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## THESIS SUMMARY

Daniel Gugan:

Euro-Mediterranean Interdependence and  
Economic Co-development

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THESIS SUMMARY  
of the Ph.D. dissertation by

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titled

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Economic Co-development**

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## Significance of the research

Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and interdependence -the main focus area of this research- has serious importance for both of the cooperating partners: the EU and the countries in its southern neighborhood can both benefit from this partnership on many different levels. The European Union -as a part of its deepening integration process- has to build up its own independent foreign policy, and for this purpose its close neighborhood is obviously the best area to start with. To create a region of peace and prosperity in its surrounding regions is highly important both for socio-economic and security reasons.<sup>1</sup> For the Mediterranean partner countries this partnership is also essential as it offers them an opportunity to get external help for the development of their economies and to gain broader access to European markets. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was established in 1995 at the Barcelona Conference as the main institutional base for the current cooperation between the EU and its partners in the MENA<sup>2</sup> region. In the framework of this research both the historical premises and the current institutional context of the partnership will be examined including the Union for the Mediterranean and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

After the introduction of the institutional framework of this cooperation, Euro-Mediterranean security and economic interdependencies will be evaluated to discover the “hidden realities” lying behind these institutional cooperation forms. Several sectors of security and economic interdependence will be closely studied to gain a deep insight of these ties, which will make us able to give a fair evaluation of the institutional framework outlined before. This evaluation will be focused on the ENP, because of its unique and effective structure and its potential to become the EU's main tool of foreign policy making in its neighborhood.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, the Arab uprisings of 2010/11 will provide a perfect “test ground” for the concrete implementation of our knowledge on Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and interdependence and show us how these ties work in the contemporary inter-regional political arena. The ENP plays a central role in the EU's reactions to the uprisings, therefore -here again- it will be the key element being studied to understand the EU's capabilities and intentions.

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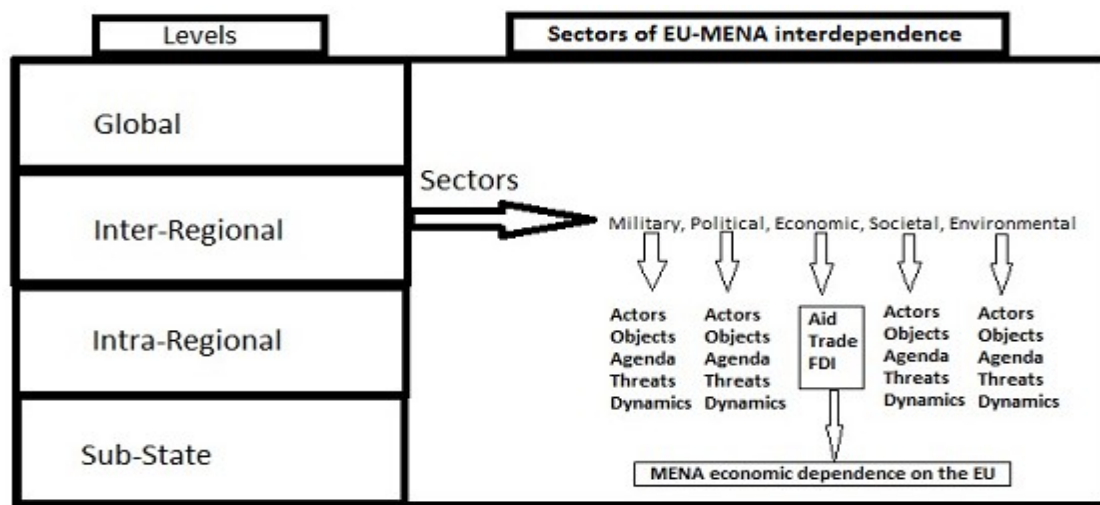
1 Based on: Marseille Declaration, 2008: <http://www.ufmsecretariat.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/dec-final-Marseille-UfM.pdf>

2 "MENA" in this work will be used to describe the EU's southern neighbours including Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Lebanon, and Syria but excluding Turkey, Iraq, Iran and the Gulf states

