European norms and a “logic of appropriateness” based largely in what are appropriate roles and behaviour for “European” actors.

⁶² Catherine Ashton, Vice-President of the European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, ‘Human rights in the world and the European Union's policy on the matter (debate)’.

⁶³ Nicolai Wammen, President-in-Office of the Council, ‘Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)’.

⁶⁴ Pöttering, Hans-Gert, MEP + former EP President (Personal correspondence)

⁶⁵ Geoffrey Van Orden MEP, ‘Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)’.

Although social constructivist scholars view institutions as more than mere arenas for constraining actors' behaviour, it is important not to underestimate their importance as arenas for debate. It is through argument and persuasion, made possible by the institution of the European Parliament, that norms of European identity are socialised, and I believe that this is particularly true in the field of EU enlargement. The nature of enlargement as a policy area means that arguments based in identity are prevalent, and this combined with the density of interaction within the European Parliament results in strong socialisation of European norms in this area.

We have seen that existing norms can gain in strength and breadth within the institutions of the EU through the process of socialisation, but the European Parliament also provides an arena for the creation and propagation of new norms. In line with the theory of mutual constitution of agent and structure, norms can be introduced by members of the institution and become part of the "rules of the game" governing the institution, before being socialised into existing and new members.

One way in which norms can be introduced is when new members join the European Parliament, bringing their own norms into the institution. As no-one entering the institution will be in a state of normative vacuum they will already have normative frameworks underpinning the different components of their identity, and these will be expressed through argument and debate. Although these new actors will be subject to socialisation by norms of the institution along the lines outlined above, it will not be a one-way process, one of the foundations of argumentative persuasion being that the best argument will win the debate (although this is not the same as rational choice decision making as traditionally understood). This is one way in which the presence of Turkey within the EU could influence identity within the institutions. There is a perceived 'duty to safeguard these [European] values, especially at a time of crisis when they are placed under pressure',⁶⁶ and this accords with the social constructivist theory outlined earlier. Zbigniew Ziobro suggests that 'accepting Turkey into the European Union would appear to be completely unrealistic and illogical. It would be a disaster for such pillars of the Union as the protection of human rights',⁶⁷ while Peter van Dalen points to the 'dangerous cocktail of Turkish nationalism and the dark sides of Islam' before asserting

⁶⁶ Britta Thomsen MEP, 'Recent political developments in Hungary (debate)', 18.01.2012.

⁶⁷ Zbigniew Ziobro MEP, 'Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)'.

that ‘Allowing Turkey into the EU would be a mistake of historic proportions’.⁶⁸ It is clear that some MEPs perceive an acute pressure on European identity and harbour concerns of identity change in relation to Turkish membership. Respondents indicated their belief that Turkish accession would be unlikely to fundamentally change the values of the European Union, as these would need to be subscribed to by Turkey before membership would be possible, but that new norms would be introduced, and identity would be changed. One possible effect could be one of ‘underlin[ing] that European identity is pluralistic, it’s “unity in diversity” but it would also have a message that it’s not based on a culturally exclusive viewpoint. It’s accepting that European identity is indeed, not just politically, but also culturally and religiously pluralistic’.⁶⁹ This effect highlighted by my research would mark a departure from European identity as I outlined it in the previous section, and demonstrates the socialising power of the institutions.

Whether the new norms are brought into the institution by new members or ‘norm entrepreneurs’⁷⁰ already within the institution, the European Parliament provides an arena for these new norms to be debated, and for the norm entrepreneur to attempt to convince members of the institution to subscribe to the new norm. Although the established normative environment of the European Parliament will make the establishing of new norms difficult, the process of argumentation and persuasion will follow the pattern established above and, if the arguments in support of the new European norm are strong enough, eventually a “tipping point” will be reached and European identity will be changed. It is through social learning and argumentative persuasion that Checkel theorises that élites, rather than the larger population, will internalise these norms.⁷¹ This certainly appears to be the case at European level, as density of interaction is significantly higher at the level of the élite, including amongst MEPs, with European identity perceived to be much stronger within the institutions of the EU than amongst ordinary citizens of member states, as indicated throughout my research.

⁶⁸ Peter van Dalen MEP, ‘Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)’.

⁶⁹ Corbett, Richard. Personal interview (19th March 2010).

⁷⁰ See Finnemore and Sikkink ‘Norm Dynamics and Political Change’ p.895.

⁷¹ Checkel, ‘Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change’ *International Organization* 55:3, 2001.

While Checkel and Risse look primarily at how norms are spread, Adler addresses the question of why specific norms are spread. ‘Because interpretation is involved in the social construction of international reality, constructivist theory must be able to address the question of which interpretations and whose interpretations become social reality. In other words, why do certain ideas and concepts acquire epistemic, discursive and institutional authority?’⁷² To answer this question Adler proposes the concept of “cognitive evolution” which ‘means that at any point in time and place of a historical process, institutional or social facts may be constructed by collective understandings of the physical and the social world that are subject to authoritative (political) selection processes and thus to evolutionary change. Cognitive evolution is thus the process of innovation, domestic and international diffusion, political selection and effective institutionalization that creates the intersubjective understanding on which the interests, practices and behaviour of governments are based’.⁷³ In practice this covers much of the same theoretical ground as the theories outlined above, although it attempts to draw together elements of norm creation, selection, spread and reification into a unified theory of identity change. Adler also points to the importance of interaction and socialisation for which the European Parliament provides such a good arena, but he goes on to suggest that institutions and norms which become internalised and reified are not necessarily those which are the best fit or the most efficient, but those ‘that prove most successful at imposing collective meaning and function on physical reality’.⁷⁴ Adler highlights the role of power in the selection of norms, as well as ‘political selection...driven by political leaders’ intersubjective expectations of progress’. For Adler, as with Risse, European identity as it stands is just one of the theoretically possible “European identities”, and changes which occur will be based on intersubjective selection pressure. In this way new members of the European Union will have a constitutive effect on European Union, but will not produce a causative change. An example of this within extant European identity can be seen within the association between Europe and the Christian faith. In the course of my research it was suggested to me that, although the majority of respondents associated Europe and the European Union with Christianity, or even modern Christendom, it could be argued that there is a Judaeo-Christian basis to European values, and that other religions, including Islam, had

⁷² Adler, E., ‘Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics’ *European Journal of International Relations* 3:3, 1997, p.337.

⁷³ Ibid, p.339.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p.340.

a historical role in Europe. Bernd Posselt suggests that although the European Parliament ‘also support freedom of conscience and religion for Muslims and agnostics’, ‘Christians all over the world are being persecuted in a very specific way and Europe, as a primarily Christian continent, must be seen to be protecting Christians throughout the world in a very specific way...The specific target group of our human rights policy is Christians’.⁷⁵ Although there is today a sizeable population of Muslims in the EU, this focus on Christianity led one of my questionnaire respondents to argue that Turkey was very unlikely to join the EU due to ‘prejudice against Muslims’ and suggest that some within the EU were Islamophobic. Although this claim is difficult to assess, and it is undoubtedly unfair to accuse most within the EP of this, some statements made debates certainly imply an association of negative factors with Islam.

Despite the questionnaire respondent’s observations, if Turkey does become a member of the European Union it is partially due to this power to shape debate that worries over changes to European identity stem. Although Fiona Hall believes that ‘the European Parliament is a big place, there are many, many other people and no one country, even of that size, can dominate completely’,⁷⁶ when asked whether Turkish membership of the EU would affect European identity John Bowis replied ‘because of its size it would have to, it couldn’t not’.⁷⁷ Peter Van Dalen argues that ‘Turkey’s accession would have a detrimental effect on integration’ and that ‘[w]e would have to deal with millions of people who, unfortunately are not familiar with the Judaeo-Christian fundamentals of Europe and who would want to change them’.⁷⁸ If Turkey joined the EU as the largest country by population it would (barring special measures to prevent it) have the greatest number of MEPs. While this concerns respondents in terms of decision making power it would also afford them a degree of power over norm selection.

Although the work of Adler indicates that European norms may not be exact transcriptions of the “brute facts”, the norms retain their power to shape identity and interest, and this effect could be felt in a broader context than simply within the institutions themselves. Accession negotiations with Turkey are conducted by the

⁷⁵ Bernd Posselt MEP, ‘Human rights in the world and the European Union’s policy on the matter (debate)’.

⁷⁶ Fiona Hall. Personal interview (16th October 2009).

⁷⁷ Bowis, John. Personal interview (2nd September 2009).

⁷⁸ Peter Van Dalen MEP, ‘2010 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

institutions of the EU and not by member states. This puts the institutions of the EU into a position of power within the cognitive evolution of this area, and thus gives them power in norm selection and, ultimately, in relation to European identity concerning Turkey. By the conclusion of accession negotiations the institutions of the EU could have produced a marked shift in norms towards Turkish membership, significantly influencing identity in the European Parliament and beyond, as well as the outcome of Turkey's membership bid.

A competing hypothesis for identity within the context of the European institutions has been put forward in the form of social identity theory, which differs from the theories outlined thus far in that it posits a distinction between personal and social identity, and 'SIT is concerned with the latter and starts from the assumption that social identity is derived primarily from group memberships'.⁷⁹ '[S]ocial identity is an individual's attempt to categorize himself/herself as a member of a group that is different from others'.⁸⁰ Curley attempts to clarify the difference between social identity theory and constructivist approaches, stating that 'SIT assumes a "social identity" is an individual-based understanding of the group, rather than the constructivist assumption that the group entirely defines the group self',⁸¹ however I believe that this over simplifies the constructivist approach. Adler is keen to point out that 'actors are far from being structural "idiots"',⁸² and this is the point of the mutual constitution of agents and structures, that it is a two-way process. In keeping with this argument for the genesis of social identity, Curley 'proposes that the development of a national identity in relation to Europe is the most significant contributing factor to a policy to support/oppose expanding the EU to include applicant countries'.⁸³ Although my research has suggested that identity has a role to play to in enlargement, I do not believe that the formation of a national identity for Europe has occurred, rather that European norms are present alongside national norms, and the appropriate norms are selected in each situation. My data show that a separation into personal and group identity, with actors within the European Parliament demonstrating a group identity based on their membership of the Parliament, is too simple a model for a very nuanced normative environment. My data

⁷⁹ Brown, R., 'Social Identity Theory: past achievements, current problems and future challenges' *European Journal of Social Psychology* 30, 2000, p.746.

⁸⁰ Curley, T., 'Social Identity Theory and EU Expansion' *International Studies Quarterly* 53, 2009, p.651.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Adler, 'Constructivism in World Politics', p.325.

⁸³ Curley, 'Social Identity Theory and EU Expansion', p.649.

suggest that many competing norms are present within each actor, the European Parliament does have a constitutive effect on the identity of actors within it, new norms will be socialised, and the institution will help actors to select the norms relating to appropriate behaviour in a European setting, but these norms would not have been socialised into a “normative vacuum”, rather they will be alongside the pre-existing norms.

Despite my disagreement with some elements of social identity theory, I believe that some of the hypotheses Curley generates from SIT are worth examining in relation to my research. He states that ‘SIT’s main contribution to the issue of EU expansion policy lies in its ability to provide a framework for understanding which EU decision-makers will likely support/oppose the inclusion of an applicant country and when rationality-/identity-based arguments will be used to highlight the various policies’.⁸⁴ Curley generalises this to a national level, and does not attempt to extrapolate his hypotheses to the European institutions, but I believe that this model does not cover the full spectrum of identity arguments which have been expressed within the European Parliament and explained to me during the course of my research. Curley argues that ‘the stronger a decision-maker identifies with Europe, the stricter he/she will be when deciding which country should be allowed entrance into the EU’,⁸⁵ however my research has suggested that a drive towards enlargement is in fact a component in the European identity, and the weight of norms associated with this must be balanced against any potential “ingroup bias”. As a result Curley makes little reference to identity arguments being used in support of potential members, and my research has indicated occasions on which identity arguments have overridden rational arguments in favour of candidate countries.⁸⁶ Curley goes on to argue that ‘those decision-makers who have weaker European identities will be more supportive of including applicant countries into the EU because meeting the membership criteria of the group is sufficient for accession’.⁸⁷ My research has indicated that this is not always the case with decision-makers within the European Parliament, where those who do not subscribe to European identity still make identity judgements, or at least rational choice judgements, based at a national level rather than rational choice decisions taken at European level. Although

⁸⁴ Ibid, p.650.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ See, for example, John Bowis, Stephen Hughes interviews.

⁸⁷ Curley, ‘Social Identity Theory and EU Expansion’, p.650.

the importance of the Copenhagen Criteria for membership of the EU is emphasised during debate, within the same session MEPs suggest a number of important factors which go beyond these criteria which are also important in decision-making regarding enlargement. This is supported by interviewees and questionnaire respondents, all respondents indicated conditions other than the Copenhagen Criteria which also needed to be met, and these varied from respondent to respondent. For this reason I don't believe that those who do not feel a European identity will necessarily be more supportive of Turkish membership than those who do. While this would hold within a perfect model of social identity theory I do not believe these hypotheses are valid for the views of MEPs with relation to EU expansion, specifically to Turkish membership.

One area of social identity theory which I believe is supported by my data is some concept of "ingroup bias" and positive comparisons with outgroups, what is referred to in the broader literature as the creation of the "Other". This is seen by many social constructivists as vital to the establishment of identity, and my research suggests that this effect is found within European identity. As European identity has evolved and challenges to the identity have changed, so too has the sense of other changed. Throughout the cold war European identity had an "Other" in the form of communist states in the East, and it has been suggested that it was easier for Eastern European states to join the European Union once they had moved away from communism for this reason. During my research I have found it difficult to establish a single, unified "Other", not least because of the varying nature of European identity. For many the "we" of the European Parliament is established and phrased primarily on grounds of values, those outlined in the preceding chapter. For these actors, the "Other", those which are seen to present the greatest threat to European identity, are undemocratic, repressive regimes.⁸⁸ Where cultural heritage is seen to be of particular importance, the "Other" is likely to be constructed along these lines.⁸⁹ Similarly, where Christianity is of primary importance, countries which follow, or who have large populations which follow, other religions are likely to be constructed in this way.⁹⁰

Even this is of course a simplification of the real picture, where all of these factors are

⁸⁸ Eg. Tadeusz Zwiefka MEP, 'Human rights violations in Bahrain', 15.03.2012.

⁸⁹ Eg. Tadeusz Cymański MEP, 'Enlargement report for Serbia'.

⁹⁰ Eg. Barry Madlener MEP, '2010 Progress report on Turkey'.

likely to play a role to a greater or lesser degree. For some of those I spoke to Turkey is clearly seen as the “Other”, to Hans-Gert Pöttering ‘Turkey is not part of the European family’ and Turkish accession is undesirable ‘politically, culturally, financially as well as geographically’,⁹¹ while Barry Madlener bluntly states that ‘Europe does not want Turkey, and Europe does not want Islam’.⁹² As attitudes towards Turkey are not straightforward in this regard it is an area which will be intensely debated if and when Turkish membership of the EU gets closer to becoming a reality, and this debate will have a constitutive effect on European identity. If the norms which are selected and socialised are those which portray Turkey as the “Other”, presumably with identity heavily reliant on religion and culture, Turkey will find it almost impossible to join the EU. If, on the other hand, identity within the institutions of the EU evolves to a point where it is compatible with Turkish national identity and Turkey is not the “other” then it will become a simpler process for Turkey to accede to membership. This does not, however, mean that it would become straightforward as, although the identity within the European Parliament, and perhaps the EU institutions, would support Turkish membership, this does not mean that broader European identity would be in accordance and it would be necessary for the norms be transferred to transcend the EU institutions.

The Parliament and broader European identity

Having spoken about the creation and spread of norms within the institutions of the EU I asked my interviewees and questionnaire respondents whether they believed that the European Parliament embodied European identity. The response to this was, unsurprisingly, mixed. For the minority of respondents who do not believe in a European identity or believe that the identity is not related to the European Union the answer was no, although from some there was an acceptance that others within the institution did feel and express the European identity. Amongst respondents who were more accepting of a concept of European identity however, the European Parliament was seen to embody the identity to a greater or lesser extent. A questionnaire respondent argued that the European Parliament did indeed embody European identity, and that identity is ‘essential’ in the European Parliament, while Hans-Gert Pöttering suggests that ‘The European Parliament has been an important promoter of European values

⁹¹ Pöttering, Hans-Gert, MEP + former EP President (Personal correspondence)

⁹² Barry Madlener MEP, ‘2010 Progress report on Turkey’.

since its very beginning. Its evolution towards a full legislator has strongly strengthened democracy in Europe. Furthermore, the European Parliament itself is a place of lived European identity: It mirrors European diversity through different view points and illustrates that cultural, geographical and linguistic differences are no barriers for mutual understanding'.⁹³ In this statement Mr. Pöttering elucidates a vision of the European Parliament in social constructivist terms, one which has a normative basis constituted by those within it. Mr. Pöttering goes on to say that 'the European Union can clearly be seen as an identity shaper',⁹⁴ indicating that the EU institutions in turn have a constitutive effect on the identities of their members. Echoing the importance of common action in identity, Libor Rouček argues that European identity is felt within the European Parliament 'perhaps more than in any other institution because the European Parliament is an elected body of representatives of 27 countries so it's...a body that to a large extent deals on a pan-European basis'.⁹⁵ John Purvis suggests that there is the potential for the European Parliament to play the role of 'custodian of the European identity',⁹⁶ drawing on its embodiment of the European identity, pointing out that 'it's about the only thing that could, because each individual parliament in each country can't really aspire to the European identity'. While he does point to this potential role, he is also quick to point out that the Parliament 'has a long way to go before it's accepted by the population at large' for the role of custodian, another example of identity being felt stronger within the institutions of the EU. Although he argues that the European Parliament does embody European identity, he points out that 'it's just an element, one dimension of it'. Due to the nature of this question, it is difficult to judge from European Parliament debates the mood of MEPs on this issue, however there is clearly a perceived role for the EP in broader identity in Europe. Acting as President-in-Office of the Council and speaking during the debate over the Enlargement Report for Turkey, Nicolai Wammen chose to 'emphasise the importance of the European Parliament in a broader political context. Debates like the one we have had today are crucial for engaging the citizens of both Turkey and the EU Member States and for ensuring the continued support for, and understanding of, our joint project. This is important work that we must not underestimate and that we should focus on to a greater extent. The European Parliament has an incredibly important role to play in this

⁹³ Pöttering, Hans-Gert, MEP + former EP President (Personal correspondence)

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Rouček, Libor. Personal interview (6th May 2010).

