1. INTRODUCTION

“The Barcelona conference takes place at the exact same day when Pope Urban II, 900 years ago in the French town, Clermont, launched the first crusade, […]”
Manuel Marin, November 1995

For decades, the European Union (EU) has been trying to define a coherent cooperation framework for the Mediterranean region. From policies to strategy, from a partnership to a union, the EU has imagined many different cooperation models whose outcomes have nevertheless very often been put into question. Its last initiative, the so-called Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), seems all the same to be in a cleft stick. Regarding the deep-rooted Israeli-Arab conflict and following the recent Arab protests that led to crucial changes in the region, European partners have not find the way yet to breathe new life into this project and to reshape their relations with this highly strategic area. From the ruins of unconvincing policies and of various projects’ shortages the following question emerges: how is it that the EU meets so many difficulties in forging a durable and stable relation with its Mediterranean neighbours?

Be it a geopolitical entity or an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991), a mythical unity or a historical “cradle of civilizations”, the Mediterranean area is obviously imbued with paradoxes and complexities. From Spain to Turkey, from Lebanon to Morocco or from France to Jordan, the area is far from being homogenous and epitomizes many of the contradictions the world faces nowadays. Admittedly, the Mediterranean encapsulates “the rich/poor or North/South division, on the one hand, and alleged civilizational tensions between Islam and the West, brandished even more forcefully after the events of 9/11, on the other” (Soligen & Oziurt 2006: 52). As a centuries-long site of confrontation, mare nostrum has witnessed divisions and fractures. Today, it remains the scene of ongoing tensions which continue to threaten stability over the region. Long considered as the centre of the world, the Mediterranean region is still the field of geostrategic battles, as well as a diplomatic and symbolic issue, in which access to natural resources, promotion of human values, security and

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1 This document is part of a PhD thesis which is being carried out at the University of Luxemburg and the Université catholique de Louvain. This one is still in progress and the output presented here are preliminary results. Comments to improve it are more than welcome. This paper has been prepared for the seminar “Mémoire et résolution des conflits” exclusively (16 April 2013). Please do not quote without permission of the author.
migrations are at stake. To sum up, the Mediterranean is a region where in many ways notions of wealth and poverty, security and democracy, war and peace are questioned on a worldwide scale rather than on a local scale as it might at first appear.

For Europe, and the European Union in particular, the area is of symbolic importance. Located on its southern flank, the Mediterranean is most of the time conceived of as a natural geographical border that gives shape to and limits EU expansion. Besides this close proximity, there also exist deep historical ties linking (Northern) European and (Southern) Mediterranean neighbours. The Mediterranean Sea is a common lake that has symbolically connected peoples around its shores for centuries. In this site of cultural encounters, where coherence and contradictions are interwoven, various historical memories are at work. Recollections of the shared past sound differently in the South and in the North of the Mediterranean. Memories may compete with one another, echoes of the past being expressed in challenging ways. What does not vary, nonetheless, is the haunting presence of this shared past in Euro-Mediterranean relations. As the statement quoted above from Manuel Marin, former Vice-President of the European commission, suggests, EU initiatives towards the Mediterranean somehow mirror the heritage of the past. This very past is tinted with communication and cultural exchanges on the one hand but also with violence and exclusion on the other. My dissertation’s basic assumption lies in the belief that memories of the past are still “at work” (weight/choice) in Euro-Mediterranean relations. What impact does the shared past really has on Euro-Mediterranean relations? Is it still weighting on them and, if this assumption turns true, does it impede on their cooperation?