3 The most detailed source on the ENP: <http://www.enpi-info.eu/>

## Theoretical Background and research methodology

The work on hypothesis testing will be largely build on Barry Buzan's Regional Security Complex Theory<sup>4</sup> (RSCT), because of the theory's well-structured and elegant way of dealing with interdependencies. The original research framework of Buzan will be closely followed, but applied on only one geographical level and altered in the economic sector. This sector will get larger attention than the others, and the methodological approach used here will be also different than in the other four sectors. The exploration of economic interdependencies will be embedded into the Buzanian sectors/levels system of security in the following way:<sup>5</sup>



Out of the Buzanian geographical levels, this thesis will use exclusively the inter-regional level as Euro-Mediterranean relations fall into this area. The five Buzanian sectors (Military, Political, Economic, Societal and Environmental) will be explored according to Buzan's original issue areas (Actors, Objects, Agenda, Threats and Dynamics), but the economic sector will be altered and explored through terms of economic interactions (Aid, Trade and Foreign Direct Investment) and here IPE theories will be utilized rather than Buzan's neorealism. While the four “original” sectors are expected to show signs of interdependence, the economic sector is expected to show asymmetric relations and dependence.

The second step of hypothesis proving will be the evaluation of the EU's Mediterranean policies in each sector (“Agenda”), while the third step will examine the effects of the Arab Spring on each sector. This last sectoral issue (“Dynamics”) will describe the latest developments in the MENA in-

4 See: Buzan, Barry - Ole Waever (2003): Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

5 The illustration is the author's own work (2012)

cluding the effects of the revolts and propose the adaptation of EU policies to these developments. The methodological approach will follow a four-step “algorithm”: (1) Examination of security interdependencies on Buzanian terms, (2) Examination of economic interdependencies with the help of some IPE theories (mainly Immanuel Wallerstein's Worlds System Theory), (3) Examination of the effects of the Arab Spring on these interdependencies, and (4) Evaluation of EU policies related to these interdependencies. These four steps will need two slightly different set of methodologies:

Examination of security interdependence (1), the effect of the Arab Spring (3) and the EU's relevant policies (4) will need some kind of interpretative reading of these issue area's core documents. The methodology for these parts therefore involves the following data collection methods: a review of Euro-Mediterranean institutional developments and programs since the very beginning of the European Economic Cooperation (1957) until now-days, and an interpretive reading of these activities to discover underlying norms. After exploring and interpreting the historical progress, data collection turns into contemporary sources such as EU, ENP and EMP websites, reports from research institutes focusing on socio-political and economic developments in the Mediterranean region and data from the foreign ministry websites of member states. The most important sources here will be the Action Plans of the ENP, because these documents show explicitly what the EU considers important about its relations with each partner country. The Action Plans will serve as a starting point for the research, since they refer to most of the Buzanian issue areas (actors, objects, threats) that we need to identify and show the pre-Arab Spring agendas of the EU on these issues.

Examination of economic interdependencies (3) will need a different methodological approach. Here the work-flow will mainly consist of the examination of different economic indicators (statistical numbers and their ratios) like imports, exports, GDP, FDI, HDI, amounts of aid given out/received and other indicators related to trade, redistribution and development. The main goal of analysis here will be to develop an "economic profile" for the region to make us able to evaluate the EU's economic policies towards its southern neighbors and to understand the prospects of these countries in the light of their "EU-dependence". Sources will consist of different statistical databases available online as EUROSTAT (the EU's statistical service), MEDSTAT (the EUROSTAT's subdivision for Mediterranean countries) and different OECD and World Bank data-sets. The analysis of raw data will be software-based, using tools like Excel and SPSS. The outputs of this kind of analyzes are expected to be graphs and info-maps containing visualized forms of economic realities. These products of information can be then interpreted scientifically and used to figure out economic trends and developments in the Euro-Mediterranean economic space.

## Hypotheses

The current research on contemporary EU-MENA relations can be split into two separate question groups. One group can be formed around the rapidly changing security relations and the dynamics of interactions between the EU and its southern neighbors. This line of the research implies the deep examination of EU-MENA security interdependencies and the evaluation of the EU's policies in respect of these. The first group of research questions can be formulated as following:

(1) How could we describe the sectors of Euro-Mediterranean security interdependencies? How do the EU's foreign policy tools (mainly the ENP) reflect these interdependencies and could they be improved? Finally, what did the Arab revolutions change in the original status-quo in these sectors?