⁹⁶ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

regard.⁹⁷ Although the ability of the EP to engage with the citizens of Europe would undoubtedly be challenged by some actors within it, this perceived role is an interesting and important dynamic at play in matters of identity. During a debate concerning the European Intelligent Energy programme Janusz Lewandowski, a Member of the European Commission, speaks of the European Parliament in normative terms, albeit presumably unintentionally, by suggesting that ‘The role of the European Parliament is very clear in shaping the future by shaping the rules of the game’.⁹⁸

As John Purvis points out, it would be artificial to look at the European Parliament in isolation as the sole home and driving force behind a European identity. There is a large degree of interaction, debate and argument between the institutions of the EU on legislation, and this provides the opportunity for wider socialisation of norms and identity change. In areas where decisions are reached through the ordinary legislative procedure (formerly the co-decision procedure)

we, the Parliament, and the Council sit down and try and thrash out agreement, two readings in Parliament, two readings in Council. If there’s a disagreement then we end up in negotiation with Council, in conciliation as it’s called, but at each key stage we need to muster the majorities inside the Parliament. At second reading stage we need to have an absolute majority, so half the members plus one, and given the fragmented nature of the political groupings inside the European Parliament that necessitates cross-party consultation and communication and therefore...we’re more willing to empathise and take on board the perspectives of other political groupings which involve a mix of European perspectives.⁹⁹

These procedures allow argumentative persuasion within and between individual institutions and, by extension, the socialisation of norms. Although decisions can end up in conciliation, ‘early cases set a precedent for reaching agreement at first or second reading stage, even on sensitive issues’,¹⁰⁰ and the important role of norms is further highlighted with the argument that ‘growth in inter-institutional negotiations led to the gradual emergence of a new practice...known as the trilogue’.¹⁰¹ The trilogue involves

⁹⁷ Nicolai Wammen, President-in-Office of the Council, ‘Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)’.

⁹⁸ Janusz Lewandoski MEP, ‘Intelligent Energy Europe programme (debate)’, 15.12.2011.

⁹⁹ Hughes, Stephen. Personal interview (21st May 2010).

¹⁰⁰ Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton, *The European Parliament*, p.241.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

interaction and negotiation between a European Parliament delegation, the Council Presidency and the appropriate Commissioner, and although ‘rules lay down the main framework for preparing, conducting and following up trilogies...much detail has been left to practice.’¹⁰² John Bowis echoes the importance of inter-institutional interaction, suggesting that although the formal procedures can produce identity change, it is again informal interaction which can be more effective. ‘In my ten years I got to know and work with people from the Commission. Certainly criticising them, berating them and being robust, but also by saying “this is where we want to go, why don’t we try something along these lines?”’.¹⁰³ Interaction between the European Parliament and other institutions of the EU affords opportunities for socialisation of norms across the institutional divide and within the individual institutions. John Purvis highlights the importance of identity arguments in gaining agreement within the EP. ‘You’ve got to get 375 people to vote the way you want to go, rather than 375 against it. It might only be you and me, your MEP, and I’ve got to get 374 to back me up’, and with there not being enough from a single country, ‘you have to get wider than that, broader than that’.¹⁰⁴ The norms developed within and as a result of inter-institutional interaction mean that this can be an important factor in identity change within the European Union.

Although it lies beyond the scope of my research, my data suggest that there is the possibility of extending Wendt’s individual analogy, ‘states are people too’¹⁰⁵ to an EU level, with EU institutions themselves becoming actors with identities and interests. The European Parliament undeniably has a material base, which Wendt describes as vital to a personal or corporate identity and as a ‘site or platform for other identities’.¹⁰⁶ My research suggests agents within the European Parliament also see a role identity for their institution, as the democratically elected body within the European Union, the voice of the people, possibly even the custodian of European identity.¹⁰⁷ This role only exists in relation to the other institutions and, I believe, gives the European Parliament a form of identity. The place of the European Parliament within the EU as a whole, and the European identity in general could result in the Parliament expressing collective identity with fellow institutions, particularly when presented with a greater or more relevant

¹⁰² Ibid, p.242.

¹⁰³ Bowis, John. Personal interview (2nd September 2009).

¹⁰⁴ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

¹⁰⁵ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p.215.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p.225.

¹⁰⁷ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009)

“Other”. While I would not claim that this suggestion is irrefutable, or that a European Parliament identity is set in stone, the respondents in my research have spoken of the role of the European Parliament, and John Bowis refers to the European Parliament as a ‘living organism’, suggesting that in interaction with other institutions ‘*it certainly gets frustrated by certain things*’.¹⁰⁸ If the European Parliament were found to have identities and interests it could affect decision-making within the institution, as actors were aware of the interests of the Parliament and the role which it plays. This is an area which, I believe, warrants further research and could be an interesting and informative addition to theories of European integration.

I believe that my research has shown that the rational choice “thin” view of institutions, as arenas for and constraints on actor behaviour and strategies, is not an accurate view of the institutions of the European Union as they are at present. The institution of the European Parliament amounts to a great deal more than what is outlined within the treaties of the EU, and is a complex picture of norms and identities. The European Parliament is both constituted by the actors within it and constitutes the identity of those actors and, as such, has a profound effect on actor identity. The European Parliament is a particularly good environment for the creation and socialisation of new norms for a number of reasons. When actors enter the European Parliament they are put into novel situations, for which they have no defined appropriate behaviour. To settle upon an appropriate course of action actors engage in discussion, argument and persuasion. The European Parliament provides an arena for normative debate of a nature and density which result in many actors socialising and expressing European norms, thus shifting identities. As Gawain Towler, who expressed his disagreement with the concept of European identity relating to the EU, put it ‘many of those who are in the parliament are from the eurocracy, most of those who don’t [sic] are indoctrinated into it’.¹⁰⁹ Even when not phrased in normative terms, this socialising effect is observed by the vast majority of respondents.

The normative debate occurs in areas of greatest co-operation within the European Parliament, or between institutions, as well as in areas which challenge existing norms and identity. One area for which all of these criteria are strongly met is the area of

¹⁰⁸ Bowis, John. Personal interview (2nd September 2009). Emphasis added.

¹⁰⁹ Towler, Gawain. Personal interview (7th September 2009).

enlargement, particularly the accession negotiations with Turkey. For this reason an understanding of the European Parliament's role in identity is important when considering the Turkish application for membership, but the reverse is also true. Identity within the institutions of the EU is changeable, and the debate over Turkish membership will affect this identity.

The official role of the European Parliament in decision-making on EU enlargement is relatively small, limited to a largely symbolic vote once a country has already been accepted by all member states, but this view of the institutions of the EU involving merely regulative norms is once again insufficient. My research has demonstrated that the strength of European identity within the European Parliament exceeds that of the population of the EU as a whole, and MEPs suggest that there is a role for the Parliament to propagate European identity outside its own boundaries. Through interactions between the European Parliament and other institutions norms can be socialised further afield, and European identity can change. The institutions of the EU also have a far stronger role than member states' governments during the negotiations and this process has the potential to alter how Turkey, and Turkish membership of the EU is viewed. If negotiations are concluded and Turkey is no longer viewed as the "other" and is seen to have a broadly similar identity it is more likely to be granted membership of the EU.

My research has also highlighted areas in which future research could be conducted. Although I believe that a "thick" view of institutions provides a more accurate picture of their nature and workings, this means that EU institutions are also subject to change without recourse to treaty change. For this reason my research only provides a snapshot of the current state of the institutions. The strength of identity, and the nature of normative arguments involved, also varies between competences, and further study could fruitfully be carried out into the effect of identity in other policy areas. In order to achieve depth and richness of data, my research has focussed on the European Parliament but I believe that a study of identity within the other institutions and a greater emphasis on the interactions between institutions could elucidate the strength and nature of identity within EU as a whole, as well as the Commission and European Parliament individually. Finally an interesting avenue of research could be pursued investigating the applicability of the individual analogy to EU institutions and the effect

this might have on decision-making.

In accordance with social constructivist theory, this chapter has demonstrated that the European Parliament amounts to a great deal more than the intervening variable hypothesised by rationalist scholars, that institutions have an important role to play in the socialisation of norms and that the European Parliament is a key factor in constituting the identity of MEPs. This is a vital facet in understanding the role of norms and identity within the EU, and the influence these factors have on actor interest and behaviour. The findings of this chapter, that the European Parliament itself plays an important role in the identity of its constituent actors, show that an analysis of identity which failed to take this into account would be flawed. The European Parliament provides a normatively rich and dense environment in which actors interact, debate and argue. I have shown that the conditions necessary for normative influence and change are present within the European Parliament, and the degree to which normative factors are invoked and challenged varies by policy area. The nature of Turkey as ‘the ‘thorny issue’ or ‘hot potato’ topic of EU enlargement policy’,¹¹⁰ particularly in areas of identity, norms and values, means that identity will have a particular impact in Turkish accession, but also that Turkish accession has the potential to impact on identity within the European Parliament.

¹¹⁰ Bogdani, M., *Turkey and the Dilemma of EU Accession*. p.159.

The influence of Identity on the Interests and Behaviour of Actors within the European Parliament with regards to Turkish Accession

I have demonstrated with my research that actors within the European Parliament are exposed to a “European identity” based on norms from the European level, alongside other norms and identities, and the important role played by the European Parliament in this identity formation. This is not enough, however, to address all of my research questions, or to have a rounded view of identity within the European Parliament. To gain a more complete understanding of identity, it is also necessary for me to examine the interests and behaviour of actors within the EP. Although I have shown that there is a role for identity founded in European norms this does not logically mean that actor behaviour is influenced by this identity. Although social constructivists assert that identity and interest are inextricably linked, the evidence of the preceding chapters is that European identity is not experienced to the exclusion of national and regional identity. The social constructivist argument I have outlined argues that behaviour is based on a wide array of norms which are exerting influence concurrently and through different mechanisms. For this reason, it is possible that, although norms of European identity are experienced within the European Parliament, it is not these norms which influence the interests and behaviour of actors. For this reason, this chapter will examine the influence of norms of European identity on the behaviour and interests of actors, and assess the impact of these norms in relation to more “rational” factors. This chapter will not attempt to provide definitive answers to questions of decision making regarding Turkish accession, but the case study will be used to examine the nature and strength of European identity within the European Parliament.

As I have indicated throughout this thesis, it is not my intention to replace one theory concerning the European institutions and actor identity which I believe to be inadequate, with another theory which ignores the important strong points of the existing theory. The issues of identities, interests and decision making processes remain complex problems within the European Parliament, and the European Union generally. Although it is my assertion that issues of identity, norms and logics of appropriateness have a role to play in the interests of MEPs, I do not claim that they are important to the exclusion of more traditional, “rationalist” factors such as power and national interest. Instead I

aim to investigate the relative importance of what might be termed “rationalist” and “social constructivist” factors and how these issues interplay and interact, and this will be the key to establishing a more nuanced understanding of identity within the European Parliament. In keeping with my earlier research I will remain conscious of the fact that my research is context dependent, that is that norms of European identity will be felt in varying strengths by different individuals and in different policy areas, and it is possible that different logics of action will be followed by different individuals. I intend to achieve this by problematising the identities of actors within the European Parliament, rather than accepting them as given as if often the case in EU scholarship.

The importance of historical context in understanding norms and identity, as indicated in earlier chapters, renders an understanding of the historic relations between the EU and Turkey equally important. Norms regarding Turkish membership and attitudes towards Turkey will have developed over the course of negotiations, and indeed longer, and there will be a two way relationship between norms and the negotiations. Identity and normative issues will have influenced the process and the progress of negotiations, and these will also have played a constitutive role in identity formation. For this reason an understanding of the normative background of Turkey-EU relations plays an important role in understanding norms relating to Turkish accession at play in the current European Parliament.

Turkey-EU relations

The case of Turkey has long been a complex and special one within the EU. While other countries have acceded to membership of the Union relatively quickly and easily, Turkey has a history with the EU dating back to 1959. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign affairs asserts that ‘Turkey chose to begin close cooperation with the fledgling EEC in 1959’,¹ and the Ankara Agreement, granting Turkey associate membership, was signed on the 12th of September 1963.² Turkey applied for full membership of the EU (then the

¹ Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ‘Relations between Turkey and the European Union’, [<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-the-european-union.en.mfa>], Accessed 25.03.10.

² Erdemli, Ö, ‘Chronology: Turkey’s Relations with the EU’ in Çarkoglu & Rubin, *Turkey and the European Union: Domestic Politics, Economic Integration and International Dynamics*. Frank Cass, London, 2003.

EEC) on the 14th April 1987³ and, although the 1990s are described by the EU as ‘a Europe without frontiers’,⁴ accession negotiations were not opened until 2005 and are still ongoing. When the EU turned down Turkey’s initial application for membership in 1989, the Commission’s opinion highlighted political and economic issues relating to Turkey, as well as pointing to ‘the negative effects’ of ‘the situation in Cyprus’.⁵ Despite these concerns, and the initial refusal to open accession negotiations, the Luxembourg European Council held in December 1997 confirmed ‘Turkey’s eligibility for accession to the European Union’.⁶

In 1998 the European Commission published the inaugural ‘Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s progress towards accession’, and these annual documents contain the European Commission’s position on the progress made by Turkey towards the requirements for membership of the European Union, which have been codified in the form of the Copenhagen Criteria. In accordance with the Copenhagen Criteria, the analysis is divided into three sections, political criteria, economic criteria and ability to assume the obligations of membership. Throughout the span of the annual progress reports, 1998 to 2005 (when negotiations were opened), the ‘ability to assume the obligations of membership’ section comprises a technical list of areas of the *Acquis Communautaire*, and relates the degree to which Turkish law has been brought into line with that of the EU. The ‘economic criteria’ section is similarly filled with rational choice concerns of the functioning of the market economy in Turkey, ensuring that were Turkey to join the EU it would have an economy commensurate with those already in the Union. In the progress report from 1998 the ‘political criteria’ section is also full of points which have a clear rational choice basis, such as the role of the army in Turkish politics. ‘The lack of civilian control of the army gives cause for concern’, exacerbated by ‘the major role played by the army in political life through the National Security Council’.⁷ This perhaps reflects the European Commission’s memories of the military coup carried out in Turkey in September 1980, the third in 20 years, as well as the

³ Ibid.

⁴ ‘1990-1999: A Europe without frontiers’ Europa, *The History of the European Union*. [http://europa.eu/abc/history/1990-1999/index_en.htm]. Accessed 28.08.10.

⁵ ‘Opinion on the Turkish Application’, European Commission, 18.12.89, quoted in *Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress Towards Accession*, European Commission, 1998. p.5.

⁶ Quoted in *Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress Towards Accession*, European Commission, 1998. p.7.

⁷ *Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress Towards Accession*, European Commission, 1998. p.7.

‘February 28 process’, action carried out by the Turkish military in 1997 and subsequently described as a ‘post-modern coup’.⁸ This instability would clearly weaken the EU if Turkey were allowed to join in the state described and, as such, there is a clear rational choice argument for demanding these changes in a potential member state. Similarly, the 1998 progress report argues that ‘Turkey must make a constructive contribution to the settlement of all disputes with various neighbouring countries by peaceful means in accordance with international law’. This statement, primarily relating to the dispute over Cyprus, once again has a strong rational basis. Although peace is a key component of European identity and thus has a normative component, as I highlighted earlier in my research, it is clear that the European Union could not admit a new member who was in dispute with another country unless all existing members were already in dispute with the third country. If it were a third party then the EU would be drawn into the dispute, but even more of a problem would be presented if the dispute were with an existing member of the EU, as in the case of Cyprus.

The issue of human rights also falls within the ‘political criteria’ section of the progress report, and in this instance I believe that it is less clear that the basis for these arguments are primarily rational choice in nature. In the inaugural progress report from 1998 the issue of human rights warrants only a small percentage of the larger analysis,⁹ overshadowed by the concerns outlined above. As time goes on, however, human rights concerns come to dominate the evaluation of political criteria. Although rational choice concerns such as corruption and the role of the army do not disappear completely, the 2004 progress report suggests that ‘the [Turkish] government has increasingly asserted its control over the military...nevertheless, the armed forces in Turkey continue to exercise influence through a series of informal mechanisms’,¹⁰ the focus noticeably shifts towards other factors. The 2002 report states that ‘The adoption of these [constitutional] reforms is an important signal of the determination of the majority of Turkey’s political leaders to move towards further alignment with the values and standards of the European Union’,¹¹ and I believe that this is symptomatic of a shift

⁸ Rabasa, A. & Larrabee, F. S., *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*. RAND, Santa Monica, 2008. p.44

⁹ *Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress Towards Accession*, European Commission, 1998.

¹⁰ *2004 Regular Report on Turkey’s progress towards accession*. Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 6.10.2004. p.53.

¹¹ *2002 Regular Report on Turkey’s progress towards accession*. Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 9.10.2002. p.45.

from rational choice decision making on Turkish progress towards a more normatively based one, albeit not one which is explicitly set out in normative terms. By the time the 2005 report was published it was accepted that Turkey sufficiently fulfilled the Copenhagen Criteria,¹² and the section of analysis on issues of fundamental freedoms, women's rights and minority rights outweighs sections relating to the role of the military and the Cyprus issue. Interestingly the report also refers to the 'consensus on the need to address the...cultural and social development of the Southeast'.¹³ I believe the important role afforded to Human Rights issues within the European Commission's opinions on the progress of Turkey towards accession indicates the importance of normative factors in the decision making process, and that elements of European identity are so accepted that they have become "taken for granted". In this way actors do not make decisions based on a feeling of national identity, however norms play a role in constraining the parameters of the decision, limiting imagination. As I suggested in my earlier examination of European identity, I believe that norms of human rights are an integral part of European identity, to such an extent that they are seen to transcend that identity.

The issue of Turkey's record on human rights was rated as a "vital" issue to be addressed in Turkey's EU membership bid by both of the questionnaire respondents who answered that they believe there to be a European identity, both of whom rated human rights as a "vital" component of European identity. Interestingly the questionnaire respondent who does not believe in the concept of European identity (rating human rights as "irrelevant" to European identity, but 'highly relevant to human dignity across the world') still answered that issues of human rights were "important" in Turkey's membership bid. This is another example of the taken for granted nature of human rights norms. Bill Newton Dunn rates human rights as a basic criterion, stating that 'we don't say to the Turks...or anybody "do you like classical music?"...we say "do you have equal rights, democracy, rule of law, separation of powers?"', the basic criteria'.¹⁴ Stephen Hughes also argues that the issue of human rights remains

¹² *Turkey: the Commission recommends opening accession negotiations*. European Commission, Brussels, 6.10.04. [http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/enlargement/ongoing_enlargement/e50015_en.htm] accessed 28.04.2010.

¹³ *Turkey: 2005 Progress Report*. European Commission, Brussels, 9.11.2005. p.42.

¹⁴ Newton Dunn, Bill. Personal interview (9th March 2010).

