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Vol. 5, No. 4
February 2008

Published with the support of the EU Commission.

EUMA

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UNEQUAL PARTNERS IN THE EU SOUTHERN NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGY: IS REGIONAL INTEGRATION FEASIBLE?♦

Astrid B. Boening♣

Security issues are still as prevalent in the Mediterranean today as they have been since at least the Trojan Wars some three thousand years ago. Paritcularly since 9/11, securing the EU's borders, as with most country's borders, has become even more imperative. The EU's southern borders (i.e. to its north African and Middle Eastern neighbors), however have been difficult to secure. Specifically, illegal immigration, usually in direct relation to the economic wellbeing of the originating country, has been difficult to control especially by those European countries bordering the Mediterranean: Spain, France, Italy, and to a lesser extent, Greece. The riots in the last few years in France, the terrorist attacks in Madrid, and the recent increase in murders in Italy by illegal immigrants have led European law enforcement to undergo the financially and socially difficult task of increased forcible repatriations. In addition to the frailty of EU border integrity to the south, Libya under Gadafy (and apparently his son) represents a neighbor who is only barely, and very cautiously, becoming re-socialized into the Euro-Mediterranean "neighborhood".

These topics are a small sampling of the security issues facing the countries bordering the Mediterranean today and are addressed bilaterally (especially pertaining to those countries bordering the Mediterranean on both shores), inter-regionally (e.g. between the EU and "the Palestinian-Israeli" situation, multilaterally (e.g. NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue), and also, as I am proposing here: (super-)regionally in terms of a Euro-Mediterranean Regional Security Complex – and, extrapolated, a transatlantic Euro-Mediterranean Super Regional Security Complex. While there have been a number of political cooperation initiatives involving this region, the latest being French president Sarkozy's proposal of a "Mediterranean Union", in this paper I analyze some of the security-related dynamics within the framework of the EuroMed Partnership (EMP) (Thornhill 2007a and 2007b).

♦ Paper presented at *University of Miami - Department of International Studies* Panel on "The EU as a Model" – February 25, 2008.

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The Mediterranean as a macro geo-political region "ties the nations around its rim with common 'concerns' and shared 'interests'" (Pace 2003, 163). Pace suggests re-thinking and re-imagining the Mediterranean 'region' politically, geographically, socially and culturally by conceptualizing the social construction of this area, as well as the "underlying assumptions …[to] reveal how regions, in particular the Mediterranean region, are produced and reproduced over space and time" (Ibid.).

The European Community's (EC) involvement in the Middle East was first formulated in the Global Mediterranean Policy of 1972 "to establish relations with its southern neighbors" (Pace 2003, 164). It was enhanced through the Euro-Arab Dialogue following the Arab-Israeli war of 1973, "as a means of regularizing, controlling and manipulating the emerging system of Euro-Arab interdependence … by attempting to influence the economic policies of oil-rich Arab states through economic aid to resource-poor Arab countries" (Pace 2003, 164). Neither initiative was successful according to Pace (Ibid.) apparently due to the predominantly political agenda of the EC with respect to Palestine and Israel.

After the end of the Cold War, the global power distribution changed from bi-polarity to multi-laterality.[2] However, even with the economic and political burden of the Cold War lifted, many other problems in the world, remained. Neither did the post-Cold War international environment catapult the world into maximizing democracy - nor does democracy automatically equate development or peace. With the end of the Cold War, the EC recognized "the transition to a new European order as a positive opportunity to develop its external role" (Pace 2003, 164). With the establishment of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as part of the Maastricht Treaty, a renewed Mediterranean Policy was introduced in December 1990. Nevertheless, the EU still had not adopted long-term policies to address the increasing disparities between the two sides of the Mediterranean (Pace 2003, 164).

Few argue about the positive correlation between economic development and political stability (e.g. Christiansen, Petito and Tonra 2000, 404). And although as much discussion has taken place on this topic – and development and research funds spent – the yawning gap in income between developed and developing countries has worsened in the past three decades despite a booming world economy (Ocámpó 2006). This understanding with respect to the differential between the northern and southern Mediterranean was one of the motivations which led to meetings and negotiations starting on October 30, 1991 at the Peace Conference in Madrid, from which the structures of the Madrid Framework for a *bilateral* and a *multilateral* negotiating track were developed. They also enabled the first ever direct talks between Israel and its immediate Arab neighbors on November 3, 1991. These negotiations focused on key issues of concern to the entire Middle East at the time, such as water, the environment, arms control, refugees and economic development, and led to the first Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers of the EU, North Africa and the Levant[3] in Barcelóna in November 1995. This marked the official starting point of the EuroMed Partnership (hence also referred to as the Barcelóna Process) (EU Commission website 2006: Barcelóna Declaration)[4] .