The second group of questions comes from the EU's proposed deeper involvement in the MENA's economic development. As the region's dominant economy, the EU could use its economic potential to stabilize its neighborhood and to build a mutually beneficial economic cooperation with its southern partners. Therefore the second group of research questions can be stated as following:

(2) How could we describe Euro-Mediterranean economic interdependencies? How do the EU's external economic policies (aid, trade, FDI) reflect these interdependencies and could these policies be improved? Could a deeper Euro-Mediterranean economic integration be profitable for both of the cooperating partners?<sup>6</sup> Finally, how did the Arab revolutions change the prospects of these economic relations?

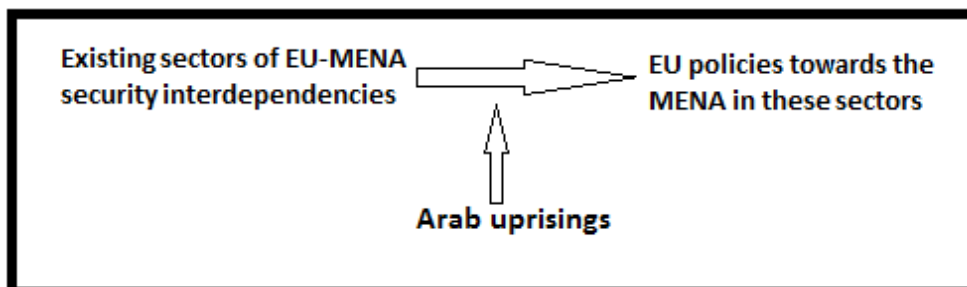
The two hypotheses of the current work can be derived from the questions above:

**H1: The Euro-Mediterranean area has several sectors of security interdependencies that are deep enough to transform the area into a single security complex. This interdependence was highlighted by the Arab Spring, which posed new challenges to EU policy makers. The level of interdependence is not reflected correctly by the current set of EU policies therefore they do not meet these challenges and their review is unavoidable.**

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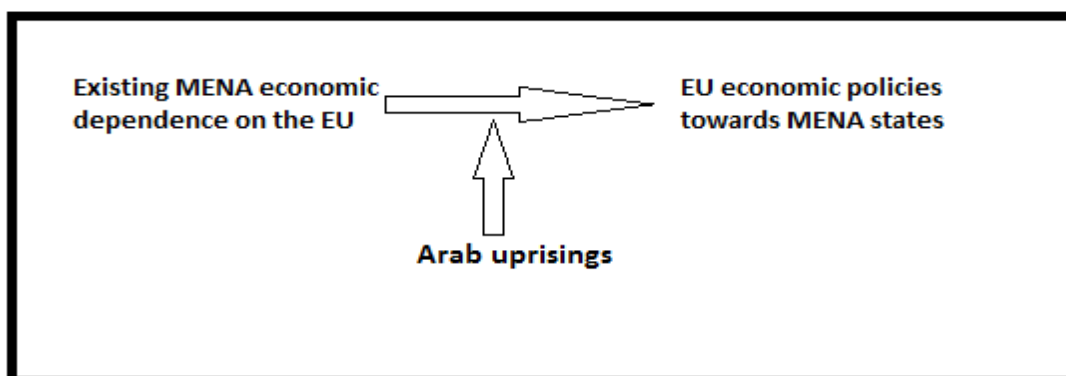
6 By deeper integration we propose a common Euro-Mediterranean Economic Area as did Andre Sapir and Georg Zachman (2012): A European Mediterranean Economic Area to Kick-Start Economic Development, in: Egmont Papers Nr. 54, Egmont – The Royal Institute for International Relations

When proving H1, at first existing sectors of security interdependencies will have to be discovered, and identified as “independent variables”, then different EU policies (ENP mainly) will have to be evaluated accordingly as “dependent variables”. Finally, the Arab uprisings as “intervening variables” have to be examined to see what they changed in the original system and how policy improvements should reflect these changes:



**H2: The Euro-Mediterranean area is economically interdependent but this is asymmetrical: the Arab states are much more dependent on the EU than the EU on them. This dependence gives the EU a potential economic leverage in the region especially as the Arab Spring was triggered by mainly economic reasons. Current EU policies do not coordinate this potential efficiently, therefore their revision is highly desirable and reaching a deeper Euro-Mediterranean economic integration should be the main goal of this revision.**

When proving H2, first the economic dependency of MENA states on the EU will have to be proved and identified as “independent variable”, then different European external economic policies will have to be evaluated accordingly as “dependent variables”. Finally, the Arab uprisings as “intervening variables” have to be examined to see what they changed in the original system and how policy improvements should reflect these changes:





## Security interdependence

The examination of inter-regional security sectors of interdependence between the two halves of the Euro-Mediterranean area will follow closely the structure of the ENP's Action Plans in this part. The four Buzanian sectors of security (Military, Political, Societal and Environmental) are perfectly represented in the structure of the ENP's Action Plans therefore all we have to do is to categorize the several „points of action” in the APs into the four Buzanian sectors and give them a systematic evaluation in the light of the post-Arab Spring realities of the MENA region.

The methodology of this chapter will therefore follow the original Buzanian structure: first we identify the Actors, Objects and Agenda components of each sector with the help of the APs which will show us the EU's main fields of concern regarding the MENA. Second, we give a post-Arab Spring „reality check” to these concerns by identifying the most recent Threats and Dynamics in the region in the examined sectors. Finally we can conclude our examination by identifying areas where the pre-Arab Spring ENP architecture is „missing the point” and give recommendations how it could be changed to make it able to formulate better answers to contemporary challenges.

Summarizing our discoveries in the four sectors of EU-MENA security interdependence we can agree with Barry Buzan in that „Adjacency is potent for security because many threats travel more easily over short distances than over long ones. The impact of geographical proximity on security interaction is strongest and most obvious in the military, political, societal and environmental sectors.”<sup>7</sup> (Although as we will see in the next part, economic ties are also highly visible.) These impacts of geographical proximity are widespread but the most important ones we discovered in this part are already making the case to treat EU-MENA interdependence as a ground for a common inter-Regional Security Complex:

- Hard security challenges, especially fighting transnational terrorism and the instability in the Sahel brings EU-MENA security interests close and form a possible base of common military actions. (This happened in the current situation in Mali for example.) Nonproliferation of WMDs is an other example where inter-regional interests could converge. Fight against organized crime and drugs, money laundering, financial and economic crime are also crucial parts of EU-MENA cooperation, while law enforcement cooperation recently turned out to be one of the most fruitful common policy area.

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7 Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver (2003): *Regions and Powers*, Cambridge University Press, p.45

- Political ties are close as the recent uprisings (Arab Spring) in the MENA affected seriously the EUs policy making agenda, even triggering military intervention in the case of Libya. Establishing good governance and the rule of law after the uprisings is the main challenge in front of the new MENA governments, and the EU is capable to give technical and financial help for the process.
  
- Societal EU-MENA interdependencies are -again- widespread: Unemployment and poverty in the MENA are the main causes of migration pressure towards the EU and this pressure is even strengthened by the demonstration effect of modern media outlets showing Arab youth how different their lives in Europe could be. Migration is high on the EU's agenda as well: recognizing the unsustainability of the previous purely administrative migration prevention system, the EU will have to turn towards more sustainable options. These options involve the different economic improvements that the EU could support to its Arab partners which will be the core focus of the next chapter.
  
- Environmental and energy issues are showing again a high degree of interdependence. Energy connectedness -both hydrocarbon and electricity- is an already obvious fact, but there are several plans to develop connections even further. New gas pipelines and the possibility of transporting clean solar energy from the MENA to Europe will deepen EU-MENA interdependence in the future even further. On the other hand, overfishing and the pollution of the Mediterranean Sea are common inter-regional „crimes” and have to be resolved also on an inter-regional level giving space for further fields of cooperation in the future.