‘absolutely vital’¹⁵ and, even though Turkey was found to meet the Copenhagen Criteria, for many in the European Parliament ‘[w]ith regard to Turkey, there remain many concerns over human rights, the ongoing blockade of Armenia [and] religious freedoms’,¹⁶ and Nikolaos Chountis MEP took the opportunity of a 2009 debate in the European Parliament on enlargement strategy to ‘remind the House that there are still problems with respect for democratic rights and trade union freedoms in Turkey’.¹⁷ Indeed the issue of human rights is a common theme in European Parliament debates relating to enlargement, with rights issues raised in recent debates over the potential accession of Montenegro,¹⁸ Serbia,¹⁹ Macedonia,²⁰ Bosnia and Herzegovina²¹ and Iceland²² (although in the case of Iceland it was commended for its record). Debates concerning potential Turkish accession are certainly no exception, indeed these arguments are used with greater frequency in relation to Turkey than when looking at other candidate countries. Despite this concern from MEPs, the EU has accepted the progress made by Turkey by opening accession negotiations, and it is acknowledged that human rights ‘were issues for Greece as well, and Spain’,²³ as well as the countries which joined the EU in 2004, but that these issues are not insuperable. Although two interview respondents describe the problems perceived in the Turkish membership bid based in the issue of human rights as ‘just one huge red herring’²⁴ and an excuse, a hoop for Turkey to jump through,²⁵ and Martin Callanan argues that ‘[t]here are clearly some human rights concerns in Turkey but, you know, human rights concerns don’t stop the EU from having good relations with lots of other odious regimes across the world, they are quite happy to ignore human rights concerns where it suits them’,²⁶ the opinion of the majority of MEPs, including those spoken to during primary research, clearly contradicts this. Dr. Libor Rouček stated that ‘it’s one of the preconditions in the negotiations that Turkey has to do all the reforms in order to implement the changes and

¹⁵ Hughes, Stephen. Personal interview (21st May 2010).

¹⁶ Charles Tannock MEP in *Enlargement Strategy 2009 (debate)*.

¹⁷ Nikolaos Chountis MEP, *Ibid*.

¹⁸ Enlargement report for Montenegro (debate), 28.03.2012.

¹⁹ Enlargement report for Serbia (debate), 28.03.2012.

²⁰ Enlargement report for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (debate), 14.03.2012.

²¹ Enlargement report for Bosnia and Herzegovina (debate), 14.03.2012.

²² Enlargement report for Iceland (debate), 14.03.2012.

²³ Hall, Fiona. Personal interview (16th October 2009).

²⁴ Bloom, Godfrey. Personal interview (4th February 2010).

²⁵ Callanan, Martin. Personal interview (12th October 2009).

²⁶ *Ibid*.

respect the human and civic rights’,²⁷ a sentiment echoed by Fiona Hall, who argues that if respect for human rights ‘was not the thinking of Turkish people, Turkish politicians, Turkish government then they wouldn’t be allowed in’.²⁸

Although I believe they are in the minority, the viewpoints of Godfrey Bloom and Martin Callanan do raise interesting questions concerning European identity. Godfrey Bloom argues that existing member state Bulgaria ‘is simply run by gangsters’²⁹ and, while this is certainly an extreme view, MEP Sophia in ‘t Veld argued in the European Parliament that ‘if we ask Turkey to comply with EU standards, we must make sure to meet these standards ourselves...homophobia, compulsory religious education and restrictions of freedom of the press must equally be fought in the current member states’.³⁰ These arguments raise questions as to why nations like Bulgaria were allowed to accede to membership of the EU while Turkey, which ‘isn’t a badly run country at all in comparison’³¹ is held back on these grounds. One possible answer to this question lies in the more widespread acceptance of other states on grounds of identity. Stephen Hughes accepts that there was an identity argument in recent enlargements which, to a degree overrode rational concerns. He stated that ‘I think that political imperative involved a number of considerations, and one was “let’s re-establish the greater Europe”’. These countries are historically part of Europe, it’s absolutely important that we get them back in to begin the process of building democracy, pluralist societies and respect all these rights, and the best way to do that is to bring them into the family’,³² before going on to suggest that similar arguments could be used against Turkey. Although it is difficult to assess the relative severity of human rights abuses in different countries, it is possible that this identity argument is also behind the frequent references during debates to human rights issues in Turkey while other candidate countries which have similar difficulties have significantly fewer arguments made against them on these grounds.

Alongside, and intertwined with, issues of human rights stands another of the founding principles of the EU, democracy. Although the demand for candidate countries to have a

²⁷ Rouček, Libor. Personal interview (6th May 2010).

²⁸ Hall, Fiona. Personal interview (16th October 2009)

²⁹ Bloom, Godfrey. Personal interview (4th February 2010)

³⁰ Sophia in ‘t Veld MEP, 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate).

³¹ Bloom, Godfrey. Personal interview (4th February 2010).

³² Hughes, Stephen. Personal interview (21st May 2010).

functioning democracy has clear rationalist reasoning, providing stability and governmental commensurability and interoperability, my research suggests that arguments for democracy have other components as well. Gerard Batten argues that ‘Turkey holds elections but it is not a democracy in the accepted Western sense’,³³ for him this is largely due to human rights abuses, but he also points to the ideology of Islam. Norms of “Western democracy” and human rights are very closely associated with those of personal freedom, and one strongly contested contemporary debate concerns the wearing of Islamic dress. In recent years there have been calls in many countries in Europe to ban the burqa or niqab on grounds of female rights, with a German Liberal MEP referring to the burqa as ‘as enormous attack on the rights of women. It is a mobile prison’.³⁴ She goes on to state, despite her argument being based in human rights and freedom, that ‘Freedom can not go so far as to take away the public faces of humans. At least not in Europe’.³⁵ The association of the burqa with norms which are not part of the European identity is confirmed by Ms. Koch-Mehrin, who stated that the burqa represents ‘values we in Europe do not share’.³⁶ These norms are indicative of the complex situation Turkey is in. The full veil is banned in civic and government buildings within the secular state of Turkey, unlike most of Europe, but the veil is still common amongst the people of Turkey. This association of democracy in Turkey with different norms appears to be inextricably tied to the attitudes of MEPs in this regard. Where MEPs point towards the role European integration played in ‘consolidating’ democracy in ‘countries like Portugal, Spain and Greece...countries that have lived through dictatorships’,³⁷ and argue that ‘a young European democracy has to have strong and unstinting backing from Europe’,³⁸ the support for Turkey in this regard is not so strong. Andreas Mølzer argues that Turkey’s ‘disregard for democratic principles alone is, in my opinion, reason enough to suspend accession negotiations’,³⁹ and this is perhaps indicative of the fact Turkish democracy is not viewed in the same way as ‘European’ democracy, a distinction based in identity.

³³ Democratisation in Turkey debate.

³⁴ Silvana Koch-Mehrin MEP, quoted in ‘Top German Liberal in EU parliament wants Europe-wide burqa ban’ Phillips, L., 03.05.2010 *EU Observer*. [<http://euobserver.com/?aid=29991>]

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Paulo Rangel MEP, ‘Enlargement report for Serbia (debate)’.

³⁸ Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris MEP, ‘Enlargement report for Kosovo (debate)’, 28.03.2012.

³⁹ Andreas Mølzer MEP, ‘EU external policies in favour of democratisation (debate)’, 6.07.2011.

Arguments of identity in European Parliament decision making

As the above examples have demonstrated, there are elements of normative factors and identity which clearly influence actor interests and behaviour within the EU. When asked to assess the importance of the degree to which Turkish identity corresponds with European identity, responses to the questionnaire were mixed. One questionnaire respondent rated this factor as “important” in the membership bid, and argued that there were significant cultural differences. The other questionnaire respondent who believes in European identity suggested that this cultural correspondence was “not very important” (although not “irrelevant”), despite stating that issues of identity and its promotion were vital in debates concerning enlargement. The final questionnaire respondent, who does not believe in European identity also rated correspondence of identity as “not very important”, although he suggests that the deciding factor in Turkey’s membership bid will be based in religious factors.

Amongst interviewees there is widespread, although not unanimous, acknowledgment that identity will play a role in the debate over Turkish accession. When asked whether identity was a salient point in the Turkish membership bid, John Purvis answered that it was ‘very much so. I’m sure it’s almost all that’,⁴⁰ and Libor Rouček agreed that it had an important role to play. Stephen Hughes, meanwhile, agreed that identity arguments were used in opposition to Turkey, although ‘it’s not used openly, it’s there’.⁴¹ Bill Newton Dunn conceded that issues of identity would be important in the membership bid, but not directly within the institutions of the European Union. He suggested that issues of culture and religion would be important in the minds of the population of Europe when voting in any potential referenda on the issue, as well as the national governments representing those people. He also suggested that ‘Churches in Europe will probably be...campaigning furiously against Turkey’.⁴² Although Mr. Newton Dunn suggests that decisions taken within the institutions of the EU in the area of enlargement are the result of cost-benefit analysis, he demonstrates that there are normative preconditions to membership of ‘our particular family’⁴³ and concedes that the idea of bringing Turkey into a notional “Christendom” ‘won’t be considered, but will be in

⁴⁰ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

⁴¹ Hughes, Stephen. Personal interview (21st May 2010).

⁴² Newton Dunn, Bill. Personal interview (9th March 2010).

⁴³ Ibid.

peoples' minds'.⁴⁴ In contrast to the majority of respondents is the view expressed by Martin Callanan and Godfrey Bloom, that the decision over Turkish accession will be taken on grounds of national self-interest and cost-benefit analyses.

Despite Stephen Hughes' assertion that the majority of identity arguments are not used openly against Turkey, rather just colouring and informing viewpoints on the matter, examples of the arguments can certainly be found within the institutions of the European Union. Comments made in the Belgian parliament in 2004 by Herman van Rompuy, now President of the European Council, were widely quoted after his election in 2009. He stated that 'Turkey is not part of Europe and will never be part of Europe' and that 'fundamental values' of Europe would be undermined by the admittance of Turkey.⁴⁵ A similar point is put forward by Zoltán Balzóc MEP who argues that '[w]ith regard to the accession of Turkey, there is a fundamental question to be clarified: what do we consider the European Union to be? Do we still consider the values, the shared European values important?...Do we deem the cultural heritage of Europe important as a cohesive force? If the answer is 'yes', Turkey has no place in the European Union'.⁴⁶ The importance of explicit arguments of European identity, and their relative weight in relation to rational factors is alluded to by Lorenzo Fontana, who suggests that Turkey is a country which 'is no doubt strategic for Europe and with whom we can no doubt enjoy good trade relations. However, EU membership would surely also lead to imbalances in our very foundations and our core values'.⁴⁷ The degree to which factors in the accession negotiations are intertwined are emphasised by Adrian Severin MEP who argues that conditionality for candidate countries should be 'linked directly to their capacity to be interoperable with us from a legal, institutional, political and cultural point of view'.⁴⁸ This viewpoint is echoed by other MEPs in various debates concerning Turkish accession, who give rational reasons opposing or supporting Turkish accession, before seeming to use identity factors as a rationale for their decision. These views on Turkish culture and identity are important in light of the references to article 49 of the Lisbon Treaty, that 'any European state which respects our values and is committed to

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Quoted in 'Van Rompuy: 'Turkey will never be part of Europe'. Phillips, L., 18.11.2009 *EU Observer* [<http://euobserver.com/9/29016>].

⁴⁶ Zoltán Balzóc MEP, '2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)'.
⁴⁷ Lorenzo Fontana MEP, 'Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)'

⁴⁸ Adrian Severin MEP, 'Enlargement Strategy 2009 (debate)'.

promoting them may apply to become a member of the Union'.⁴⁹ Although this is a clear indication of the importance of European values, less clarity is provided as to what those values are.

The prevailing view of a Turkish culture and history differing from, and not interoperable with, European culture is not ubiquitous however, and a competing discourse exists. Pavel Poc MEP asserts that '[a]rguments against accession based on the pattern 'European countries' versus 'Islamic countries' are incorrect and wrong. Turkey's historic affiliation with Europe is undeniable',⁵⁰ and this argument is taken up by Rumelili, who suggests that '[f]ollowing the failed siege of Vienna in 1683, a fundamental change occurred in the Ottoman outlook toward Europeans. Thereafter, the Ottomans implemented Europeanizing reforms in the military, in education, administration, dress, as well as political and civil rights'.⁵¹ Although MEPs do not refer this far back, perhaps because reference to the siege of Vienna would be counter-productive, Geoffrey Van Orden MEP 'support[s] the idea of Turkey as a secular and united country that, for over 80 years, has looked to the West'.⁵² '[T]his Muslim country is unique in that it took the first steps to adopting European values almost 100 years ago and, despite the various historical winds, it did not go off the road'.⁵³ This alternative dialogue on Turkish and European history and culture is picked up by the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The MFA statement on 'Relations Between Turkey and the European Union' is filled with references to the efforts to westernise Turkey and the great importance Turkey places on its relations with European countries. It goes further, however, arguing that '[h]istorically, Turkish culture has had a profound impact over much of Eastern and Southern Europe' before going on to point out that '[d]uring the Cold War, Turkey was a part of the Western alliance, defending freedom, democracy and human rights'.⁵⁴ These statements indicate the importance the Turkish government places on norms of identity and the degree to which Turkish and European identities correspond. This belief can be easily understood when it is suggested that

⁴⁹ As phrased by Carl Bildt, speaking during the enlargement strategy 2009 debate, at which time he was President-in-office of the Council.

⁵⁰ Pavel Poc MEP, 'Democratisation in Turkey (debate)'.
⁵¹ Rumelili, 'Turkey: Identity, Foreign Policy, and Socialization in a Post-Enlargement Europe', p.243.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Justas Vincas Paleckis MEP, 2009 Turkey progress report debate.

⁵⁴ 'Relations Between Turkey and the European Union'. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs. [<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-the-european-union.en.mfa>]. Accessed 07.09.10

Croatia, ‘because of its geopolitical situation and historical relations, should unquestionably accede to the European Union as quickly as possible’.⁵⁵

At the present time Turkey and its supporters do not appear to have persuaded the majority of the European Parliament that Turkey is part of the “European family” of shared history and culture, with doubts expressed about the true outlook and direction of Turkey⁵⁶ and her policies, as well as the true extent of the concordance of identity – ‘[a]lthough Istanbul has an enlightened, Europe-orientated, educated population...[it is] not, unfortunately, representative of the country as a whole’.⁵⁷ With the views expressed within the European Parliament and the comments made by Stephen Hughes regarding the unofficial fast-tracking of candidate countries on identity grounds, however, altering the discourse on Turkey’s place in the cultural history of Europe appears to be a vital stage towards the successful outcome of accession negotiations. When asked whether arguments of culture and history are a problem for the Turkish bid Richard Corbett answered that

objectively it is because a lot of people say that. Whether or not it stands up to scrutiny is of course debatable. Turkey’s been part of European history for 400 years or so, a large part of Southeastern Europe was part of Turkey, Istanbul is still Europe’s largest city. It’s been integrated into the European context from the Council of Europe to its charter on human rights which is a set of common values as much as a legal document. It’s been part of UEFA and European football tournaments and other things, the Eurovision Song Contest for decades. We’ve accepted in a whole range of contexts that Turkey counts as a European country.⁵⁸

Despite this acceptance, it is clear that for some actors and elements within the European Parliament a ‘Western’ Turkey with a ‘European’ outlook and values is far from a given.

The importance of perceived cultural differences was highlighted by the European Commission when it suggested the opening of accession negotiations. It stated that the

⁵⁵ Bogdan Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz MEP, 2009 Turkey Progress Report Debate.

⁵⁶ Eg. Niki Tzavela MEP, 2009 Turkey Progress Report Debate.

⁵⁷ Franz Obermayer MEP, Democratisation in Turkey debate.

⁵⁸ Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010).

third pillar within its three pillared negotiations ‘entails enhanced political and cultural dialogue between the people of the EU member states and Turkey. This includes a dialogue on cultural differences, religion, migration issues and concerns about minority rights and terrorism’.⁵⁹ This statement also serves to highlight another area of perceived discordance between European and Turkish identity. As I explained earlier in this thesis, religion is perceived by many within the European Parliament as a key factor in European identity. While the current religious practices are important for some, for many more the cultural religious inheritance in Europe is seen as a vital factor in European identity. Some actors talk of a modern concept of Christendom, while references to Christianity as an important progenitor in shared European values are found throughout European Parliament debates,⁶⁰ particularly those relating to Turkey. Hannu Takkula argues that ‘Middle Eastern culture is based on different values. We in Europe have been brought up in a world of Judaeo-Christian values, whilst theirs come from Islamic thinking. In both, people are treated differently, and the notion of a human being is different’.⁶¹ Fiona Hall suggests that ‘there is a right wing Christian tradition that has problems with the Muslim identity and says it’s not Europe’⁶² and, while this viewpoint is partially supported by evidence from the European Parliament, it appears too narrow to consign it solely to the ‘right wing’. Echoing his thoughts on culture, when asked about religion Richard Corbett responded that ‘I know a lot of people point to that. I’m not saying I agree with them. What I’m saying is that it is a fact that a lot of people see that it’s culturally difficult, it’s Islamic’.⁶³ Indeed two respondents went so far as to say that within dealings with Turkey there were elements of Islamophobia.⁶⁴ It is certainly clear from an analysis of discourse within the European Parliament that there is widespread support for the comments of Herman Van Rompuy, that ‘[t]he universal values which are in force in Europe, and which are also fundamental values of Christianity, will lose vigour with the entry of a large Islamic country such as Turkey’.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ European Commission, *Turkey: the Commission recommends opening accession negotiations*.

⁶⁰ Eg. Mirosław Piotrowski MEP, ‘State of the Union (debate)’, 28.09.2011; Csanád Szegedi MEP, ‘European Heritage Label (debate)’; Adam Bielan MEP, ‘Explanations of vote’, 16.02.2012.

⁶¹ Hannu Takkula MEP, ‘Explanations of vote’, 07.04.2011’.

⁶² Hall, Fiona. Personal interview (16th October 2009).

⁶³ Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010).

⁶⁴ Stephen Hughes (Personal interview 21.05.10) and a questionnaire respondent.

⁶⁵ Quoted in Quoted in ‘Van Rompuy: ‘Turkey will never be part of Europe’’. Phillips, L., 18.11.2009 *EU Observer* [<http://euobserver.com/9/29016>].