The EMPs specific mandate is based on the political, economic and culturally strategic significance of the Mediterranean region to the European Union (EU) and seeks to develop a relationship between its partners based on "comprehensive cooperation and solidarity, in keeping with the privileged nature of the links forged by neighborhood and history" (EU Commission website 2006: Barcelóna Declaration). This reflects dynamics of a security community. According to current literature on development and the synchronicity between political, economic

[2] or to unilaterality, depending on one's perspective

[3] The countries of the latter two, including Israel, will be referred to in this paper intermittently as "MENA"

[4] Currently the EMP comprises the twenty-seven EU member states, and ten Mediterranean Partners (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, which is now also an EU candidate country, and Libya, whose membership is anticipated to be re-activated in the foreseeable future after the lifting of the international embargo).

and societal security, the framework of the EMP was laid out rather wisely to provide the groundwork for accommodating this interconnectedness in the relationship between the neighbors along the Northern and Southern Mediterranean[5].

MENA is one area in the European "neighborhood" with traditional historical and cultural ties to Europe in addition to the continuing strategic significance between the two. As both Abdullahtif Ahmida (2000) and Joffé (2001, 34) point out, already the 1957 Treaty of Rome made specific provisions for the economic relationship between the Maghrib and the EC. However, while these were based strongly on colonial patterns of the former as a raw material and labor supply, and market for EC/EU goods, the economic aspect of the EMP is directed towards economic *development* in MENA to reduce the gap between the northern and the southern periphery of the Mediterranean. This recognition and the initiatives to put them into practice in the relationship of security, cooperation and development were inspired by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe following the Helsinki Conference of 1975.

The EMP is applying a neo-liberal institutionalist approach, hoping for neo-functionalist integration through the measures arising from "2nd basket" (i.e. economic programs , such as the plan for a Free Trade Area) to develop a more complex interdependence among member states. The benefits described in the literature arising from such "thick" institutionalization, such as increased trust, transparency, lowered transaction costs (compare Keohane (1984 and 1988), Keohane and Nye (2001), Moravcsik (1999) and Finnemore (1996), and ultimately greater harmony[6] (i.e. "de-securitization") within the region.

In the case of the EMP we notice that since its inception in 1995, its members have in fact set out to pursue this agenda: follow-up meetings between the foreign ministers of EMP member states as well as conferences have been taking place since the signing of this agreement. Examples of their results are the plans for a EuroMediterranean Free Trade Area through harmonization of rules, procedures and standards in the customs field, the elimination of unwarranted technical barriers to trade in agricultural products and the adoption of relevant food, phyto and veterinary sanitation measures and the reporting of reliable data (e.g. economic, financial etc.) on an EU- harmonized basis. Joint research programs undertaken are especially in the telecommunications and energy sectors (including the support for renewable sources of energy), regional tourism development, environmental protection (especially combating desertification) and scientific and technical cooperation (such as the expansion of the Mediterranean Water Charter of 1992 for the expansion of desalination projects, clean-up of the Mediterranean Sea and a pro-active approach for conservation and rational management of fish stocks in the Mediterranean Sea, including improved research into stocks, including aquaculture to re-stock the Mediterranean Sea and inland lakes (EU Commission website 2006: Barcelóna Declaration).

Additionally the EMPacknowledges the pivotal role of the energy sector in the economies of EMP partners and the need to strengthen cooperation and intensify dialogue in the field of energy policies, including the appropriate framework conditions for investments in, and the activities of, energy companies (Ibid.). The supply, management and development of water resources, the modernization of agriculture and the development and improvement of infrastructure, especially in rural areas, including efficient transport systems and information technologies, were also declared priorities (Ibid.).