As my thesis will try to show, pages of History, whether bright or dark, have entered EU official discourse on the Mediterranean. In line with this observation, as will be advocated, there seems to be an ongoing tension in EU’s approach towards Mediterranean partners. It continuously oscillates between a discursively articulated wish of rapprochement and a yet potent detachment policy. Why, for instance, are there so many different cooperation frameworks elaborated by the EU for the Mediterranean region? Relations with the ACP group, with which EU member states also share deep historical ties, look much less “complicated”. Indeed, the general framework for relations between both groups of countries has remained the same for decades (Cotonou Agreement) although it underwent some evolutions (from Yaoundé and Lomé Conventions). This reasoning cannot be applied to Euro-Mediterranean relations. Many questions then arise: why have there been so many failures in the so-called Euro-Mediterranean cooperation? Why are Mediterranean partners feeling that the EU does not really want to invest in Euro-Mediterranean relations? Why is it actually that important for the European Union to cooperate with the Mediterranean area? And what actually is the Mediterranean?
In order to tackle with these complex questions, my PhD will focus on EU discourses, that is, on the words used by the European Union to explain and give meaning to Euro-Mediterranean relations. The research is embedded in a social constructivist framework (Adler 1997). This basically means that Europe, the Mediterranean, and even the Euro-Mediterranean region, barely sketched out, are considered as social ontologies. This also involves that Euro-Mediterranean policies are thought to be correlated not only to material resources, that is to an objective reality, but also to ideational representations. This dissertation is based on the firm belief that relations between the European Union and Mediterranean partners have also to be understood with the help of such concepts as memory and identity. The conceptual constructivist toolbox will not be developed here as an extensive theoretical chapter may already be found in my PhD draft. Nevertheless, it is useful to underline that constructivism gives language special attention. In line with the intersubjective reality they believe in, constructivists argue that “world and words are [not] independent”, rather, they are “mutually constitutive” (Onuf 1989: 94). Human agents give meaning to the world via language and to do that, they use linguistic categories which have “social origins” (Onuf 1989: 94). They regard language as being neither subjective – as “it exists independently of us to the extent that language is always more than its individual usages and prior to them” – nor objective – as “it does not exist independently of our minds and our usage” (Guzzini 2005: 498). In other words, language is intersubjective. To Nicholas Onuf, “people become agents by living in a world of language” (Onuf 2002). Individuals depend on language to communicate, to make their wishes known and to act in society. Furthermore, language does not only mediate meanings, it also gets meanings fixed. It hence participates to (re)produce structures that will last in time. In other words, through language, agents “contribute to the institutionalization of practices and consequently to the unintentional survival of social structures” (Adler 2002: 102). Individuals attribute meaning to the world through words. Language, in sum, does not simply mirror reality; it actively participates into its social construction. Inspired by this theoretical input, I propose to investigate the discursive construction of Euro-Mediterranean official relations.

The preliminary analysis presented here embodies the first step undertaken within my PhD project. More specifically and in more restrictive terms, the present paper investigates the semantic (and institutional) evolution of EUropean representations of the Mediterranean along the various cooperation projects set up by the EC/EU. It does not take into account purely bilateral relations between the EU and each single country bordering the Mediterranean. Rather, it does only focus on those initiatives that have included all Mediterranean countries at the same time. Through the

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2 Constructivism, as social theory, and discourse analysis, as methodology, are particularly relevant in EU studies as I argue in my theoretical chapter.
3 Noteworthy, some of these initiatives are based on bilateral agreements but they are nonetheless addressed to all Mediterranean countries, see infra.
discursive analysis of fifteen selected documents (see *infra*), I try to point to the lexical and diachronic evolution of the representations EU officials have of the Mediterranean world. It basically deals with such questions as “What is meant by the term “Mediterranean”?” , “Has the region been clearly defined?” , “Who is the Mediterranean Other?” . As will be further specified, this preliminary study has been particularly helpful to more precisely delineate the hypothesis that will be tested in the PhD in progress (see *infra*).

2. REMARKS ON THE PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

“[…] and this extraordinary capacity to communicate which have always characterised the Mediterranean world.” Nicole Fontaine, 23 May 2000

As briefly mentioned above, the first step of my PhD has been to discursively scrutinize the various official documents that delineate the legal Euro-Mediterranean cooperation framework. This primary research has investigated “this extraordinary capacity [of the EU] to communicate [on] the Mediterranean world”, if I am allowed to distort Nicole Fontaine’s quotation. It has then contributed defining the forthcoming research question (see *infra*). It is actually its only purpose and its sole claim. It was performed to give an impulse to the whole research and it effectively allowed the emergence of more precise interrogations. Noteworthy, it was based on an intuitive approach and no accurate, or rather in-depth, discourse analysis has been carried out in this section⁴. Besides, this initial analysis is limited to cornerstone documents, it does not take into account additional statements and speeches as will be the case for the main analysis⁵.

The chosen documents are mentioned in the table here-below (table 1). They have been studied in their English version although, admittedly, it was not always the original version⁶. Those particular documents have been taken according to their salience in engaging a new cooperation

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⁴ The main analysis which will be at the core of my PhD will be made thanks to a well-defined discourse analysis referred to as the Discourse-Historical Approach. The study presented here conversely mainly rests on an intuitive discourse analysis.

⁵ The corpus data of the main analysis will be made up of speeches and official statements released by the Presidents of the various EU institutions (European Parliament, European Commission, Council) and the official representatives of the European Union for external affairs.

⁶ The content of a text is naturally embedded in the socio-linguistic and cultural contexts from which it emerges. Nevertheless, the EU offers a particular setting in which working languages, including English, interact all the time. Documents are released in various languages and I assume that translations carried out within EU institutions are reliable enough as to select the English version in each case. Nonetheless, when differences that are obviously linked to the linguistic peculiarities appear I will mention them and integrate them into the observation.
framework between the EC/EU and Mediterranean non-member countries. They are documents of reference and are accordingly constantly evoked in other EU official texts or in the related literature. For each initiative, two documents, three maximum, have been incorporated in the analysis. This is not the case for the Common Strategy though, for which there is only one text selected, as this one has been a specific unilateral statement from the EU, as it has had limited impact and as it has expired by now.