Turkey goes some way towards addressing this issue by emphasising the secular nature of Turkish government, the opening line of the MFA statement points out that ‘Turkey is the only pluralist secular democracy in the Moslem world and has always attached great importance to developing its relations with other European countries’,⁶⁶ but the broader issue is a greater challenge for Turkey. My research has indicated that Christianity is seen as an important facet of European identity, and this is an area where differences between Turkey and the EU are pronounced. Philip Claeys MEP argued during the 2009 enlargement strategy debate in the European Parliament that ‘[u]nder the leadership of Mr. Erdogan and President Gül, Turkey is becoming more Islamist in nature...we do have some members here, and I am one of them, who are in favour of the idea of a European Europe’. Questionnaire respondents back up the view that religion will be a major factor in the outcome of Turkey’s membership bid, with one respondent rating the issue as “vital” to the outcome of the negotiations, and the other two rating it “important”.

Despite the widespread acceptance of the idea of European identity founded in Christianity and Christian ideals, there is an alternative viewpoint, albeit much less frequently expressed, that this idea ignores the presence of Jews and Muslims in the EU at the moment. Stephen Hughes argues for the need for ‘a far more mature debate about how Islam and Christianity meet...and live and work together. We talk a great deal about the need to integrate migrants into the economic life of the European Union but in reality we continue to create ghettos in all sorts of parts of the European Union and, with it, increasing tensions’.⁶⁷ Despite these comments, the prevailing opinion appears to be that European identity contains an important Christian component, and this would produce a clash between European and Turkish identities. Boguslaw Sonik MEP argues that Turkey ‘continues to be separated from Europe by a broad divide, because Europe stands in defence of fundamental values. This difference is a serious obstacle in building a common identity’.⁶⁸ This dichotomy of views plays an important role in debates concerning Turkey,

Alongside concerns about the clash of European and Turkish identities is the idea that

⁶⁶ MFA, ‘Relations Between Turkey and the European Union’.

⁶⁷ Hughes, Stephen. Personal interview (21st May 2010).

⁶⁸ Boguslaw Sonik MEP, ‘2009 Turkey Progress Report (Debate)’.

Turkish membership of the EU would change European identity. For some proponents of Turkish accession this is viewed as a positive move, for Turkey's opponents, however, this is a source of worry and fear. This is of course linked to the degree to which the identities correspond but, as outlined earlier, social constructivists view identity as dynamic and the accession of Turkey has the potential to alter EU norms and change what is perceived as "appropriate" courses of action. Questionnaire respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they believed Turkish membership of the EU would influence European identity,⁶⁹ and the two respondents who subscribe to the idea of European identity both suggested that the effect would be large.⁷⁰ Interestingly the respondent who professed not to believe in European identity also suggested that there would be a slight effect.⁷¹ Despite this agreement on the effect Turkish membership would have on European identity, the impact this would have on the accession process is more debated. The respondent for whom Turkish membership is seen to have the greatest effect view this as "important" in the negotiating process, while both the other questionnaire respondents view the effect as "not very important".

Like respondents to the questionnaire, those I interviewed also had mixed views about the degree to which Turkish accession would impact on European identity. Opinion is divided about the degree to which identity would change with one respondent asserting that 'I don't think it would actually matter that much', although the Turks' attributes, 'strong, tough, resilient, militarily brave and courageous people', would provide 'a shot in the arm for Europe'.⁷² This view is supported by Fiona Hall, who argues that a European identity based in the founding principles of the EU would *de facto* remain strong as adherence to that identity would be a prerequisite to accession.⁷³ '[T]hose are the basic principles, the Copenhagen Criteria...and they are not changeable'.⁷⁴ Štefan Füle takes up this argument, suggesting that 'The accession process is not there to compromise on our values. The accession process is for Turkey to embrace the values the European Union is so firmly based on'.⁷⁵ This resistance to the constructivist notion of dynamism is interesting, and for those who view the European identity as having

⁶⁹ The scale given was 1='No effect' up to 5='A profound effect'

⁷⁰ One respondent ranked it at the maximum of 5, while the other ranked it at 4.

⁷¹ Ranked at 2.

⁷² Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

⁷³ Hall, Fiona. Personal interview (16th October 2009).

⁷⁴ Newton Dunn, Bill. Personal interview (9th March 2010).

⁷⁵ Štefan Füle, 'Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)'.

cultural or religious components the potential for change is likely to be seen as more acute. Richard Corbett asserts that Turkish membership ‘would underline that European identity is pluralistic, its “unity with diversity”, but it would also have a message that it’s not based on a culturally exclusive viewpoint. It’s accepting that European identity is indeed, not just politically, but also culturally and religiously pluralistic’.⁷⁶ This is viewed as a positive by those for whom religion should not play a role and pluralism is to be encouraged. ‘Ultimately it would strengthen the European Union and thereby help the development of a strong identity...We argue that need for more pluralism, it would be a challenge to us to make the European Union and the idea of Europe more pluralist as well, and that would not be a bad thing. I don’t think it’s healthy that we have this Christian basis to the whole thing...It’s not what Europe’s about’.⁷⁷ ‘We must defend religious pluralism, tolerance and mutual understanding both here in Europe and everywhere in the world.’⁷⁸ Evidence from the European Parliament suggests that there is a prevalent viewpoint which conflicts with this one, however, and those for whom religion and culture are important facets of European identity view a change in European identity in this direction and occurring in this way negatively, and as a move away from the “European family”. Rumelili picks up on this dichotomy, arguing that ‘[t]hose who hold a principled objection to Turkey’s accession express the concern that its inclusion would dilute the particularistic norms of European society rooted in Judeo-Christian heritage. In response, those who support Turkey’s accession argue that rejection would challenge the multicultural and universalistic foundations of European norms and identity’ before, tellingly, going on to state that ‘[e]ven when such constitutive questions are not explicitly addressed, discussions on the state of Turkey’s fulfilment of membership conditions in many ways remain derivative of these polarized positions’.⁷⁹

Despite the different views exhibited by actors within the European Parliament, it is clear that worries over the impact of Turkey on European identity influence the interests of some of those within the European Parliament. The view of Mr. Van Rompuy that Turkey’s accession to the EU would result in a loss of “vigour” of Christian values and

⁷⁶ Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010).

⁷⁷ Hughes, Stephen. Personal interview (21st May 2010).

⁷⁸ Marielle de Sarnez MEP, ‘Situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion (debate)’.

⁷⁹ Rumelili, ‘Turkey: Identity, Foreign Policy, and Socialization’, p. 237.

European identity is echoed in the European Parliament,⁸⁰ and it is pointed out that ‘Turkish accession would inevitably change the nature of the EU project’.⁸¹ It is further argued that during accession negotiations ‘we are not only responsible for the accession candidate. Our primary responsibility is to the European Union’.⁸² These concerns have led some MEPs to reach the ‘unshakable conviction that it is not right for Turkey to enter a Europe whose unity depends, above all else, on the spirit of Christianity’.⁸³ These concerns have even led some proponents of Turkish accession to point out that ‘it is the integration of Turkey into the European Union that we support, not the integration of the European Union into Turkey’.⁸⁴ Concerns over the potential change of European identity which would be associated with Turkish accession have produced some of the strongest overt arguments of identity, and this is consistent with the social constructivist assertion that an area in which identity is challenged is likely to produce a strong feeling of identity and will result in actors turning to identity arguments.

The social constructivist notion of dynamic identities does not only give rise to the possibility of European identity change, it also affords the possibility of a change in Turkish identity. Earlier in my analysis I pointed to the presence of a drive towards enlargement as a factor in European identity, and my research indicates that some MEPs view EU enlargement and accession negotiations as a method for propagating European values and identity,⁸⁵ and this appears to be the case with the Turkish membership bid. Indeed Metin Kazak explicitly calls for support of the Turkish application on this basis, suggesting that ‘if we really want the European perspective to continue to act as a catalyst for the political reforms in Turkey and to be a factor in discussing issues such as freedom of speech and the media, the Member States that are still opposed to this opening must reconsider their position’.⁸⁶ It is suggested that ‘the European Union can play a role in the democratisation of Turkey by demanding full application of the European *acquis* without derogations, without self-seeking calculation and without applying a policy of double standards’.⁸⁷ This application of *pacta sunt servanda*, an

⁸⁰ Eg. Barry Madlener MEP, ‘Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)’.

⁸¹ Geoffrey Van Orden MEP, ‘2009 progress report (debate)’.

⁸² Alexander Graf Lambsdorff MEP, *Ibid.*

⁸³ Mara Bizzotto MEP, *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Takis Hadjigeorgiou MEP, *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Watson, Graham. MEP. (Personal correspondence. 12th August 2009).

⁸⁶ Metin Kazak MEP, ‘Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)’.

⁸⁷ Antigoni Papadopoulou MEP, ‘Democratisation in Turkey debate’.

element of European identity detailed earlier, is seen as vital to identity change. ‘After all, the basis of European integration is the saying *pacta sunt servanda*’⁸⁸ and, it is argued, if Turkey feels she cannot trust the words of MEPs and other European actors, efforts in working towards accession, and the resulting identity change, will be compromised. ‘If Turkey’s membership prospects continue to weaken, [the] sceptics will wean their support from the reform process and begin to contest the necessity of targeting the highest standards in democracy and human rights. Although this will not reverse the progress that has been made, Turkey will nonetheless appear increasingly reluctant to comply with EU norms and values.’⁸⁹ Godfrey Bloom suggests that ‘the dangling of the so-called carrot...of membership of the European Union is actually more likely to drive it into an Islamic fundamentalist state than not. We’re doing active harm with the dishonesty of our negotiating position. Everyone at senior level in the European Union knows that Turkey will never join. Much better to be honest about it’.⁹⁰ While this is certainly not a majority view, Godfrey Bloom is not alone in suggesting it, and it is indicative of the perceived need to operate fair and open conditionality. Andreas Mølzer agrees that ‘A greater degree of honesty needs to be brought into the negotiations with Turkey and the way prepared for a privileged partnership’,⁹¹ while Monika Flašíková Beňová suggests that ‘in order to be honest, and if we affirm that Turkey is gradually fulfilling the criteria, then we must not talk in advance about a privileged partnership. It would be better to tell Turkey directly that, despite fulfilling all the criteria, it will not achieve full EU membership. In my opinion, that would be honest on our part’.⁹² John Purvis suggests that for Turkish membership to become a reality ‘Turkey will probably change more that the EU will change...It’s one of the reasons I think it would be a good thing; they should join. Like all the other countries that have joined, it’ll become tied into the morés of Europe, a European identity’.⁹³ Anna Maria Corazza Bildt argues for the need to continue pushing for change in Turkish identity without worry about the potential change in Europe and European identity, ‘The European perspective is a driving force for democratic reforms...EU policy should never

⁸⁸ Johannes Cornelis van Baalen MEP, ‘Iceland’s application for membership of the European Union (debate)’.

⁸⁹ Rumelili, ‘Turkey: Identity, Foreign Policy, and Socialization’, p. 247.

⁹⁰ Bloom, Godfrey. Personal interview (4th February 2010).

⁹¹ Andreas Mølzer MEP, ‘Accession Treaty : Treaty concerning the accession of the Republic of Croatia - Application of Croatia to become a member of the European Union (debate)’.

⁹² Monika Flašíková Beňová MEP, ‘2010 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

⁹³ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2010).

be driven by fear'.⁹⁴ It is very difficult to extricate the desire to expand and reinforce European identity from the desire to create stability throughout the European Union and its neighbours, not least because stability can be seen to occur with an accord of identity and normative factors, but I believe that I have demonstrated that there is a normative drive behind enlargement.

Rational arguments and normative factors

Throughout this thesis I have indicated that it is not my intention to ignore or attempt to downplay the importance of the traditionally accepted, rationalist factors which are at play in the accession negotiations between the European Union and Turkey as I believe that they are inseparable from factors of identity. Instead I aim to explore the normative underpinning which dictates the appropriate course of action, and the dominant discourse in particular areas, taking Stephen Hughes' comment that arguments of identity are often not used openly. The focus of this thesis is identity in the European Parliament and the role of norms on actor interest and behaviour, an analysis of decision making with regards to Turkish accession is beyond the scope of this research. For this reason I do not intend to provide a thorough and exhaustive examination of these factors, as these analyses can be found elsewhere⁹⁵. Instead I will look at these factors briefly, before examining the interplay between normative factors and these issues which are not normally deemed to have a normative element.

One factor in the accession negotiations which is seen to cause a number of problems is the size of Turkey and its population. By the time there is a possibility of Turkish accession it is projected to have a population larger than any other single country within the European Union. This would mean that, if current rules were still in place and no special measures were brought in, it would have the largest number of MEPs and a great deal of influence. This is viewed within the European Parliament as a potentially large problem, especially for Germany which is currently the largest member state, 'It's long been the tag...that the French have always regarded the European Union as a German

⁹⁴ Anna Maria Corazza Bildt MEP, 'Democratisation in Turkey (debate)'.

⁹⁵ See, for example, Arıkan, H., *Turkey and the EU: An Awkward Candidate for EU Membership?* Ashgate, Aldershot, 2006; Flam, H., 'Turkey and the EU: Politics and Economics of Accession' CESifo Working Paper 893.

horse with a French jockey, and that is certainly true',⁹⁶ and this is perceived to be under threat by Turkish accession. The impact Turkish membership would have on the institutions of the EU was ranked as vital by one questionnaire respondent, important by one and not very important by the third. There are other problems associated with the size of the Turkish population, it is an issue 'in terms of the EU rules on free circulation of EU citizens, the right of abode etc. in other EU countries. After the enlargement to Eastern Europe there's a growing realisation that that could potentially mean a large number of migrants from Turkey'.⁹⁷ This is again undoubtedly a problem for some actors, particularly in France and Germany. 'It's a bigger issue for Turkey because of its size irrespective of the cultural things or identity issues...but, of course, the combination of the two means that Turkish accession is more controversial than, say, Croatian or Icelandic accession'.⁹⁸

The evidence of my research suggests that issues of immigration and shifts in the balance of power in the institutions of the EU would be problematic irrespective of the candidate country, but these problems are undoubtedly exacerbated by the identity issues discussed throughout this thesis. For some within Europe, and the European Parliament, the difference between European identity and Turkish identity is great, some even perceiving Turkey in some ways as the "Other" which European identity is set up in opposition to, as discussed earlier. As demonstrated throughout this research, '[t]he perception of Europe as a geographical, religious and cultural space that does not include Turkey is strongly entrenched. Turkey and the Turks have been viewed as constituting the central "Other" to Europe and the Europeans, and references reaching back to the Crusades can be made'.⁹⁹ This means that allowing Turkey a major say in EU politics and allowing large numbers of Turks to reside throughout Europe would be problematic. My research indicates that size and identity are inextricably linked in the Turkish accession bid, with the suggestion that it would probably not be a major problem for the EU to allow a country with a different identity, including a Muslim country, to join. The issue for Turkey appears to be twofold, that it is perceived to have an identity significantly different from European identity, and that if it were allowed to

⁹⁶ Bloom, Godfrey. Personal interview (4th February 2010).

⁹⁷ Corbett, Richard (speaking in a personal capacity). Personal interview (19th March 2010).

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Siitonen, A., 2008. 'The debate on Turkey: The perspective of the European Parliament on Turkey's affiliation with the European Union' Publications of the Department of Contemporary History 33, University of Turku. p.135.

accede it would be large enough to impact on European identity. ‘Admitting a very large...member state, predominantly poor, Muslim country would clearly change the nature of the EU. They would become the big power brokers then. They would have the most seats in the European Parliament, the most votes in the Council of Ministers. It would profoundly change the terms of the debate’.¹⁰⁰ Although this view appears repeatedly throughout my research, it is not unanimously held. Fiona Hall argues that ‘the European Parliament is a big place, there are many, many other people and no one country, even of that size, can dominate completely...the Germans do not rule the roost in the EP, it’s very much a pluralistic set-up and I think that Turkey would simply become part of that pluralistic set-up’.¹⁰¹

As indicated by the comments of Martin Callanan above, the issue of money and the cost of Turkish membership to the existing EU member states is closely related to its size, and is at the forefront of many of my respondents’ minds. One questionnaire respondent ranked the impact Turkish membership will have on the budget and funds of the EU as a vital issue in accession negotiations, while one ranked it as important and the last as not very important. This level of disagreement was also evident amongst interviewees, some argue that cost is an area which is relevant to every accession and nothing which hasn’t been addressed before. For others the expense involved in bringing Turkey into the EU is a great stumbling block, Godfrey Bloom argues that money will be the biggest deciding factor in accession negotiations, and that ‘the golden rule is follow the money’.¹⁰² There is certainly a view amongst some actors in the European Parliament that ‘Turkey wants to join the European Union because they will have their hands out in the hope of having them filled with lots of European taxpayers’ money in subsidies, and they see the opportunity of offloading millions of their poor and unemployed excess population by exporting them to Western countries’.¹⁰³ The economic arguments are also inseparable from arguments of identity, however, and respondents suggested that the figures involved are not the only reason it is difficult to give money to Turkey. Libor Rouček suggested to me that, even if the money was currently available, there was not the political will in the EU to give Turkey the amount of money it would be entitled to if it joined the Union. When asked whether this was

¹⁰⁰ Callanan, Martin. Personal interview (12th October 2009)

¹⁰¹ Hall, Fiona. Personal interview (16th October 2009).

¹⁰² Bloom, Godfrey. Personal interview (4th February 2010)

¹⁰³ Gerard Batten MEP, ‘Democratisation in Turkey (debate)’.

tied to European identity and how 'European' Turkey is Dr. Rouček replied 'I think that's the case. I think if you look at the current state of Greece I think people are willing to show some solidarity'.¹⁰⁴ Although the solidarity with Greece might have subsequently reduced, the importance of identity is only likely to heighten in times of economic uncertainty, with limited resources made available to those viewed as sharing identity and withheld from those viewed as the "Other". Bill Newton Dunn echoes the comments of Dr. Rouček, that 'it is true for every member state that joins...that they usually join because they're short of cash' and that the EU are happy to oblige in the cases of the Balkan states, 'they are European, there's no question...Turkey not being geographically so obviously Europe is more difficult'.¹⁰⁵

One of the areas which is seen almost universally as a major problem for Turkey in their membership bid is the issue of Cyprus. Two questionnaire respondents rated ongoing problems concerning Turkey's continued involvement in Cyprus as vital, while the third ranked it as important. Similarly interviewees overwhelmingly suggested that the problems in Cyprus would have to be resolved before Turkey could accede to membership. Interestingly Libor Rouček, Vice-President of the European Parliament, did not go that far, arguing only that 'in an ideal case...there should be a solution before that'.¹⁰⁶ It seems very unlikely, however, that Turkey would get the required unanimous support of member states if a resolution were not reached. The accepted and prevailing viewpoint within the EU is that Turkey 'is illegally occupying 40% of the Republic of Cyprus and scuppering every solution to the problem'.¹⁰⁷ Arguments relating to Cyprus are not beyond the realm of normative influence, with suggestion that 'the aggressive and unfair behaviour of [Turkey] is out of line with the system of principles and values which we are obliged and have undertaken to defend'.¹⁰⁸ Indeed there is some suggestion that the prevailing attitude regarding Turkey is as widespread as it is within the EU because it has become established that is the appropriate behaviour for a member of the European Union. Geoffrey Van Orden argued in the European Parliament that 'in relation to Cyprus...a distorted version of recent history has unfortunately

¹⁰⁴ Rouček, Libor. Personal interview (6th May 2010).