Reading through all these sectors and issues of interdependence, we can recite again Barry Buzan and wonder if his definition of Regional Security Complexes allows us to call the Euro-Mediterranean space a unified inter-Regional Security Complex. Are they „so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from one another?”<sup>8</sup> Our answer to this question is a definite yes. This chapter of the dissertation concludes that the security concerns of the lands on the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea are fundamentally interlinked.

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<sup>8</sup> Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver (2003): *Regions and Powers*, Cambridge University Press, p.44

## **Economic interdependence**

The approach with which we examine EU-MENA economic interdependence consist of four core issue areas: trade relations, production patterns, FDI flows and aid. In all of these areas we expect to find huge asymmetries between the two regions and a strong EU-dependence of the MENA. This will prove for us the existence of a Wallersteinian “periphery belt” in the southern neighborhood:

- We have found that trade relations are highly asymmetrical as EU members tend to trade mainly amongst themselves and only tenth of their trade volume is directed to the MENA, while MENA trade is directed to the EU between 30 and 60 percent. Maghreb countries are much more dependent on EU trade than Mashreq countries.
- We identified the production pattern asymmetries as well, and found that MENA economies are mainly based on low added-value industries as agro, textile and hydrocarbon production.
- We saw that FDI inflows to the MENA were insignificant historically as these economies were closed to foreign investments by business-unfriendly regulations. In the last decade however, FDI inflows started to soar and foreign investments became a significant factor in MENA economies, especially in the Mashreq. The EU largely dominates the MENA FDI market.
- Finally, we saw that aid directed to the MENA comes from two main sources: EU member states and the US. EU institutions have a miniscule budget (the ENPI) compared to the member states aid budgets. The only MENA country where aid plays a significant role is Palestine which earns half of its GDP from assistance sources.

Summarizing all these four groups of findings, we can say that we succeed in proving the existence of a Wallersteinian “periphery belt” in the southern neighborhood, therefore we have to make an assessment of the ENP in the light of this discovery. This assessment will inform us about the plausibility of the two main economic aims of the ENP: the core request in the Action Plans to “increase economic integration with the EU” and the first step of operationalization, the establishment of the proposed Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area. By assessing the ENP in the light of our findings, we can state that:

- An established comprehensive free trade area (EMFTA) would be beneficial to both of the partners, although it would carry some negative effects as well. Existing trade dependency and production patterns suggest that further integration (especially with the Maghreb) would fix the

MENA's role as a "low-cost client region" in the Euro-Med economic structure. As in the classical Wallersteinian model, the core EU could gain more access to markets for its sophisticated goods in the peripheral MENA, while using it as a cheap labor and commodity resource in the same time. The short term backdrop for the EU would be the loss of some of its low added-value production (especially agriculture) by the cheap MENA competition but this would be a definite gain for the MENA.

- On the other hand, FDI flows could move upwards MENA economies on the value chain by technology transfer and managerial learning. On the long term this could be the only way for MENA economies to develop and balance their dependency on the EU. The EU would also benefit from the "investment boom" created by the increased economic integration and the EMFTA because as we saw, MENA countries tend to produce more-than-average profits for foreign investors. Mashreq countries tend to be better in attracting foreign investments but once they show progress, the Maghreb will be under pressure to follow.

- The role of direct assistance (aid) is far less significant than the factors discussed above, but a coherent European aid policy could definitely play an important role in facilitating a positive MENA-environment for ENP implementation. As we saw, EU member states together are the biggest source of aid worldwide and this plenty of aid given out by them could be organized better to serve common EU interests. First of all, the current role of the MENA in the EU's aid portfolio should be improved to make the southern neighborhood top priority in EU assistance. (Currently it's second behind Africa.) This would be another wise strategic move from the EU to bind its neighborhood even closer to itself. Second, the fragmented bilateral aid give-outs by member states should be at least partially centralized in EU institutional hands to make the EU "speak in one voice" in this issue area as well. Improved EU aid budget would not only mean a more coherent common aid policy, but the raised amount of ENPI funds could give the ENP itself a far greater significance as well. If the EU wants to follow its own "more-for-more" doctrine in ENP implementation, the needed "more" in cash could come from the centralization of national aid budgets and this would therefore not decrease the cash support of other common policy areas.