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<th>INITIATIVES</th>
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| **GMP**     | (1) Statement from the Paris Summit  
|             | (2) Report of the European Parliament-Document 385/75 |
| **RMP**     | (3) Communication from the Commission (SEC(89)1961 final)  
|             | (4) Communication from the Commission (SEC(90)812 final) |
| **EMP**     | (5) Communication from the Commission (COM(94)427 final)  
|             | (6) Barcelona Declaration  
|             | (7) Communication from the Commission (COM(2005)139 final) |
| **ENP**     | (9) Communication from the Commission (COM(2003)104 final)  
|             | (12) Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean  
|             | (13) Final Declaration Marseille Ministerial Conference |
| **[RP]**    | (14) Communication from the Commission (COM(2011)200 final)  
|             | (15) Communication from the Commission (COM(2011)303) |

Table 1: Selection of Official Documents

The gathered texts may be considered as having either given the impulse to the various initiatives, or created the projects among EU institutions, or given food to processes already at work. It is essential to underline that the selected texts belong to different genres, fulfil diverging functions and emanate from distinctive institutions. As stated by Andrea Teti, who has discursively analysed the “EU’s first response to the ‘Arab Spring’” by investigating the documents implementing the renewed partnership, “texts produced by/through the EU present a complex challenge” (Teti 2012: 269). As he

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8 RP stands for “renewed partnership”. These last two documents require much more caution than the others. They are quite recent and not much literature may be found on them. These documents are mostly categorized as a review of the ENP. The label “renewed partnership” can in reality turn to be ill-chosen. It is given here for clarity reasons although it can hardly be depicted as a completely innovative cooperation framework as opposed to other categories referred to in the table. Consequently, the enquiry into these two documents will be used to enrich this primarily analysis but the initiative will not be treated as the others. This explains why following tables, graphs or illustrations do not all take them into account.
further specifies, “most texts are produced by drawing on multiple genres, discourses and/or styles, and in this sense any text is hybrid, but EU policy documents are particularly complex” (Ibid.). Regarding the selected documents the following comments may be outlined. First, out of the fifteen chosen texts, nine are labelled “communications” from the European Commission. Such texts are particularly enlightening as to EU’s position and standpoint:

They propose a certain political direction and therefore constitute the base for decisions of the Council as decisionmaking organ in foreign policy affairs. Furthermore, the communications of the Commission give the most precise indications of the internal discourse within the European institutions, as they are directed towards both, the European Council and the European Parliament. (Steinbichler 2009: 74, my emphasis)

In the present data set, communications emanate from the Commission, or jointly from the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (COM(2011)200 final, COM(2011)303), and are directed to other EU bodies, be it to the Council alone (SEC(89)1961 final, SEC(90)812 final) or to both the Council and the European Parliament (COM(94)427 final, COM(2005)139 final, COM(2003)104 final, COM(2008)319 final), or even including the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (COM(2011)200 final, COM(2011)303). As the above-mentioned quotation makes it clear, they mirror the EU “internal discourse” and as such, are particularly helpful for the present concern. Second, one of the texts under study is a report of the European Parliament (EP). This is a working document and it was drawn up on behalf of the Committee on External Economic Relations. It was submitted to the European Parliament as motion for a resolution. Like communications, reports of the EP also reflect an internal discourse. Third, two selected documents may be characterized as some kind of unilateral declarations of intent from the European Union. The Statement from the Paris Summit (1972) outlines the objectives and policies to be pursued by the then future nine EC Member States. Similarly, the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean Region is a decision of the European Council. These two documents therefore reflect a negotiated discourse among representatives of the Member States regarding EU policies. Although an internal audience may also be targeted, the external dimension cannot be neglected. Fourth, and finally, the last type of texts that fall under this analysis are declarations that have been agreed on in the multilateral frameworks of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean. Although theoretically one might think they would reflect the view of all (i.e. including that of Mediterranean non-EU countries) and not only that of the EU, when looking at other documents surrounding these initiatives, one has to admit that it is the EU that gave them their true shape. This can be attested by the content of communications released by the Commission a few months before the official launch of both projects. These early drafts are very much similar to the final versions.
This preliminary research, as already mentioned, does not follow a thorough discursive analysis and is rather based on an “intuitive” reading. It was nevertheless influenced by literature on discourse analysis methodologies and some interpretative tools, which had then been internalized, have necessarily affected the study. Needless to say that the constructivist toolbox was all the same activated as the analysis basically seeks to understand how the EU has constructed its relation with the Mediterranean and how it has constructed the Mediterranean as an object of cooperation. This analysis is divided into three main parts. The first one investigates the “titles” given to the various cooperation models. The underlying question is: How do European officials categorize the policies directed towards the Mediterranean? What do such terms as policies, partnership or union cover? As compared to relations with the ACP groups, for instance, which have for long been based on the Lomé Convention (1975) which was revisited as the Cotonou Agreement (2000), and then on the Joint EU - Africa Strategy (2007), the vocabulary chosen to refer to Euro-Mediterranean relations are quite unique in EU’s external relations. Which evolutions have undergone these labels? The second part of the preliminary research focuses on one discursive strategy, that of nomination and predication which provides insight into the discursive construction and qualification of social actors (Reisigl & Wodak 2009). In short, this sub-section will seek to answer following questions: who has the EC/EU been talking to when addressing its Mediterranean partners since it first engaged in a cooperation model? Who has been referred to as the Other in the successive initiatives? How has this Other been pictured by European officials along the last five decades? Third, I will focus on the very term “Mediterranean” and try to answer the question: what does this term refer to? Which representation do Europeans have of this area and how do they shape the Mediterranean throughout the official texts?