A particular focus in MENA as part of the EMP are development measures for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the adoption of international/European standards for, and the upgrading of, conformity testing, certification, accreditation and quality standards both in the public and the private sectors. The Euro-Arab Business School in Granada and the European

[5] This is frequently referred to as the "three basket-structure" of the EMP and which I will refer to occasionally as "the paradigm" of the EMP.

[6] or the "absence of conflict" as a common definition of successful security

Foundation in Turin are contributing to this end, as is the Anna Lindh foundation which focuses on women's empowerment and development. It should be pointed out that NGOs, such as the Stanley Foundation (in association with the Institute for Near East & Gulf Military Analysis) in the US for example also address open Arab media (though in the context of US foreign policy) and similar goals as the EMP. None, however, have the legitimacy or are as all-encompassing as the EMP (Boening 2007g)

EMP participants recognize that the traditions of culture and civilization throughout the Mediterranean region, the dialogue between these cultures and exchanges at the human, scientific and technological levels are essential factors in bringing their peoples closer by promoting understanding between them and improving their perception of each other, including the importance of the role which mass media can play in the reciprocal recognition and understanding of cultures as a source of mutual enrichment (Ibid.).

The importance of civil society specifically, and the development of human resources overall, such as social development and education and training for young people (e.g. the familiarization with the cultural identity of each partner country) are realized by facilitating active exchange programs between partnership states. The importance of these programs, beyond enabling the EU's southern neighbors to develop a workforce with skills (i.e. increase their human capital) (Putnam 1993) which enables them to improve their economic situation, is to develop civil society as a significant component of functioning democratic institutions and strengthens the rule of law (Tarrow 1994, 1996). Reinhardt (2002) points out that the development of civil society, and especially exchanges and communications between the civil societies of the northern and southern Mediterranean and the movement of people within the EMP overall have not been facilitated sufficiently in the past.

Buzan (1991, 190, quoted in Pace 2003, 166) introduced the concept of a *security community* and a *security complex theory*. Security community, according to Buzan (1991, 218) represents the far end on the scale of security interdependence, wherein "disputes among all the members are resolved to such an extent that none fears… either political assault or military position on his continuum security configurations, related to the idea of a 'security community'". A security complex represents "a group of states whose primary security concerns are linked together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another (Buzan 1991, 190, quoted in Pace 2003, 166). Hence this paper examines the extent to which the mutual roles of the EU, North Africa and the Levant beyond historical ties and their current economic interests in a security context shift from state-centric interests to society and identity.

Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde (1998, 27) define security as "survival in the face of existential threats", though these threats are not the same across different sectors. According to these authors (Ibid., 22) in the societal sector, "the referent object is large-scale collective identities that can function independent to f the state). Hence this paper will attempt a discoursive analysis of the political constellations to determine the securitization in the Euro-Mediterranean region within the EMP.

Noting that Buzan, Waever and de Wilde are diverging from the traditional military definition of security by adding "soft" areas, such as economic, environmental, societal and individual security, we turn to Joffé (2001, 55) who refers to the EMP as:

> aperfect example of political symbiosis that may have interesting social and cultural consequences and should be the real paradigm for the future … [where] soft power projection becomes interdependence as the 'forgotten frontier' becomes the common arena – the stated objective of the Barcelóna Process, if not its underlying purpose.

Security Community (compare Karl Deutsch 1957, Adler and Barnett 1998, Ole Waever 1995) "zones of peace", are based on knowledge on identify conditions (board environmental factors, e.g. demographics, shifts in global economy). This concept provides an ideational epistemic shift through the development of new interpretations of social reality/learning (i.e. alternative notions of what security is). Thus mutual trust and collective identity (based not only on material, but also on social structure) are achieved through social learning. Additionally, institutions can provide conditions of dependable expectations of peaceful change, e.g. mutual trust and collective identity among the involved actors (e.g. EMP member states). Hence, I argue in this paper that the security structures of international politics are outcomes of social interactions: states are not static subjects, but dynamic agents without given identities, that are (re-)constituted through complex, historical overlapping (if often contradictory) practices and a tenuous relationship between domestic and international politics.The argument in this paper is that the essence of regional security is not about charters, but in the *processes* of a *shared commitment* to security region-wide[7].