Finally, assessing our theory selection, we can confirm the plausibility of our choice: the Wallersteinian dependency theory is generally well-usable in the Euro-Med economic system. An important side-finding is the dual difference of dependency factors between the Mashreq and the Maghreb. The Maghreb shows a far bigger trade dependency and a significantly lower FDI intensity than the

Mashreq. Both of these factors imply that in the case of a deeper EU-MENA economic integration the Mashreq would be far more resistant of EU “economic colonialism” than the Maghreb.

### Case studies

After the detailed exploration of the different areas of Euro-Arab interdependencies in the previous parts, which resulted in the recognition of how deep these interdependencies are, we have to turn to the most recent history of the MENA region and ask ourselves how the Arab Spring affects these interdependencies. As the “Arab Spring” covers several and sometimes very different set of events, we will have to pick and select some individual cases and follow them closely while trying to make sense of the “whole”. The main question here -of course- will be the connection of these events to the ENP and how they affect the future prospects of Euro-Med relations.

As the concept of the “Arab Spring” signifies a heterogeneous set of events, it’s really hard to choose only one representative case to properly track all the related issues. On the other hand, exploring all the states and events involved in this huge arena would be a far more ambitious plan than the current work could afford. A usable compromise can be done if we select a few cases, which cover most of the differences in these events and therefore show a good representation of the whole.

The four selected case studies here -Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt and Jordan- can give an appropriate representation as they cover both geographically, demographically and politically most of the appearing differences in the MENA. Egypt and Jordan represent the Mashreq while Tunisia and Morocco the Maghreb. Tunisia and Egypt represent the revolutions, while Jordan and Morocco had only reforms. Finally the demographics of Egypt and Morocco make them dominant regional players, while Jordan and Tunisia are marginal. The following matrix represents well this grouping of our case studies:<sup>9</sup>

Changes-Location Matrix	Mashreq	Maghreb
Reform	Jordan	Maroc (dominant)
Uprising	Egypt (dominant)	Tunisia

<sup>9</sup> Image Source: the author’s own work (2012)

This part therefore follows a simple structure: it elaborates one-by-one these four case studies, summarizing first shortly the concrete political events in each and then drawing conclusions on the further possible trajectories of the events with a special attention to the outcomes affecting the ENP.

After the short assessment of the four case studies, our main goal here is to evaluate the effects of the Arab Spring on EU-MENA interdependence. This evaluation can be worked out effectively by a four-step approach checking four different but closely related sub-fields of this question. A comparative approach of the case studies can be effectively used in the four following areas to discover similarities and differences:

1. The mainly common socio-economic background of the uprisings with slight differences in the details, especially in demographics.
2. The very different political build-ups of the case countries and their different answers to the political crises leading to divergent effects on EU-MENA security and economic interdependence in each case.
3. The EU's different leverage (both "soft" and geoeconomic power) in the case countries and the different capabilities this leverage gives the EU to act in each case. (Especially the Maghreb-Mashreq difference.)
4. The EU's original plans with each country (as expressed in the ENP Action Plans), the assessment of their performance (As expressed in the Progress Reports) and the outlined new plans for the post-revolutionary cooperation.

Our conclusions on the first point include the identification of the common socio-economic background of the uprisings like GDP stagnation, population boom, inflation and youth unemployment. The difference of the Maghreb and Mashreq subregions is that the later is far more vulnerable as Jordan and Egypt has a more rapidly growing population than their Maghreb counterparts. Conclusions on the second point present another type of differentiation: Tunisia and Egypt as "new democracies" can be more easily engaged by the EU than the monarchies, with which the EU will need a more pragmatic and less ambitious approach. The EU's different economic leverage in the two subregions poses another important factor as the Maghreb is far more EU-dependent than the Mashreq, therefore the EU has less leverage to intervene into the political progress of the later. Finally, the EU's plans with these countries included political and economic reforms, and surprisingly we find that the EU is now satisfied with all the four countries regarding the political progress, but dissatisfied with the economic part and urges all countries to open up and modernize their economies.