¹⁰⁵ Newton Dunn, Bill. Personal interview (9th March 2010).

¹⁰⁶ Rouček, Libor. Personal interview (6th May 2010).

¹⁰⁷ Charalampos Angourakis MEP, 'Democratisation in Turkey (debate)'.
¹⁰⁸ Eleni Theocharous MEP, 'Tensions between Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus (debate)', 27.11.2011.

become the accepted wisdom',¹⁰⁹ before going on to argue that Turkish Northern Cyprus had made efforts to resolve the issue which were rejected by the Republic of Cyprus. John Purvis went as far as to suggest that the concern expressed over Cyprus was 'another excuse issue'.¹¹⁰ Although the Turkish invasion of Northern Cyprus and the effect this will have on accession negotiations is beyond contention, it does demonstrate that there are normative components to all the 'rational' arguments which face Turkey.

The nature of the debate over Turkey is such that rationalist arguments are deployed in favour of Turkish accession as well as in opposition. Proponents of Turkish accession argue for 'the strategic importance of full EU membership for Turkey',¹¹¹ and that 'we need Turkey in the European Union for many reasons'.¹¹² One of the most cited reasons in favour of Turkish membership is the stabilising effect it would have on the region and the EU's neighbours. It is believed that allowing Turkey to accede will reduce tensions in the region and allow more friendly relations between member states of the EU and nations in the Middle East. Once again, there is an undoubted rationalist basis to these arguments, but I do not believe that they can be completely removed from identity factors. As I suggested earlier in my analysis, there is a competing discourse in relation to Turkey which is less common but is often cited by actors who point to strategic reasons in support of accession. In contrast with the 'Clash of Civilisations',¹¹³ discourse which tends to dominate thinking in relation to Turkey, is an "Alliance of Civilisations" discourse¹¹⁴. This view positions Turkey as between Europe and the Middle East, or the "Western" and "Islamic" civilisations, with its unique identity as a democratic, Western looking Muslim state. This discourse views the EU as having 'a historic opportunity to influence Turkey's development-...building a sturdy bridge between Europe and the Muslim world'¹¹⁵.

¹⁰⁹ Geoffrey Van Orden MEP, 'Enlargement strategy 2009 concerning the countries of the western Balkans, Iceland and Turkey (debate)'

¹¹⁰ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

¹¹¹ Oldřich Vlasák MEP, 'Enlargement report for Bosnia and Herzegovina (debate)'.

¹¹² Inés Ayala Sender MEP, 'Democratisation in Turkey debate'.

¹¹³ Huntington, S., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Simon & Schuster, London, 1996.

¹¹⁴ I choose this phrase, proposed by Zapatero, as the terminology closely mirrors that of Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations', although the conclusions are markedly different.

¹¹⁵ Rehn, O., 'Enlargement as an Instrument of the EU's Soft Power' Speech delivered 19.10.2007 [<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/07/642&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>]. Accessed 23.06.2010

Alongside the security role which Turkey is seen as potentially playing within the EU, another rational factor seen as working in Turkey's favour is energy and energy security. Actors within the EU point to the key geopolitical role of Turkey as an energy hub, situated near major oil and gas reserves, and a key stage in the journey these resources go on before arriving in EU member states. This is, of course, linked to the Alliance of Civilisations hypothesis, as it is suggested that membership of the EU for Turkey would improve relations between EU member states and energy rich countries in the Middle East, marking a move away from the Clash of Civilisations. The importance of energy security was highlighted by Geoffrey Van Orden in the European Parliament when he rhetorically asked '[a]t a time when, in all our countries, we have serious concerns about energy security and Turkey is in such a key geographical position in providing the routes for pipelines from the Caspian, why is the energy chapter [of accession negotiations] not open?'.¹¹⁶ Perhaps the answer to this question is that the opening of chapters of accession negotiations are not supposed to be linked to factors such as this, but it does highlight that this issue is in the minds of actors in the European Parliament.

Although there appears to be a normative component to these reasons for favouring Turkish accession, for some they appear to be separate from arguments of identity, and indeed reinforce the use of identity arguments against Turkey. 'There is an identity issue I'm sure, because the positive arguments are nothing to do with it. They're usually to do with trying to make a bridge to the Middle East, defending us from Russia, energy security, pipelines, all those...more hard, practical issues rather than emotional issues'.¹¹⁷ This is supported by Franz Obermayr who argues that 'it would be possible to resolve numerous non-European conflicts following Turkey's accession. However, despite Turkey's participation in the Eurovision song contest, [Europe] is built on three hills: on the acropolis for Greek humanism, on the Capitol in Rome for the concept of the European state and on Golgotha for the Christian Western world'.¹¹⁸ Clearly this is not a universally held view however, Olli Rehn, then European Commissioner for enlargement, points to Turkey's 'key role in energy security and in the dialogue between civilisations'.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Geoffrey Van Orden MEP, '2009 Progress report on Turkey (debate)'.

¹¹⁷ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

¹¹⁸ Franz Obermayr MEP, 'Enlargement strategy 2009 (debate)'.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

It is clear that in the minds of MEPs issues of identity and rational factors are not separable, and neither provides a single determining factor in actor interest in relation to Turkey. This is highlighted by two MEPs with contrasting views on Turkish accession. Pino Arlacchi favours ‘full EU membership for Turkey’ on the grounds that:

I have heard many objections to this process and I believe many of them are well grounded, but I believe also that these objections are overshadowed by three facts... First, the contribution of Turkey to the stability of the world economy.... The second fact is the strengthening of global peace generated by Turkey’s democratisation process and its related problem-free foreign policy. There has been a huge change of course of Turkish foreign policy in the right direction, which is positively affecting all East-West relationships. The third is the quality of Turkish social policies.¹²⁰

In contrast, Elmar Brok argues that:

Turkey is strategically important to us, but not at any price. Firstly, we cannot abolish the conditions for accession, including freedom of speech, an independent judiciary, rights for minorities and freedom of religion... Secondly, we must not put the integration capacity of the European Union at risk... Thirdly, it is Turkey’s responsibility to ensure that this process is not obstructed and, at last, to keep the promises that it has made in the context of the Ankara Protocol.¹²¹

It is clear from these two contrasting viewpoints that addressing the issue of Turkish accession in terms of either rational or normative factors does not adequately cover the complex forces which influence actor interest and behaviour.

The exact impact of European identity on the decisions made within the European Parliament on the Turkish membership bid is difficult to gauge, and this could perhaps form the basis of future research. What is clear is that factors which are traditionally viewed as rational and normative factors are inextricably linked. As I demonstrated in an earlier chapter, the concept of European identity is one which is widely subscribed to within the European Parliament. This European identity is dynamic, but in its current form is comprised of norms of the founding ideology of the European Union

¹²⁰ Pino Arlacchi MEP, ‘Enlargement report for Turkey (debate)’.

¹²¹ Elmar Brok MEP, ‘2010 progress report on Turkey (debate)’.

(democracy, rule of law, human rights etc.); a drive towards enlargement of the EU; European culture and history and Christian religion and heritage. Although I have spoken of a single European identity this is, as with all identities, an over simplification of the normative environment. My research has shown that different norms are experienced to different degrees by different actors within the European Parliament and the Logic of Appropriateness dictates that this produces different attitudes and interests in the different actors.

For a large number of MEPs there appear to be concerns relating to the degree to which European and Turkish identities do not correspond or indeed are in conflict. This can be broadly tied to Huntington's 'Clash of Civilisations' hypothesis, and fears stem from the opposing concerns of the difficulty in building a common identity and the degree to which Turkish membership of the EU would change European identity. These problems both stem from the belief that a common identity is a strong cohesive force in the EU and important for it to continue functioning. This viewpoint appears to be strongly related to the belief that there is a Christian basis to European identity and that Christian heritage is a factor which unifies member states. This is not exclusively true however, and there were other areas of difference referred to in the European Parliament, such as culture and the nature of norms of democracy and rights. Associated with this view is the depiction of Turkey as the "Other" which European identity is set up in opposition to. This view is also closely related to an opposition between a modern Christendom and the Muslim world, but in parts of Europe has a more directly historical basis. Respondents in my research suggested that for some the image of "Turks at the gates" and the memory of the Battle of Vienna are still a very real and powerful, and it is certainly raised in the European Parliament.¹²² This image, and this view of Turkey, is in direct opposition to the norm for peace in the EU and very much positions Turkey as a threat to European identity.

An alternative viewpoint exists within the European Parliament, although it does appear to be a less commonly held view. This contrasting attitude views changes to European identity associated with Turkish membership as a positive force. This viewpoint primarily appears to be held by those who do not view a strong link between religion

¹²² Eg. Tadeusz Cymański MEP, 'Enlargement report for Serbia (debate)'

and European values, although this does not necessarily mean they are not religious. One respondent pointed out that they are themselves Christian, but that they did not believe that religion and politics should mix, and that there is no religious basis to the European Union.¹²³ Turkish membership is perceived by these actors as moving European identity towards a more religiously and culturally pluralistic identity and this is viewed as a positive. The key difference for these actors compared to those subscribing to the previous viewpoint is that this pluralism would not come at the cost of the values of the European Union, rather it would strengthen them. Allied to this view of positive change to European identity is the 'Alliance of Civilisations' model, which argues that Turkish membership of the EU would bring improved relations with the Middle East and the EU's near neighbours. While those who propound the Alliance of Civilisations model do not speak in terms of identity change, it is precisely this change in identity, from a Christian based identity (or at least an identity which is perceived as based in Christianity to those outside the EU) to a more pluralistic and open identity.

There is, of course, a third group of MEPs for whom identity is not perceived to play a large role, and this can be further subdivided into two categories. I have found evidence of a small number of actors within the European Parliament, who believe that there is not a large difference between European and Turkish identity, or that by the time Turkey would join the Union the identities would greatly correspond. This viewpoint appears to be associated with the small number of actors who subscribe to a European identity which is based almost exclusively in the values of the EU set out in the founding treaties. As these values are enshrined in the Copenhagen Criteria they are seen to be a prerequisite of membership, so any difference in identity would be negligible upon accession. The second group who do not believe that Turkish membership would influence European identity are those who do not believe such a thing exists. These actors generally have a strong component of national identity and interest informing their behaviour and dictating appropriate action and are not concerned with identity at a European level. Despite this, many of these actors concede that considerations of European identity are important in many actors at EU level.

I have indicated throughout this thesis that European identity is widespread in the

¹²³ Questionnaire respondent.

European Parliament and this is borne out by my documentary research, supported by interviews and questionnaire data. I believe that the European Parliament is likely to attract those wishing to be members who are from the extremes of the spectrum concerning European identity rather than those who are ambivalent to it, although that is an area I am not able to address here. As I demonstrated in the last chapter however, there is a socialising effect of the European Parliament, and the European Union as a whole, and, as would be expected, my research has indicated this group of MEPs to be relatively small. The nature of the European Parliament as an arena for normative argument and debate suggested that European identity would be felt strongly within it, and this has certainly been supported by my research. Evidence has suggested that European identity is felt to some degree by a majority of MEPs, and the nature of the debate over Turkey amplifies that feeling. Debates within the EP emphasise European norms, strengthening European identity in relation to other elements of identity (such as national and regional identities) and influencing decisions made. This is especially true in the competence of enlargement, and particularly in the case of Turkey, where identity is regularly and robustly invoked and challenged.

Although within debates in the European Parliament there are direct references to identity arguments I do not believe that such arguments are the full impact of norms and identity arguments. Multiple respondents pointed to the degree to which identity influences decision making without being directly cited. Much of the debate within the European Parliament in relation to Turkish accession refers to the need for Turkey to meet the Copenhagen Criteria in relation to democracy, rule of law and human rights. Interestingly, the other requirements of the Copenhagen Criteria are discussed less often, perhaps because it is assumed that they will be met, or perhaps because they are deemed to be less important. Although there are clear reasons of defence and security for demanding these reforms from Turkey, I believe the normative arguments relating to the “fundamental values” of the EU have become sufficiently taken for granted that they are no longer actively considered, MEPs are unable to conceive of the possibility of a member not reaching these normative standards. Other factors which are normally considered purely in terms of cost benefit analyses are also inextricably bound up with normative factors. Throughout European Parliament debates on Turkish accession issues such as Turkey’s size and relative poverty and the problems in Cyprus are often mentioned, as are concerns over energy security and military alliance, but the nature,

shape and direction of European Parliament debates have demonstrated that rational and identity factors are inseparable. Indeed Rumelili goes as far as arguing that ‘when EU-Turkey relations are being debated, the EU politicians are not debating Turkey per se, but how “Europe” writ large is being constituted through its relations with Turkey’.¹²⁴ European Parliament debates also highlight the power norms have in setting actor priorities in relation to these issues, with MEPs acknowledging that there are gains and losses involved in Turkish membership but giving different emphases to different factors. Although there will be some variation in the applicability of each of these factors throughout the EU, and each will be felt differently in various member states, there does not appear to be a direct correlation between geographical location and attitude towards Turkey. Within the UK, the primary locus of my study, there is a marked variation in attitudes towards Turkish accession, and I believe that the nature and extent of European identity is one of the factors which explain this phenomenon.

This chapter has demonstrated that there is a strong association between the European identity as understood and experienced by the actor and their attitude towards Turkey. Although norms of European identity do not consciously influence the interests of all MEPs, I believe that these norms dictate what constitutes appropriate behaviour for the actor, and which factors are the most important in the Turkish membership bid. I also believe, however, that rational choice factors retain strength and it is possible that there are those for whom identity and norms are employed in a rhetorical way (mirroring Schimmelfennig’s “rhetorical action”). In this way decisions which are based in cost benefit analyses are phrased in terms of identity to provide them with extra influence. This does, however, still indicate that identity influences some actors within the EP. Although my research has demonstrated the importance of identity and norms in the decision making process over Turkish accession, further research could perhaps be conducted into identifying occurrences of this “rhetorical action”.

In the preceding chapters I have demonstrated that, within the European Parliament, there is a widespread European identity which is based in the fundamental, founding principles of the EU (which for some is linked to a Christian heritage), culture, religion and a drive towards enlargement. I then showed that the Parliament is an arena in which

¹²⁴ Rumelili, ‘Turkey: Identity, Foreign Policy, and Socialization’, p. 240.

this identity is displayed, strengthened and refined. This identity can have a profound impact on the attitudes and interests of actors within the European Parliament in relation to the accession negotiations between the European Union and Turkey. Although it is semantically convenient to talk of ‘rational’ factors and their impact on actor interest and behaviour, within a social constructivist framework such as the one I have employed, interests can never be entirely removed from norms and identity. As I explored earlier, norms have the power to affect actor behaviour through a variety of mechanisms. Although different scholars afford these mechanisms different names - Reus-Smit talks of norms influencing imagination, communication and constraining actors,¹²⁵ while Wendt talks of coercion and consent¹²⁶ - it is clear that to talk of any interests without considering normative factors would be to provide an incomplete picture. Actor interest and behaviour is to a large part governed by internalised norms, courses of action are not open to them which lie beyond the normatively imposed scope of their imagination. In addition to this actors can be coerced or constrained by norms, and interest will not be governed by ‘rational’ factors. Although it is difficult to assess the relative strength of ‘normative’ and ‘rational’ factors, it is clear that interest cannot be understood in isolation from identity, nor identity in isolation from interest. The role of norms in limiting actors imaginations, in constraining behaviour and in dictating appropriate action must be considered before drawing any conclusions regarding actor interest.

The strength of identity within the European Parliament and the degree to which that identity is invoked when debating the issue of Turkish accession mean that an analysis of interests which exclude these factors would be insufficient and any predictions made using a rationalist framework inaccurate. Although I believe that a social constructivist framework allows a better analysis of interest and decision-making in relation to Turkish membership of the EU, this will not necessarily result in specific predictions as to the future course of relations between Turkey and the EU. The different norms and competing discourses, in combination with a lack of stability in relations will impact on the ability to make detailed predictions for the future. Although this research has not directly addressed questions of decision making with regards to Turkish membership,

¹²⁵ Reus-Smit, C., ‘Constructivism’ in Burchill et al. (eds.) *Theories of International Relations*. Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke, 2005. p.198.

¹²⁶ Wendt, A., 1999. *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge University Press, pp.268-273

the employment of a social constructivist framework has drawn attention to issues which have, thus far, prevented accurate predictions as to the course of future negotiations being made, and have laid the groundwork for future research in this area. The social constructivist outlook, supported by the findings of this research, have also highlighted the possibility for changes of norms, identities and interests in the future which could have a profound impact on the accession negotiations.

While the preceding chapters have established that there is a “European identity” in the European Parliament and the important role played by the institution itself in the nature and strength of this identity, it was not a logical necessity from this that European identity influenced actor interest in the European Parliament. Instead it was necessary to produce a clear mechanism through which normative factors influenced the attitudes of actors and the decisions reached. In this chapter I have shown that an understanding of interest in the European Parliament requires an understanding of identity and norms within the institution. Although decisions are generally seen to rely on rational factors, these factors cannot be understood in isolation from the influence of norms. Perhaps more importantly, this chapter has demonstrated that not only are European level norms present within the European Parliament, European identity is felt strongly by MEPs. European level norms and European identity are not simply discarded when difficult and sensitive issues, with interests and appropriate action constituted by national norms. The case study of Turkey was chosen because the social constructivist scholarship suggested that it would be an area in which European identity would be expressed and challenged. This research has substantiated that assertion but goes further, showing that European identity runs deeper than a superficial justification for rational arguments. This chapter has provided an important exploration of the strength and impact of European identity on MEPs, as well as further clarifying the nature of that identity. The conclusion which can be strongly drawn is that European identity plays an important role in the life and activity of the European Parliament.

Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate the nature of identity within the European Parliament, how identity is experienced and expressed and the relative strength of this identity in actor interest. To highlight and investigate these issues I chose the topic of Turkish accession to membership of the EU as a case study. In order to perform a structured and delimited analysis I formulated research questions (stated earlier) and these questions will each be addressed in turn.

Is there a “European identity” within the European Parliament? If so, on what norms is this identity based?