The EU internally (and by extension its foreign policy) can be understood through its modus operandi of reconciling of competing preferences, as well as the logics of path dependency, and the capacity of institutional interactivity to socialize actors by constructing their preferences and identities and additionally via policy analysis and "new governance" theories (bridging between rationalism and constructivism). In other words, the roles of deliberation, socialization, and persuasion within formal and informal institutional venues and the exchanges between EU-level and domestic norms do more than just shape behavior, they transform interests and identities endogenous to institutional interaction (including non-state actors). Bearce and Bondanella (2007, 703) empirically confirmed that the "constructivists' institutional socialization hypothesis, which posits that intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) make member-state interests more similar over time, and hence promote interest convergence, both in global and in regionally restricted samples. They argue that these results are consistent "with a longer-term socialization process and cannot be explained by the short-term effect of institutional information" (Ibid.). This also indicates that the benefits are not necessarily reduced with increased membership.

In terms of the difference between hard and soft power in institutionalization (e.g. in the EMP), we should take note that the logic of actors' behavior changes, depending on whether the issue is political (power – JHA pillar III), economic (gains – Pillar I), or military (hard security – CFSP, Pillar II), allowing for a "hybrid-interest", depending on the "pillar". Whether the EMP will progress at some point through all stages of economic integration: complex from free trade area to customs union to common market ("4 freedoms"), i.e. more than just spill-over but full economic integration and political integration is difficult to tell at the moment.

At the latest with the intensification of globalization today, neither security nor freedom are inseparable between countries. While not advocating a "one size fits all"-identity, the more harmonized and synchronized our cultures (whether economic, political or social) become, the greater the trust between societies. Here the EU is an example of "unity in diversity": a communal construct of collective socio-political core attitudes (mentally, behaviorally) for identity formation: shared ideas and expectations to distinguish it from other social collectivities are a continuous process of reconstruction, accommodating multiple identities depending on the group and/or situation. National identities confronted and reinforced by globalization and integration processes (economic, political and cultural globalization can prompt a revival of populist and neo-nationalist demands, i.e. while globalization can erode national identities, strong counter-identities seem to form to protect the threatened identity. In the EU integration of

[7] Compare the Schuman Declaration of May 9, 1950: "world peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it".

member states is not experienced as a threat to national identity, but rather an affirmation according to "diversity in unity"[8].

"The social, political and strategic heterogeneity of the EU's Mediterranean partners" (Heisbourg 2001, 8), both in the Northern Mediterranean members (last but not least due to the evolving shift of the EU as a fully fledged security actor with a foreign policy from inter-governmentalism to supranationality) and Southern EMP members, contribute to the ongoing civil societal, economic and political institutional uncertainties. One might hypothesize that the constructivist approach of both societal and political regional security complex-identity formation would have to progress to supersede the divisions which tribalism brought to the southern Mediterranean. The goal of "stability and prosperity set out in the Barcelóna Declaration can be achieved only if all signatories are equally committed to its realization" (Chourou 2001, 69) is indeed not only a North-South process, but requires South-South commitment as well.

Nevertheless, security is by definition a realist calculation. Having framed the EMP in this analysis from a security perspective (i.e. as a regional Mediterranean security complex), potentially evolving through neo-liberal and constructivist dynamics, the legitimacy of the EMP cannot be denied, with its dynamic continuing to evolve, and the question as to what extent it might evolve from an international system to the English School's International Society not as yet answered. Hedley Bull (1977, 10), developing Grotius' concern for international society and building on Kant's (1957) recognition of trans-national social bonds, differentiates between an international system, where states have such contact that the decision of one state have sufficient impact requiring foreign policy engagement between the two. He contrasts this with international society, which can be identified when states "conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share the workings of common institutions (Ibid.).

Hence the security-significance of the EMP can be said to lie in its role contributing towards peace in the Mediterranean and a wider regional stability on a domestic, state, regional and international level overall by developing an international society from the international system for the purpose of a politically and socially more stable and prosperous region. While we strive for a positive-sum world (Wolf 2007), some relationships are more privileged than others. The EMP has earned this distinction, while recognizing that it is a continuous process: there is not one road to modernity (Hoffmann 1965; Taylor 1983), nor one recipe for regional integration, but peace as a step-by-step process through regional integration.[9]

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[8] In contrast to the U.S.' motto of "ex pluribus unum"

[9] Which was after all started already some 3,000 years ago by the Phoenicians, with a divine nod according to mythology when the Greek Zeus sought his bride among them.

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