## **Conclusions and hypotheses evaluation**

Finally, we have to make a fair assessment of the current work and collect the main findings and ideas that arose during this research. The work itself (without the introductory part) consist of four main separable items: interdependence-testing on the security and economic sectors forms the first two main issues and the case studies on the Arab Spring and the examination of the economic co-development possibilities forms the third and fourth. Since we made a detailed assessment of all these issue areas one-by-one, now we are obligated to connect them logically and help the Reader understand why these for areas were chosen in our concept. Also, we have to summarize the findings of these separate areas to see how they complement each other and how they relate to the hypotheses of this dissertation.

The findings of the first two areas can be summarized in "one go". With the detailed examination of the five sectors of interdependence (military, political, societal, environmental and economic), we identified the strong interdependence in all sectors and concluded that this interdependence transforms the area into a single security complex. Moreover, with the even more detailed examination of the economic sector we highlighted that this interdependence is partially asymmetrical and the EU has a clear advantage in the economic sector. With these findings we managed to prove the basic statements of our two hypotheses.

However, already here we have to complement our arguments with some side-findings. The most important complementary finding here is that the EU currently can not use effectively its advantage in the economic sector. The hypotheses would be more accurate to state that within this five-thread complex network of interdependence the EU has a potential advantage in the area of economics, but how this potential is being used depends on several external variables. (Which variables are not the subject of the current work.) The most important external variable is the current economic crisis of the EU which makes it inwards-focused and allows it only limited external acting capabilities. These limitations came to limelight during the Arab Spring in which the EU could have acted far more courageously and could have been much more proactive if the economics "at home" would have been more comfortable. The other external variable is the young age of the EU's external policy institutional framework. Basically we can say that the Arab Spring was the first live-test of this framework and as a new and inexperienced system, it was determined to fail in some areas.

The other two areas of research, the assessment of the effects of the Arab Spring and the possibility of economic co-development can be merged as well. With the short examination of four case studies, we have shown that the Arab Spring was triggered mainly by the economic decline of the region and also that the current "policy toolbox" of the EU does not provide effective answers to the deep-rooted problems of Arab economies. The historically developed statist and fragmented economic build-up of the MENA can not be effectively "healed" with the current short-termist and incoherent set of EU policies that are dealing with the region, therefore the redesign of these policies is highly desirable. A much more courageous approach is needed with a coherent vision on the future of EU-MENA economic co-development. Together with some other authors, we suggest that this vision should be a form of economic integration. These findings support the main statements of our hypotheses, which we consider now proven.

However, here again we have to complement our hypotheses with some very important side-findings. The first one is the necessity of differentiation. Especially the geographical differentiation between the Maghreb and Mashreq sub-regions is crucial. When designing a new neighbourhood-agenda, EU officials should be aware of the fact that these two sub-regions are very different in their EU-dependence and that the Mashreq is far more EU-independent than the Maghreb. This should imply a differentiated approach towards these sub-regions and even raise the issue of differentiated institutional frameworks. Rather than using the "one size fits all" approach in future institution-building, a separate and narrower agenda could fit the Mashreq region better, while a more ambitious one ("everything except for institutions") fits the Maghreb.

The other line of differentiation reflects more the current political build-ups of the partner countries and not the deep structural differences like the first one. Still this is important too as it provides a valuable insight to the short- and mid-term strategies that the EU could use in the region. This differentiation should be based on the state-forms of the partner countries, namely the monarchies and the "new democracies". New democracies -as we saw in the case studies chapter- are more open now to implement EU-advised reforms and the public opinion in these countries see the EU as a favorable partner who helped during the transitions. This implies that the EU can now act and communicate more boldly with these countries and expect more cooperation. In the case of the "surviving monarchies" the EU has now also a little bit more space to maneuver because of the "Arab Spring pressure", but this space is still highly restricted and these countries need a more pragmatic and less direct way of communication.



Finally, we can conclude that -by upholding all these complementary findings- we definitely suggest that in the light of the discovered interdependence patterns and economic shortcomings, the most promising way forward in EU-MENA relations is the deepening of the economic cooperation.

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