Although the treaties and documents of the European Union avoid specific reference to a European or European Union identity, they do speak of shared European values, and there is a widespread acceptance that there are normative factors which tie member states of the EU together. Despite this acceptance, scholars have questioned whether this amounts to a European identity, often suggesting that these are merely common factors of separate identities, and that European norms and identity are absent from the institutions of the European Union. Indeed Risse suggests that, in contrast to earlier neo-functional theory, ‘[u]p to the early 1990s, the conventional wisdom simply held that European integration was somehow marching along without any noticeable transfers of loyalty from the nation-states to the European level’.¹ In this way the conception of the European Parliament, and the institutions of the European Union generally, is logically limited to that of an intervening variable, an arena for intergovernmental, or at least inter-state, bargaining.² For this reason, the presence of European norms and identity are key to the “thicker” view of the institutions of the EU which I advance.

The choice to focus this research on the European Parliament and the identity of MEPs

¹ Risse, T., 2005. ‘Neo-Functionalism, European Identity, and the Puzzles of European Integration’ *Journal of European Public Policy* 12:2 p.295

² This can be seen in Moravcsik’s ‘Liberal Intergovernmentalism’, Moravcsik, A., 1998. *The Choice for Europe*. London: Routledge.

raised a number of issues many, although not all, of which formed the basis for the selection of the European Parliament. The concept of the European Parliament as intervening variable is perhaps strengthened by the composition of the institution, with MEPs directly elected by an electorate within their home nation. This factor was important, however in understanding the interaction of different identities and norms from different levels within individual actors. While the expression of European identity, or at the least European interest, is explicitly within the remit of actors within the European Commission, for example, this is not the case with the European Parliament. The relatively short term of office of MEPs and the degree to which European elections are influenced by national politics have also been cited as reasons for the importance of national identity relative to European norms. The European Parliament was in large part chosen as the focus of study precisely because of this multi-focal basis to identity.

I decided early in the research process that focussing on a single institution would allow me greater focus and specificity than looking at multiple European institutions, and the nature of the European Parliament means that identity and normative complexity are high. I established at an early stage of my research the need for specificity of study and terminology and, although I was studying “European identity”, and this label remains useful, the focus of my study was norms and identity within the élite of the European Parliament rather than a broad European identity experienced by the population of member states.

This research project was founded on the social constructivist contention that there would be a discernable presence of European norms with the European Parliament, leading to what I describe as “European identity”, alongside the more established norms associated with national identity. On this fundamental point the research conducted supported this assertion. A documentary analysis, primarily focussing on European Parliament debates and statements by MEPS, indicated the presence of European identity, and this view was supported by the evidence of interviewees and questionnaire respondents. Although this identity was found to be present, it is not universally expressed, and there was not unanimity amongst respondents. Although I would argue that the norms are present

throughout the institution, the social constructivist framework employed does not require European identity to be expressed by all MEPs to demonstrate the presence of European level norms. The theories relating to the effect of norms, outlined earlier in the thesis, show that there is scope for norms simply to be ignored by actors, or for appropriate action to be governed by other, perhaps national, norms. My research has demonstrated that European identity exists within the institution of the European Parliament and that, although not universally experienced, European norms play an important role in constituting actor identity.

My previous research had highlighted the importance of what I refer to as the “founding ideology” of the European Union - norms of democracy, peace, rule of law, justice and human rights - in European identity. For this reason these values, explicitly referred to in the treaties of the EU, formed a natural starting point for my research concerning European identity. It is clear from my research that norms concerning the “founding ideology” play an integral role in the formation of European identity, and I found evidence for this founding ideology as taken for granted norms. Alongside these norms I investigated the influence on European identity of cultural, historical and religious factors, which are not explicitly stated and have previously proved more contentious. These factors are regularly referred to and debated within the European Parliament and, particularly during enlargement debates, much is made of arguments based in culture and religion. This evidence is supported by data from primary research - while some respondents argue that each of these factors should not be components of European identity, other respondents argue that they unequivocally are. My research shows that cultural, historical and religious norms have a role to play in the constitution of European identity experienced within the European Parliament.

Although I initially spoke of the presence of a European identity, the reality of the identity complex within the European Parliament is that norms generated and strengthened at the European level influence different actors to differing degrees. While it has been possible to highlight these norms and investigate European identity, it would be to over-simplify the situation considerably to speak of a single, unified European identity. It is clear from my

research that these norms and factors influence actors within the European Parliament, but the influence of each varies from actor to actor and from situation to situation. The identity of each actor varies, but my research has allowed me to identify the common factors and norms of actor identities. To assess the degree to which European norms influence actors, constituting their identity, it was necessary for me to investigate the interests of MEPs, employing the case study of Turkish membership, and this is discussed later.

A further facet of European identity highlighted by my research is the specificity of identity within the European Parliament. Although a significant proportion of my research was into the effect of the institution of the European Parliament on identity, and I argued that European identity would be felt more strongly within the EP than amongst the population of Europe as a whole, I did not initially explicitly address the unique nature of identity within the EP. Amongst my respondents could be found the point of view that the particular form of European identity found within the European Parliament was substantively different from European identity experienced elsewhere in the European Union. While this does to a degree limit the broader applicability of my research within the EU, it also serves to emphasise the role played by the institution itself. This presents an interesting possibility for future research, investigating similar phenomena to those I studied but in a different setting, for example within the European Commission, and I believe that my research has outlined a framework within which this future research could be carried out. These findings could then be compared to the results of my research to analyse how identity varies between European Union institutions.

Another area of identity within the European Parliament which emerged during the course of the research is the presence of identity within the political groupings of the European Parliament. Although MEPs sit by political group in the Parliament, little research effort has been dedicated to investigating identity in these groupings. Although I anticipated that there would be preference and policy similarities between members of a group, irrespective of nationality, my research suggested that in some cases these similarities went beyond tactical, utilitarian associations and included an identity component. Although I did not explicitly investigate this phenomenon, and it could perhaps be an avenue for fruitful future

research, I believe this can be seen as further proof of the socialising power of the European Parliament.

How strong is this identity, and how does it interact with pre-existing identities?

There have traditionally been two contrasting, and indeed contradictory, views of the strength of European identity for MEPs, the view that there was no discernible impact of European identity on actor preferences or decisions,³ and the view that MEPs “go native”, abandoning national identity entirely. The view of members of the institutions of the EU “going native” draws on the work of Haas, who suggested that ‘[p]olitical integration is the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre’.⁴ This language of “going native” is often used in a derogatory way, in part because this implies a removal from, and perhaps a disregard for, the electorate.

My contention from the beginning of this research process was that this polarised view of actor identity was incomplete and unhelpful, that European identity did not replace national identity, instead I argued that these identities could co-exist. For this reason it was necessary for me to create a framework within which norms of identity are experienced and followed. As such, I moved away from talk of strength of European identity, towards talking more of the degree to which European norms influence actors in relation to the influence of national norms. My research indicates that norms based at the European level play a greater role in the identity of MEPs than in the population at large, although there is little indication that MEPs “go native”. There was a suggestion in my research, however, that MEPs had to a greater or lesser degree become removed from the identity of those who elected them.

In place of a model where one identity is replaced wholesale with another identity, or where loyalties shift, I propose a complex picture of norms present at the national level and the

³ Eg. Moravcsik.

⁴ Haas, E., *The Uniting of Europe: Political Social and Economic Forces 1950-1957*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, p.16.

European level where the appropriate norms are selected on a case by case basis. This does not imply that norms and identities are unstable, although they are dynamic, instead it indicates the presence of multiple stable norms and the coexistence of multiple identities. Alongside these levels of norms my research found repeated reference to the importance of other normative levels, including a level below the national level. Respondents particularly highlighted the importance of regional identity, and this was not an area I had anticipated being represented at the European level. Despite the presence of these unexpected norms, I do not believe they significantly affected the outcome of my research. I was aware at the outset that other norms would be present and that they would often be in competition with norms from the European level, indeed this was a key factor in the research. As such, the point of origin of these competing norms and the extant identity of actors does not greatly influence their relevance at a European level. I acknowledge throughout my thesis that actors do not enter the European Parliament in a state of normative vacuum, instead investigating the effect of European norms on existing actor identity.

My research suggested the presence of a sliding scale of identity, with actors influenced by their regional, national and European identities, but to different degrees dependent upon the situation. While there was little evidence for a complete adoption of European identity at the expense of other identities, analysis of European Parliament debate data did suggest that European norms and identity were expressed strongly in areas of European decision making, areas where consensus was required at European level, and areas where a high level of common action and cooperation exists. This analysis is supported by the primary research conducted; interview data suggests that European identity is felt more strongly in these areas than those which do not fulfil the above criteria. These findings were in line with the social constructivist theory which formed the basis for my selection of Turkey as the case study for the research. Debates concerning Turkish accession are hotbeds for normative arguments and those based in identity, and the actors I spoke to in my research largely agreed that the case of Turkey's potential accession to membership of the European Union was one in which European identity was felt strongly. That is, one where the strength of European norms was high in relation to other norms. The role played by the European Parliament itself will be discussed in more detail below.

What effect does the institution of the European Parliament have on the identity of actors within it?

In keeping with the social constructivist understanding of institutions, I investigated the potential role of the European Parliament as a “thick institution”, acting as more than an arena for actor bargaining. A social constructivist approach argues that the European Parliament is constituted by the actors within it and, in turn, constitutes those actors, and I believe that the findings of my research support this assertion. There was both explicit and implicit support for the idea of the European Parliament socialising actors with norms.

In line with social constructivist theorising, my research established that the European Parliament amounts to more than the rules which govern its function, the regulative norms, which are set out in the treaties of the EU. Instead, the Parliament is a dynamic institution with the ability to change and evolve independent of treaty change. This change is normative based, and is a result of the Parliament being constituted by its members. My research supports the idea of the European Parliament as a thick institution, indeed I view the institution not in terms of the formal rules which govern it, instead I look at the intersubjective understandings and shared meanings which comprise it. As a result of these factors, the institution itself gains an important role in the identity of those within it.

I found evidence supporting the action of Checkel’s “socialization” and “argumentative persuasion”,⁵ as well as Risse’s “Logic of Arguing”,⁶ and these concepts offer an idea of why the European Parliament offers a good environment for the socialisation and selection of European norms. The key to the effectiveness of the EP in this regard lies in the interactions between its constituent actors. There is a high interaction density within the Parliament, actors encounter one another on a day-to-day basis, but the nature of these interactions is also important. The nature of debate within the plenary sessions of the European Parliament means that argumentative persuasion is unlikely to have the greatest effect in this rigidly organised, formal setting. Instead interactions within the institution in

⁵ Checkel, J. T., 2001. ‘Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change’ *International Organization* 55:3

⁶ Risse, T., 2000. “Let’s Argue!”: Communicative Action in World Politics’ *International Organization* 54:1

its broader context gain importance, the informal discussions and interactions between actors. In this way, in addition to the socialising effect of the European Parliament, it also retains importance as an arena for interaction.

The meeting of MEPs, primarily in an informal context, allows norms to be debated and contested, and it is through these debates that the beginning of normative consensus arises. The Parliament itself serves to facilitate these debates and provide a locus for the dissemination of norms, understandings and consensus. There is an important role for the Parliament in the selection of norms and arguments, as the location helps to strengthen the effectiveness of the norms and encourages actors to turn to European norms. Another key requirement for the socialisation of norms is shared common understandings, a “common lifeworld”⁷ to which actors can refer. This is in part provided by the European Parliament, which is an institution comprised of shared understandings, and which plays an important role in constituting the actors within it. In this way the Parliament performs a positive feedback function, as the greater the amount of common ground shared the greater degree to which socialisation can take place. This in turn increases the degree to which a “common lifeworld” exists. Despite this loop, shared understandings of actors do not come solely from their place within the institution, I established that a European identity existed in actors prior to entering the institution of the European Union and this provided shared normative understandings. In this way European identity is key to the functioning of the European Parliament in its current form, but the institution itself is in turn key to the identities of the actors within it. The lifeworlds are constituted by language and culture⁸ and provide a basis within which truth claims can be anchored during normative argument, so the role of the European Parliament in the generation and continuation of a “common lifeworld” for MEPs is an important one.

Important to the concepts of socialisation and the logic of arguing are the degree to which interactions are based on genuine normative arguments, and the level to which actors are willing to be persuaded by opposing normative arguments. For this reason I found that

⁷ Risse, ““Let’s Argue!”” p.10

⁸ Habermas, J., 1987. *The Theory of Communicative Action - Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*. Beacon Press, Boston, p.125.

interaction within the European Parliament did not greatly influence the identities and normative frameworks of those actors who did not engage in debate involving norms from the European level.⁹ Although many of these MEPs do concede there to be some degree of shared understanding within Europe and between member states of the EU, they argue that this is removed from the action of the European Union and individual institutions. These actors display prior, ingrained beliefs which are contrary to some European norms, and are thus significantly less receptive to those norms. Despite this, there is some evidence of norm and identity formation within this group in the European Parliament, although along very different lines to the majority of MEPs, and this would be an interesting avenue of future research alongside the identity of other political groupings in the EP.

A further role in identity formation and strengthening played by the European Parliament is in its treatment of the “Other”. While within domestic politics it might be possible to assert ones identity in relation to other countries within Europe, perhaps in Britain in contrast to Euro-zone countries, this is more problematic within the EP. With interactions within the EP emphasising and drawing on a “common lifeworld” which is pan-European or pan-EU, it is difficult for the resulting identity to be set up in opposition to some European identity. This has the potential to cause MEPs to look further afield in search of the “Other”, moving it beyond Europe. As I found European identity to have a strong basis in culture and religion, this is potentially problematic for Turkey, which is perceived to differ from Europe in both of these respects. This has the potential to constitute a lifeworld which is common to MEPs and members of other institutions of the EU but crucially not to Turkish politicians or the Turkish population. The lack of a common lifeworld between Turkey and the EU would prevent Turkey from engaging in the argumentative discourse, meaning that not only would European identity not correspond with Turkish identity, but a major weapon of norm and identity change would be removed from Turkey. For those MEPs who view Turkey as the “Other” it is likely that their lifeworld would not be in common with a Turkish lifeworld, and the acceptance of a lifeworld within the EU which includes Turkey would be an important step on the road to possible Turkish membership.

⁹ These might broadly be described as “anti-European Union” MEPs, although this term is an oversimplification of a complex picture.

A final area of interest in relation to the role of the European Parliament concerned the transmission of norms from the EP to the population of Europe as a whole. It has been suggested that there is a role for the EP as a locus of European identity, and the strong identity within the institution would then “filter down” in some way, and I suggested that this effect might be present. While there is some support from respondents for this, the opposite view was also forcibly expressed and, although it was not the focus of my research, I did not find any evidence of a mechanism through which this effect could take place. The important role of the European Parliament and the unique nature of the identity within the Parliament also provide difficulties in the potential transfer of norms.

Through this investigation I have established the factors which make the European Parliament an important element in the creation and propagation of norms and identity, and I believe that this can research model could be extrapolated to the other institutions of the EU. Although there are important differences between the institutions this model could form a basis for research into other institutions, although the researcher would have to be mindful of the areas of difference.

What is the role of identity within the European Parliament?

Having established that European identity is present in the European Parliament, that it is felt more strongly by MEPs than by the population at large, and that European identity within the EP is slightly different from the broader conception of European identity, I focussed my research on discerning the role played by identity within the EP.

The analysis conducted of European Parliament debates and other documents suggests that there is a clear role for identity within debates and arguments amongst MEPs, as suggested by the findings of my previous research question, and this is strongly supported by those I interviewed. The basis of persuasion is indeed primarily based on European norms, values and understandings. The effect of persuasion based in national arguments and norms is, after all, unlikely to have great influence over actors from different nations, and MEPs emphasise the need for multi-national agreement for decisions to be made. To reach even an

absolute majority requires far beyond the support possible from any single nation. Despite this assertion of the importance of norms and normative arguments, I did not find this form of persuasion to the exclusion of all other forms. Respondents suggested that there was still a place for rational choice bargaining, although this was primarily, but not exclusively, associated with those for whom European norms and identity were not felt strongly. I also suggested the possible presence of persuasion based in Schimmelfennig's "rhetorical action" but, while this was mentioned in my primary research, it did not get widespread support. Instead the suggestion appeared to be levelled by those who did not acknowledge European level norms against those who were debating them in earnest.

My review of social constructivist literature led me to suggest that the strength of European identity within the Parliament would vary by competence and policy area, and this was supported by my research. My choice to study identity in relation to Turkish accession was, in large part, due to my belief that identity would be felt particularly keenly in this area. My findings in this regard further support the existence of the logic of arguing and socialization, as it was suggested by interview data that European identity was felt most strongly in policy areas which require the creation of a common EU, or common EP, position, and those areas which present a challenge to European norms and identity, and this was certainly seen to be true in EP debates. Policy areas which require the adoption of a common position, often areas where the EU or EP want to take the lead, also require the greatest degree of interaction and compromise, and the institution of the European Parliament encourages recourse to European norms and the lifeworld common to participants. For these reasons these policy areas also have the greatest effect in terms of the refinement and evolution of European identity. European identity was similarly experienced strongly in policy areas which were seen to challenge the existing identity, as normative arguments and those based in European identity are used explicitly. This again serves to refine and change European identity, and policy areas of this nature will have a disproportionately large impact on identity within the European Parliament.

As I indicated earlier in this conclusion, the exact expression of European identity by actors within the European Parliament varies on an individual basis, and I also found this to be

true when examining variation by policy areas. As the application of European level norms varies from individual to individual it is a logical corollary that the actor's reaction to particular situations will vary. As European identity varies, the view of what challenges that identity will also vary, as, potentially, will what requires common action. Despite this, having pointed to the common factors and norms which underpin European identity, it is possible to point to areas which are likely to be perceived as identity challenging. One area for which this certainly appears to be true is the case of Turkish accession. Turkish accession is widely viewed by those who believe in an identity to present a real identity challenge, and there is also the view that before the conclusion of accession negotiations there must be agreement and consensus. This vindicates the choice of Turkish accession as the case study for this research, and indicates that important role that debates over Turkish membership can play in the understanding of European identity.

Is European identity observable in the interests and behaviour of actors in the European Parliament?

As I have indicated from the outset of my research, the prevailing wisdom in relation to the European Parliament affords little role for factors of identity in decision-making. The common view of the EP sees it as a locus for rational choice decision-making and an arena for bargaining and compromise, but only compromise to maximise national utility. I have argued, however, that to take seriously talk of European identity, European norms must have a real and observable effect on the interests and behaviour of actors in the European Parliament. Social constructivist theory allows room for norms to exist which are ignored, but I believe that to talk credibly of a European identity it is not sufficient to point to norms if they have no impact on actors.

My research highlighted the importance of the logic of appropriateness in actor behaviour, which is often set up in opposition to the logic of consequences associated with rational choice decision making.¹⁰ The predominant role afforded to European level norms by the

¹⁰ March, J.G. & Olsen, J.P., *The Logic of Appropriateness*. Arena Centre for European Studies, University of Oslo. WP 04/09

function of the European Parliament affords European identity an important role in deciding what qualifies as appropriate action in a given situation and, by extension, influences observable behaviour. As with all the areas on which my research has focussed, there is a high degree of individual variation and variation by policy area. The appropriate action for each individual in a given situation will be determined by argument and debate, and the cornerstone of this debate for individuals who are receptive to European identity will be European level norms. As I anticipated, I did not find evidence that norms of European identity influence the actions of every individual within the European Parliament, but I had not anticipated the degree to which “appropriate action” could vary. Just as I found that the nature of European identity is variable, with different elements emphasised by different individuals, this produced a similar effect when looking at interests and arguments. Although the different variations of European identity experienced within the Parliament share the same basic principles, in practise this can produce vastly different preferences and actions when applied to different competences.

As I outlined in the preceding section, the nature of the policy area addressed in the European Parliament is key to an understanding of the strength of that identity, illuminated through an analysis of arguments and interest. As areas which are not perceived to present a challenge to existing European identity and those which do not require common action do not illicit as strong feelings of European identity, it follows that in these areas European identity has little or no effect. Where identity is felt strongly, however, it can play a significant role in actor behaviour. The difficulty in this regard is presented by the nature of the challenge to identity, as the different emphasis placed on different European level norms will affect how, and indeed whether, that challenge is perceived. In the case of Turkey, there is clear evidence that some actors within the European Parliament have concerns regarding Turkish accession based on religious and/or cultural grounds, yet for those who consider that religion and culture form little or no part of European identity these factors are likely to present little challenge to European identity. Despite these concerns, I believe that my research provides evidence that European identity is felt strongly within the European Parliament, producing an observable impact on interests and behaviour, and that the issue of Turkish accession is one area where this effect is felt particularly strongly.

Important in understanding the role of norms in the interests and resulting arguments of actors, is an appreciation of the interconnected nature of normative factors and so-called “rational” issues. Although issues like the size of Turkey and the financial cost of membership are undoubtedly important, they cannot be understood in isolation from concerns of identity. My data show that the issue of size, for example, gains in importance when the identity of the candidate country is not perceived to match European identity, more so when the candidate country is perceived as the “Other”. For this reason it is not enough merely to say that arguments for or against potential members are not made on the grounds of culture or religion, norms play an important, and often subconscious, role in assessing rational factors and setting priorities.

Although my research has shown that European identity is felt strongly enough to impact on MEP interests and behaviour, and this was my primary aim, it is not possible for me to quantify this effect. For the reasons outlined earlier in this thesis I chose a qualitative approach to my research, and I believe that this was the correct approach to investigate the concepts I have studied. This approach has, however, left me unable to quantify the effect produced by European identity, merely able to demonstrate that there is an important role for the study of European identity and that norms should play an important role in future research into the European Parliament’s decision making process. For this reason, any approach to studying the decision making processes within the European Parliament which dismisses norms and identity will provide a blinkered and distorted view of those processes.

I believe that this approach can and should be applied in research regarding European Parliament decision making, as well as other institutions of the European Union, within the framework I have outlined. The focus of this research was identity in the European Parliament, and so it was beyond the scope of this project to investigate in any detail the future process of accession negotiations with Turkey, but I believe that this thesis has demonstrated that an approach along these lines would be productive and informative. This will allow for a more nuanced view of decision making and a greater ability to predict

attitudes and outcomes.

What are the implications for Turkish membership?

The nature of European identity uncovered by my research is key to understanding the impact it will have on the Turkish membership bid although, as stated above, this is not the primary purpose for this research question. An analysis of discourses relating to the possible accession of Turkey, as well as the anticipated course of the ongoing negotiations, has provided greater insight into the nature and strength of European identity in the EP.

As well as a strong basis in the stated values of the European Union, the founding ideology, I found there to be a strong presence of norms based in religion, culture and a drive towards enlargement of the Union. Although the values of the European Union have been discussed in relation to Turkey, especially Turkey's history of human rights, less explicit discussion has historically been afforded to the other bases of identity.

There was undeniably found to be some opposition to Turkey on grounds of Turkish and European identity, and this was expressed both explicitly and more implicitly. Arguments are made within the European Parliament opposing Turkish membership of the EU on grounds of culture and religion, but there was also the suggestion that identity influenced preferences concerning Turkish accession in more subtle ways. Arguments against Turkish accession based in identity fell into two separate, but interrelated, categories. The first concerned the degree to which European and Turkish identity differed and were, perhaps, incompatible; the second, conversely focussed on the degree to which European identity would be changed by Turkish membership. Clearly both of these positions foresee a challenge to existing identity, hence identity arguments are brought to the fore, and the focus of the challenge along cultural and religious lines further emphasises the importance of these factors. The involvement of the European Parliament within the accession negotiations also requires, or is at least facilitated by, broad agreement amongst its members, causing them to draw on their common lifeworld and construct arguments focussed in European level norms. I also found evidence that European identity was

influencing actors within the European Parliament on a more sub-conscious level, affecting the way factors generally seen as rational choice are perceived, and the priorities of actors.

Although there was strong evidence of negative attitudes towards Turkey based in European identity, I also found there to be an alternative, positive view of Turkish membership on identity grounds, albeit a less prevalent one. In contrast to the “clash of civilisations” view expressed by many MEPs, an “alliance of civilisations” position was put forward by some. This view highlighted certain similarities of identity, generally a similarity of Turkish views to European ones on the founding ideology, while suggesting differences in other areas, primarily religion, could, in fact, prove advantageous. By admitting a democratic, peaceful nation which respects human rights, but also has a predominantly Muslim population, the EU can demonstrate that the identities of European nations are based in the founding ideology and are not incompatible with identities of Muslim nations. In this way the “Other” is seen to be undemocratic countries, and those who do not respect human rights or the rule of law, rather than those which differ culturally and religiously as it is in the opposing viewpoint. Turkish accession is also supported by those who argue that European identity is, or should be, based on religious and cultural pluralism, rather than being a “Christian club”.

These two separate viewpoints or discourses both have strong bases in European norms and identity, but reach different conclusions. In this way the same norms, looked at through the lens of the Turkish membership bid and within the institution of the European Parliament, create what could amount to two separate European identities. It is certainly clear that through argument and debate at least two distinct answers have been generated as to what the appropriate preference is for an actor in this situation. The answer subscribed to by an individual actor is likely to depend on many factors. As I have argued throughout, national and regional norms remain important in the identity of actors within the European Parliament and this is likely to affect which logic of appropriateness is subscribed to. Similarly my research has suggested that the nature of interactions within the EP, such as within political groupings, will exert an influence. My research has suggested that identity arguments are used more often in opposition to Turkish membership than in support,

however the challenge to identity and the resulting arguments are ongoing, and identity is dynamic.

The inextricable link between ‘rational’ and ‘normative’ factors in European decision-making renders it impossible for consensus to be reached over Turkish membership as long as no such consensus can be reached regarding European identity and interest. The creation of a consensus, or single European identity, is hindered by the nature of the subject under discussion. Social constructivists assert that stable practice is key to the generation and transformation of actor identity,¹¹ so although Turkish membership of the EU is an area in which identity is invoked, lack of stability may hinder the creation of a normative consensus on the issue. Relations between “the West” and “Islam”¹² provide little stability, particularly since the events of 9/11, so the platform for socialisation will be weak. Although the European Parliament provides stability and a strong socialising force in a number of areas, as indicated earlier, broader instability makes identity change in the sphere of religion particularly problematic. For this reason, instability in these relations will impact on the ability of the European Parliament, and the EU more generally, to provide an answer to the divergence of discourses concerning Turkish accession. This instability will only serve to increase the difficulty of making predictions concerning the Turkish membership bid.

Within my research, concerns were expressed as to the effect Turkish membership of the EU would have on European identity, but my research suggests that major changes in the identity of the European Parliament would be unlikely to take place after the accession of Turkey. Instead it appears that a significant shift would be required in identity within the European Parliament before accession would be a realistic possibility. It is hard to conceive of the European Parliament, a key element of the negotiating process, supporting Turkish accession when serious questions remain as to the “Europeanness” of Turkey. Due to the degree of separation between identity within the European Parliament and the European

¹¹ Wendt, A., 1992. 'Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics' in Der Derian, J., 9ed.) *International Theory – Critical Investigations*. MacMillan, Basingstoke, 1995. p.149.

¹² I once again use the language of Huntington, as this is the language in which interview responses were typically phrased.

identity of the population of Europe as a whole (if such a thing exists), it is possible to envisage Turkish accession producing a substantial change in the latter. I would not suggest that identity would not change were Turkey to become a member, instead that identity would continue to evolve with the new composition of the EP and the mutual constitution of agents and structures.

The negotiations over the possible accession of Turkey have the possibility to play a vital role in the future nature of European institutional identity. The continued challenge to identity and the resulting normative interactions within the European Parliament will result in the evolution of the identity. It is difficult to foresee the future path of this evolution, but this refining force has the potential to bring forward a more unified European identity, with more broadly shared common understandings of norms and appropriate action. If broader agreement on the nature of European identity does occur and it focuses on the founding ideology and religious and cultural pluralism this will benefit the Turkish membership bid. If, however, there is a focus on Christianity and the associated culture this will undoubtedly prove detrimental to Turkey's hopes of acceding.

An illustration of the difficulty of predicting how these factors will play out is provided by the great variety of responses to the question of if and when Turkey will accede to membership of the EU. Most respondents were reluctant to comment on whether Turkey's membership bid would be successful, and when pressed there was little uniformity in the answers. There was a view expressed, by both supporters and opponents of Turkish membership, that Turkey would never accede, or at least not in the lifetime of the respondents. At the other extreme was the suggestion that the process would be relatively rapid, if not simple. When presented with the original earliest possible date, 2015, Fiona Hall suggested that 'I think that 2015 is too soon, I think it would be more likely to be 2020'.¹³ Stephen Hughes suggests the 'mid 2020s',¹⁴ before Turkey could join, while John Bowis argues that accession is not close, '20 years [is] perfectly possible'.¹⁵ John Purvis, on the other hand, believes that Turkey will ultimately join the EU but warns that 'It's going to

¹³ Hall, Fiona. Personal interview (16th October 2009).

¹⁴ Hughes, Stephen. Personal interview (21st May 2010).

¹⁵ Bowis, John. Personal interview (2nd September 2009).

be a long time I'm afraid'.¹⁶ Bill Newton-Dunn is more pessimistic, only offering 'probably 30-35% of them actually joining in the end',¹⁷ while Martin Callanan stated that, despite being in favour of Turkish accession 'we shouldn't kid ourselves that it's ever going to happen in our lifetime. I'd be staggered if it did'.¹⁸ Opinion expressed within the European Parliament is similarly split, with arguments ranging from wanting to 'stop these senseless negotiations!' in favour of privileged partnership,¹⁹ to suggesting that those in support of Turkey must 'say so again and again. The shrill voice of the rejectionist must not be allowed to drown us out'.²⁰ As well as highlighting the difficulty of making predictions, I believe this vast array of answers also point to the role of identity in actor's arguments and interests. When asked to assess Turkey's chance of acceding, Hans-Gert Pöttering answered that Turkey should not become a member, and that the EU, which for him has a strong identity basis, 'must have borders somewhere. It cannot be boundless. And Turkey is not within these borders. However, a "privileged partnership" is desirable between the European Union and Turkey. This partnership should be built on the mutual recognition that Turkey and the EU have durable joint interests that require a close relationship'.²¹ This viewpoint broadly fits into a traditional institutional theoretical outlook of interests, as well as a liberal intergovernmental approach to European integration. The complex nature of the identity is further complicated by other respondents who view the concept of *pacta sunt servanda* as integral to European identity arguing that only offering Turkey privileged partnership would be to ignore this principle.

The variety of opinions regarding the prospect of Turkish accession is indicative of the different discourses and bases of identity which are found in the European Parliament with regards to the Turkish accession bid. Although a rationalist viewpoint would highlight national interest as the key deciding factor in the decision making process, within a social constructivist framework other factors come into play. The interrelated nature of 'rational' and 'normative' factors, the competing discourses of Turkey's association with Europe, and

¹⁶ Purvis, John. Personal interview (21st October 2009).

¹⁷ Newton Dunn, Bill. Personal interview (9th March 2010).

¹⁸ Callanan, Martin. Personal interview (12th October 2009).

¹⁹ Peter van Dalen MEP, '2010 progress report on Turkey (debate)'.

²⁰ Richard Howitt MEP, '2009 progress report on Croatia - 2009 progress report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - 2009 progress report on Turkey (debate)'

²¹ Pöttering, Hans-Gert, MEP + former EP President (Personal correspondence).

the relative instability of the relations between Turkey and the EU make predicting the future course of negotiations problematic, and setting a timeframe for Turkish membership controversial.

What are the limitations of the research?

From the starting point of my project it was necessary for me to modify the nature and scope of my research due to practical and logistical constraints and, although I took steps to ameliorate these weaknesses, these changes will have impacted upon my findings.

My research was, unfortunately, limited by practical considerations, including fairly severe financial limitations. I had originally envisaged my research having a strong and broad base in primary data gained through qualitative interviews with MEPs, supported by questionnaire responses, and these data sources would stand alongside the analysis of debates and other documentation originating from the European Parliament and the broader EU. While my research does draw from these sources of data and, I believe is stronger because of it, it was necessary for me to re-evaluate the balance of sources due to practical considerations. Financial restrictions and difficulties accessing interviewees meant that I could not implement a programme of interviews of the scope and breadth that I had initially conceived. In practice the number of interviews I managed to conduct was a significant reduction on the planned interviews, although I did succeed in conducting some important interviews with MEPs, including members of AFET, and former MEPs and these provided me with valuable data. Good depth was achieved in these interviews, but the breadth of data was undeniably lacking. Similarly the responses to my questionnaire were disappointingly limited. Although I had a number of positive responses when initially approached about answering an anonymous questionnaire, I received few completed questionnaires. Once again, the questionnaires proved to be a valuable source of data, but the utility of the data in isolation is reduced by the small sample size. The reduced quantity of data received from interviews and questionnaires in relation to my plan outlined in my methodology shifted some of the emphasis from these sources onto other data collection techniques. To ameliorate the weaknesses created by these issues I leaned more heavily on

transcripts of debates from the European Parliament which also present directly the words of actors. The positive side to these sources is it is possible to gain an understanding of the arguments employed and gain a greater feel for the role in norms in context, unfortunately they do not afford the possibility to follow up and investigate particular areas of interest. Although it was not possible to use interview data to fully support the findings of the research, the interviews played a key role in identifying important issues and factors which could then be more fully analysed with recourse to debate transcripts. These debate transcripts provided an invaluable source of data in the absence of the breadth of interview and questionnaire data desired, and I used the three sources of data together in an attempt to understand the identities and interests of actors. Alongside these sources I employed other secondary data (such as speeches by MEPs and press releases) as well as official documents of the European Union (like treaties and progress reports) as I had envisioned in my methodology, to triangulate my data, and ensure the accuracy and breadth of my findings. Although I would ideally have conducted a more concerted programme of interviews, I believe that the weaknesses a lack of interviews presented to my research were ameliorated by the use of other data.

Due to financial restraints and difficulties of travel, it was not possible for me to conduct all my interviews face to face, those which were not conducted in person were conducted by telephone. Although I would ideally have conducted all my interviews face to face, as this would allow me to build a more personal relationship with the interviewee, interviews by telephone still allowed me to receive answers to the questions I posed through conversation with the actors themselves, pursuing important lines of questioning and requesting clarification where necessary..

Another result of logistical restrictions was that the majority, although not all, of those I did succeed in interviewing were MEPs representing UK constituencies. With this predominance of primary data coming from UK MEPs there was a danger of my analysis becoming blinkered and addressing only UK attitudes towards Turkish membership. This weakness in my data was again addressed through the use of other data sources. I did conduct one interview with a non-UK MEP, as well as receiving correspondence from

another, and the transcripts of Parliament debates contain the views of MEPs from throughout the European Union. In this way, although the focus of the primary research was on UK MEPs this was not to the exclusion of all other MEPs. One positive point of this focus on the identities and interests of actors from one country provides a demonstration that there is not a single national identity which is followed by all UK MEPs, and my research strongly suggests this to be true of all other EU member states. In this way the effect of other norms is emphasised and allows me to conclude that European norms do indeed influence the identity and interests of those within the European Parliament.

As I have outlined earlier in the thesis, the complex of identity in the European Parliament presented an interesting problem to me, with the direct attachment of MEPs to their national, and in some cases local, electorates serving to highlight the interconnected nature of norms and identity, and the way pre-existing norms and identity interact with European level norms. One perceived weakness of focussing my research on the European Parliament is the degree to which membership of the Parliament can change through elections, and the degree to which those elections can be influenced by national political factors. While this is a factor to be considered, and the latest round of European elections in the UK does bear this out to a degree, there is also a significant degree of stability. Due to the electoral system employed there is a high degree of continuity between Parliaments, with many of those I spoke to having been in the European Parliament for more than 10 years, and some for more than 20 years. The make-up of the Parliament is, of course, very important as the actors constituted the institution, but equally important is the constitutive effect of the institution on the actors. Although a charge of inconsistency is levelled at the European Parliament, John Bowis argued that where national governments must 'bend' and change their principled views, 'Europe is a bit more rigid in its output' because 'we're not changing governments and we don't get marks out of ten for if we've completed our manifesto or indeed how we've dealt with interim problems', 'we're quite conscious [that] we're not going to complete the job in this parliament probably the next parliament, probably not in our political lifetime. It doesn't matter, we're moving forward'²². Although there is an impact of national politics on the European Parliament it is not as pronounced as sometimes

²² Bowis, John. Personal interview (2nd September 2009)

suggested, and indeed the perception within the EP is of continuity and insulation from outside factors.

Another accusation which could perhaps be levelled at my research is that the case study of Turkey is such a special one that it is difficult or impossible to draw conclusions from my analysis which have any relevance beyond this specific example, but I do not believe this charge to be fair. It is certainly true that Turkey does present a unique challenge to European identity, although this is true of every application for membership, but it was pointed out to me in the course of my research that the factors which comprise the challenge of Turkish membership are not themselves unique to Turkey. It was suggested to me that all the problems which will be encountered with Turkey have been encountered before, but the combination of factors presents a strong challenge to European identity. Issues of size have been addressed before by the EU, and the unbalancing effect of the size of a reunified Germany on EU institutions required careful attention before a united Germany gained membership. Similarly, differences of culture were considered in relation to the accession of Eastern European countries, and religious difference is debated in relation to Balkan countries. It is certainly true that the combination of factors in the case of Turkey present a particularly great challenge to identity, and it is for this reason that Turkey was chosen as my case study, but I do not believe the specificity of the case study limits the usefulness of my conclusions in other areas. The case study also allowed me to shed light on the effect of the institution of the European Parliament on identity, and this will have a profound effect in other areas.

One area I did initially experience a weakness in my method was my use of the word “identity”. In some instances early in my research semantic difficulties caused some confusion when I was not sufficiently clear of the meaning of identity I was using, or the form of identity I was referring to. This was due to a lack of understanding on my part, using academic language without sufficient explanation, and without a clear enough view of the mechanics of identity in the European Parliament. As these moments of confusion happened I was able to clarify my meanings to respondents, and I was able to eliminate these difficulties through the course of my research. As I was able to clarify the meanings

of responses I do not believe this adversely affected my data or analysis.

Although there were weaknesses in my research, and areas where criticism could be levelled at it, I believe that my answers to the research questions I set out to investigate are valid and strong. Having conceded that my research does not have the breadth of primary data I had originally envisaged for it, with fewer MEPs interviewed than hoped, I do not believe that this has detracted from my assertion that European identity is experienced within the European Parliament; that it is felt more strongly than in the population at large, and experienced slightly differently from those not within the Parliament. As the phrasing of my research questions indicate, it was not my intention to quantify the effect of European identity, or the number of MEPs who are greatly influenced by it. Instead my research allowed me to identify that European norms did exert an influence on the identities of, at least some, MEPs, and to identify the effect these norms exert on interest and behaviour. Similarly my research allowed me to formulate a normative framework, a model for the interactions of norms and identities within MEPs, as well as to begin to understand the role of the European Parliament on the creation, refinement and spread of European identity. Although the course of the research presented problems to be addressed, I do not believe that any of the issues highlighted above damage the integrity or validity of the conclusions I have reached.

My research has allowed me to investigate areas which have been neglected in previous work, and present a more nuanced view of identity within the European Parliament. Where the institutions of the EU are generally presented as “thin” institutions, my analysis has helped to elaborate on a “thicker” view, where there is a mutual constitutive process involving actors and institutions. The normative framework I have elucidated provides a mechanism through which norms generated at European, national and regional level interact and influence the identity expressed by actors, and the decisions they take. Beyond this I have also highlighted the importance of the European Parliament and the nature of interactions within it, which amount to a great deal more than the strategic bargains allowed for in rational choice, “thin” views of the EP. Through these mechanisms I have suggested a refinement to the way we understand the identity of actors in the European Parliament and

by extension their interests and behaviour. This approach emphasises the importance of normative and identity arguments at the European level, while at the same time remaining cognisant of the role played by national identity and rational choice factors.

I have demonstrated the affect of European identity on the interests and attitudes of MEPs towards the possible membership of Turkey, but the implications of this new understanding of decision making processes extend into many other areas of European Parliament activity. Drawing on the work of Checkel and Risse, I have identified the factors which will influence the degree to which identity arguments are employed in given policy areas, and this new model of identity influenced decision making is likely to provide an improvement to understanding of how decisions are reached in areas where identity is invoked strongly. This model will prove useful in examining other cases of enlargement of the European Union, as well as other areas which challenge existing identity or require close co-operation at a European level.

Through an analysis of the data I have gathered, and by employing the theoretical understanding I have gained through my research, I have identified an interesting new dynamic in the potential accession of Turkey to membership of the EU. Identity factors concerning Turkish accession are often ignored amongst the population of Europe at large, perhaps because such identity is perceived to be so weak, and this perception spills over into investigating the European Parliament's dealings with Turkey. In contrast to this I have found a complex picture of identities in support and opposition to Turkish membership within the EP which, although broadly based in the same norms, dictate vastly different "appropriate" behaviours. It appears that at the present moment the predominant view is in opposition to Turkish membership on grounds of culture and identity, but this is not a universally held view. It is my belief that, as European identity stands, the prospect of Turkish accession is slim, but that this identity is dynamic and the European Parliament provides an ideal environment for identity refinement and evolution. For this reason, I believe, any discussion of the Turkish membership bid which ignores factors of identity and the role of the European Parliament itself is incomplete. Through the use of the Turkish case study I have teased out the different strands to European identity, the different norms

which are present and the ways in which they are interpreted. This is important in the understanding of identity within the European Parliament generally, and so these arguments concerning identity shed light well beyond merely looking at the potential accession of Turkey.

Throughout my research I have drawn on the work of social constructivist scholars, with particular emphasis on the work of Wendt, Adler, Risse, March and Olsen and Finnemore and Sikkink, and this has shed light on the identity and interests of MEPs, but I believe that this process has also worked in reverse. Through studying the European Parliament, I have put forward a new and unique social constructivist theoretical framework which draws on the strengths of these scholars while attempting to address the weaknesses of existing theory highlighted by this study. I have assimilated the concept and nature of norms, particularly that espoused by Adler²³, but I have found that the scope and transmission of norms within the European Parliament does not completely agree with the propositions of previous social constructivist theory.

Although the nature of institutions as arenas of socialisation is an important focus of social constructivist theory, I do not believe that this area has yet been adequately explored in relation to the European Union. As I suggested at the beginning of this thesis there is a high degree of social constructivist interest in the European Union due to the *sui generis* nature of the institutions and the level of political cooperation, as Checkel puts it 'Is Europe different? For many theorists, policy analysts, and politicians, the answer is obvious: "Of course!" Europe's degree of integration, level of political community, and pooling of sovereignty far outstrip those seen anywhere else'²⁴, although Checkel does go on to caution that in his opinion this 'headline stor[y], which emphasizes Europe's *sui generis* nature, is overstated'²⁵. I find it all the more surprising, therefore, that little research has been conducted which addresses the specific nature of European Union institutions. Much research in the area is conducted into general social constructivist themes, although the

²³ Adler, E., 1997. 'Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics' *European Journal of International Relations* 3:3

²⁴ Checkel, J.T., 2005. 'International Institutions and Socialization in Europe: Introduction and Framework' *International Organization* 59 p. 801

²⁵ Ibid.

focus is often implicitly based on a state centred model containing institutions within states and between state actors. This results in conclusions being drawn which are applicable to the forms of institutions studied, but untested on institutions such as those within the European Union. Despite this, these models are often applied directly to EU institutions, and I believe that this is a deficiency within existing social constructivist theory in relation to the European Union. This can be seen in the work of Wendt, whose research is focused on the state level, for example his suggestions that 'States are people too'²⁶, and that 'anarchy is what states make of it'²⁷, in which he talks of the nature of institutions, stating that 'anarchy and the distribution of power only have meaning for state action in virtue of the understandings and expectations that constitute institutional identities and interest'²⁸. This conception of institutions is an important one, and it is, of course, vital to his research, but that does not mean that a social constructivist understanding of inter-state institutions and interactions generated in this way can be applied directly to institutions such as those found within the EU. Checkel concedes that European integration in recent years has moved away from 'anarchy and the Westphalian system that have so fascinated theorists of international politics over the centuries'²⁹. It is within this theoretical background that I have applied social constructivist theory to the understanding of identity within the European Parliament.

Despite my caution regarding the applicability of certain elements of established social constructivist theory, I would not advocate a move back towards what might be considered more traditional theories of European integration. I believe that I have demonstrated in this thesis that identity and interest should not and cannot be treated as exogenously given within the European Parliament, and that the EP is a centre of normative activity which alters plays a role in constituting the identity of its constituent actors. For this reason an understanding of identity and interest are vital to understanding the behaviour of MEPs and decisions reached within the Parliament. In short, I believe that a thin view of institutions is not an adequate framework for analysing the European Union. In this way theories such as

²⁶ Wendt, A., *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999. p. 215.

²⁷ Wendt, A., 1992. 'Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics' *International Organization* 46:2.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 401.

²⁹ Checkel, 'International institutions and Socialization in Europe' p.801.

liberal intergovernmentalism must be rejected. Although liberal intergovernmentalism allows for national identities which are not fixed, the view of the institutions of the EU is that they constrain and limit actor choices and play no constitutive role. I believe that my research has demonstrated that a view of the European Parliament in these terms cannot be supported. I also found that my research did not support the application of Social Identity Theory to studies of the institutions of the EU.

I believe that the novel contribution to scholarship of my research lies in two areas, the nature and strength of identity in the European Parliament, and the role the EP itself plays in the creation and propagation of European identity. Throughout this research I have advanced a new model for actor identity within the institutions. I have shown that European level norms are present within the European Parliament, norms associated with the “founding ideology”, as well as norms relating to enlargement of the European Union, culture and religion. Actors within the institutions of the European Union are exposed to a unique density of normatively charged interactions beyond the state level, and this has a profound effect on their identity and interests. I have demonstrated that actors experience and are socialised with a wide variety of norms from different levels which may not coexist, and can even be in opposition. This led to my investigation of different strands of European identity, based on different conceptions of appropriate action and, although this was highlighted using the case study of Turkey, this approach has provided a novel contribution to the understanding of identity within the European Parliament. Through an investigation of the behaviour and interests of MEPs in relation to Turkey, and the interlinked nature of apparently rational and normative factors, my research has demonstrated a tangible effect of European norms on the identity and interests of MEPs.

The second area in which my research affords a novel contribution to knowledge is in showing the role the European Parliament has in the selection of norms and the reaching of consensus on appropriate behaviour and highlighting the characteristics of the European Parliament which allow and encourage this. My research has highlighted the lack of application of constructivist theory to the European Parliament, and has suggested how the Parliament can be understood in this light. I do not advocate a revolution in the approach to

the understanding of institutions, but I have suggested a novel approach to the application of existing social constructivist theory to the European Parliament which is specific to that institution. Although social constructivists accept what appears to be a very broad definition of institutions, based in shared understandings rather than physical bodies there are still shortcomings in the social constructivist approach to institutions when applied to the European Union.

My research has highlighted the importance of a number of factors which are vital to an accurate understanding of the nature of institutions and the identities and interests of their constituent actors. The composition of the institution is vital. Although the mutual constitution of structure and agent means that the actors within an institution are important, I believe that the nature of actors within the European Union institutions as non-state actors is important. An appreciation of the different 'levels' of identity experienced by actors is important in understanding interest and behaviour. The nature and density of interactions within the institutions is also key, and my research has highlighted the importance of the institutions as an arena for normative interaction. Further novelty of the EU institutions is provided by their multi-layered nature. Within the definition I am using the European Union as a whole is viewed as an institution, as are the European Parliament, the European Commission and many others individually. For this reason there is a greater density of norms, and the possibility of more competing norms which should be analysed. The interaction between EU institutions is another important factor in preference formation which social constructivist study is yet to address in detail. My research has allowed me to utilise key elements of social constructivist theory to produce a novel contribution to the understanding of the European Parliament as a "thick" institution.

Checkel asserts that there are many 'big questions' which remain unanswered in social constructivist theory, that 'Europe is...our laboratory for getting at some big issues concerning the relation of institutions, states, and individuals. When do international institutions create sense of community and belonging? If and when this happens, what does it mean for individual and state allegiances, interests, and identities? What processes

underlie such transformative dynamics?³⁰ My research does not answer all of these questions, but it provides a significant contribution to our understanding of the area.

Although my research has suggested a new view of European identity and institutions, many questions remain unanswered, and many more questions are suggested by my research. No definitive answer is given, or can be given at this stage, to the path accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey will take, or the way European identity will evolve in response to the challenges presented by Turkish membership. For this reason it would pay dividends to pay close attention to these matters in the coming years. Not only will this allow more accurate monitoring of the progression of Turkey towards possible membership, it will also allow a more current picture of how identity is influencing other areas of European Parliament decision making. This research could not address in great detail the accession prospects of Turkey, this example was instead used to highlight issues of identity, and a research project focussing on this area could be informative and interesting.

Although my research is based in the case study of Turkish accession, the broader implications of my findings warrant further research. I believe that an investigation of the strength of identity in various policy areas and competences would prove a fruitful avenue of research. The types of policy areas which might be good centres of future research are indicated by my findings, and could prove a powerful insight into decision making in a broad spectrum of areas in the European Parliament. An obvious starting point for these future studies is other applications for membership which are ongoing at the present time, and any applications which are considered in the future.

Similarly a broader investigation of identity in the EP, examining policy areas without the same degree of identity challenge, could perhaps help provide clarity as to the extent of the influence on identity of European norms in other areas, although it is still important to remain aware that any identity is a snap shot of an evolving concept. Having established that identity exerts an impact, it might also be possible to design a research programme

³⁰ Checkel, 'International institutions and Socialization in Europe' p.802.

with a quantitative based methodology, perhaps looking at voting patterns in order to measure the degree to which identity influences decisions made. Having explored the complex nature of identity and the contrasting influences European norms can exert on actors, this would have to be designed with great care.

As I indicated earlier in this thesis, I believe that it is possible to extend Wendt's individual analogy to make the argument for the European Parliament itself expressing identity, particularly in relation to the other institutions of the EU. While this is a potentially interesting and important avenue of thought and investigation, it is beyond the scope of this thesis. If a European Parliament identity were found to exist it could potentially have a profound effect on the way decisions taken within the EU as a whole are understood, as well as providing new insight into the interactions between institutions.

The decision to study the European Parliament was taken at an early stage of this research, and I believe that the reasons given for this choice have been vindicated through the course of the research. I believe, however, that the European Commission would make for a useful and fascinating focus of further study. The specificity of identity to institution reduces the degree to which the findings of my research are transferrable from the Parliament to the Commission, although I believe that the model of identity interaction has applications beyond the EP, and research into identity in the European Commission would improve understanding of identity within the European Union, interactions between the institutions and the role of identity in EU decision making. A research project designed along the same lines, and employing the same method, as this project would pay dividends in understanding identity within the Commission and within the EU as a whole. Given the important role of the European Commission in negotiating with candidate countries, it could also improve modelling of the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey.

One area of interest raised by the social constructivist theory studied that I was not able to fully address is the possibility of norm transfer from the European Parliament to other levels, particularly to the national level and into the population as a whole. Interviewees suggested that there is a role for the European Parliament in shaping and strengthening

European identity in the population of Europe, but I was not able to discover a mechanism through which this norm transfer would take place. This would prove an interesting and informative avenue of research which would have implications for the broader conception of European identity. Similarly a programme of research focussing explicitly on the interactions between EU institutions would provide a clearer indication of how these interactions shape identity within the Parliament and beyond, as well as the potential to shape institutional identity as discussed earlier.

Through an analysis of European Parliament debates, supported by data generated through interviews with, and questionnaire responses from, the actors in question, I have proposed a new understanding of identity in the European Parliament and the way norms from the European level interact with those originating elsewhere. Through an investigation of the views and arguments of MEPs I have demonstrated that European level norms are present, and that they have a real, discernible effect on the identity and interest of the actors within the European Parliament. Alongside, and allied to, this I have demonstrated the important effect the Parliament has on the identity of the actors which comprise it, and the role MEPs have in constituting the institution. This has raised many questions which could productively be answered in future work, but I believe that the findings of my research are novel, interesting and important.

Appendix A - Interview Guide¹

How do you view the idea of a European identity?

- If there is no European identity, is there any commonality of European identities?
- Is there a European component to a larger identity? How do the components interact?

Treaties and documents of the EU identify the importance of democracy, human rights, civil liberties, peace and justice within the EU and its member states. Does this provide an adequate framework for a European identity? If not, how could this be modified?

- Is there a historical aspect/cultural? Greco/Roman basis, renaissance etc.
- More controversially, is there a religious aspect? Even cultural religious

Is European identity linked to the EU?

- Is the EU cause or effect of European identity (or both)?
- Is identity felt strongly in the EP?
- How does identity influence behaviour and argument?
 - How does European identity interact with national identity (and others)?
- Does the European Parliament embody the European identity or spirit?
- Does identity or strength of identity vary by competence or policy area?
 - If so, why?
 - Is the interaction of identities different?

Is European identity dynamic or static?

- Has/Did it change(d) noticeably in your time?
- How has this change been expressed?
- What effect have the new members had?

If it is dynamic, what role does the European Parliament play in the shaping of identity?

In debates concerning enlargement, how important are issues of identity and its promotion?

Turkey's record on human rights, the role of the military in Turkish politics, the Islamic faith of the majority of the Turkish populace, the correspondence between EU and Turkish identity, the potential impact on EU institutions and funds, Cyprus and the effect Turkish membership would have on European identity have all been suggested as issues to be addressed in Turkey's membership bid. How important do you believe each of these factors to be in determining the outcome of Turkey's membership bid? Are there other important factors?

How do you rate Turkey's chances of acceding, and on what is this assessment based?

What effect would you anticipate Turkish membership of the EU having on European identity?

¹ Questions phrased for use to aid interviewer, not to be asked as phrased.

Appendix B - Questionnaire

The notion of a 'European identity' complementing and interacting with national identities is often discussed. Do you believe there is European identity or commonality of European identities in any form?

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Treaties and documents of the EU have identified the following factors as being important concepts within the EU as a whole, as well as its member states. Please rate each factor on its importance within a European identity. If there are other factors which you believe contribute to the framework of European identity please enter them in the space provided at the end and rate them using the same scale.

Irrelevant Not Very Important Important Vital Undecided

Democracy

Human Rights

Civil Liberties

Peace

Justice

Rule of Law

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If there is a European identity, do you believe it is connected to the European Union. If so, how?

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Do you believe that the European Parliament embodies European identity?

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Do you believe European identity to be dynamic or static?

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If it is dynamic, what role does the European Parliament play in the shaping of identity?

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In debates concerning enlargement, how important are issues of identity and its promotion?

Irrelevant Not Very Important Important Vital Undecided

How great an effect would you anticipate Turkish membership of the EU having on European identity? (1 is "no effect" going up to 5, "a profound effect")

1 2 3 4 5 Undecided

How would you anticipate this effect being felt?

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The following factors have been identified as issues to be addressed in Turkey's EU membership bid. Please rate how important you believe each factor will be to the outcome of Turkey's membership bid. If there are other factors which you believe will influence the outcome of the bid please enter them in the space provided at the end and rate them using the same scale.

Irrelevant Not Very Important Important Vital Undecided

Turkey's record on human rights.

The Islamic faith of the majority of the population of Turkey.

The role of the military in Turkish politics.

The degree to which Turkish identity corresponds with European identity.

The impact Turkish membership will have on the institutions of the EU.

The impact Turkish membership will have on the budget and funds of the EU.

The effect of Turkish membership on European identity.

Ongoing problems concerning Turkey's continued involvement in Cyprus.

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How do you rate Turkey's chances of acceding, and on what is this assessment based?

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The final section of the questionnaire is questions about you. These answers are intended to improve data analysis and will not be shared.

Name

Position

Length of time in position

Previous positions within the institutions of the EU (If any)

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Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. Please return completed questionnaires to:

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