Interestingly and broadly speaking, this primary analysis can be said to study the diachronic and semantic evolution of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation through a selection of official texts and along three specific axes, which are time, space and relationality. Titles of the cooperation frameworks as well as categorizations of the Other give information on relational facets. The various definitions of the Mediterranean area inform on the spatial representations and particularly enquire into questions of region-building. These are actually the three axes that, as defined in the theoretical section of my PhD draft, constitute the three-dimensional definition of European identity. As developed there, these are not fixed categories and there are many overlaps between them. For instance, the second section uses both a spatial perspective (which country is considered as a Mediterranean Other?) and a relational perspective (which predicates are associated with this Other? What binary opposition is used to

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9 The fact that this preliminary research has followed an intuitive path (which some would term “subjective”) does not weaken its conclusions. This is crucial to make this point clear as the PhD’s main hypothesis will be partly based on the obtained results. In reality, the DHA literature has greatly influenced the analysis, particularly regarding the strategy of nomination and predication. Besides, hypotheses are actually often based on rather “instinctive” precepts which will then be tested in order to affirm them or, conversely, to turn them down.
distinguish it from the European Self?). The temporal dimension, for its part, is in reality underlying each section. And yet, it is not fully developed, not at least with the meaning ascribed to the notion in the theoretical part (memory issue). This might appear surprising as the PhD mainly rests on questions of memory. Nevertheless, the memory aspects turn out to be scarcely used in the institutional written documents which are formulated in quite formal terms. Obviously, historical ties and common memories somehow find their ways into such documents but they are not as relevant as in speeches and statements as investigated later on in the PhD.

3. **EURO-MEDITERRANEAN RELATION IN WORDS**

3.1. **FROM POLICIES TO STRATEGY, FROM A PARTNERSHIP TO A UNION**

“[…] the European Union’s new Mediterranean initiative is expected to gain further momentum as negotiations are gradually concluded with all the Mediterranean partners”

Commissioner de Silguy, 28 April 1997

From a discursive perspective, the Euro-Mediterranean model of cooperation began with the Mediterranean policies, either global or renovated (GMP and RMP), in the 1970s and 1980s and subsequently switched to a partnership in the 1990s (EMP) and, more recently, to a union (UfM). The so-called strategy was almost insignificant in Euro-Mediterranean relations, but the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is still in force. There have been many “new Mediterranean initiative[s]” in EC/EU history and the statement quoted above could have been uttered for many of them. These were nevertheless given different labels. What meaning do these terms convey in the Euro-Mediterranean context?

While policies are based on bilateral agreements, the partnership and the union are intended to create a multilateral framework supporting regional integration. Noteworthy though, the initiatives have all been proposed by the European partners, although labels such as partnership and union theoretically imply cooperative models that involve parties equally. The following timeline classifies the labels according to their bi- or multilateral character. The Common Strategy does not belong to any of these categories as it was a purely unilateral declaration of intent.

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10 Nevertheless, it is worth reminding that multilateral fora, i.e. the EMP and the UfM, also have a bilateral scope. My categorization here is based on the fact that the focus is on multilateralism in these initiatives and that in the “official” declarations launching both the EMP (Barcelona Declaration) and the UfM (during the Summit in Paris) all participants, be they EUropean or Mediterranean, were signatories.
A closer look at the labels assigned to the various initiatives also enables to draw the diagram below which illustrates the relative and theoretical permeability of Euro-Mediterranean relations depending on the type of cooperation model in place (diagram 1). It is based on the theoretical definitions of the concepts under discussion, as they may be found in any dictionary (in this case from Collins 2003). First, policies can formally be defined as “plans of action adopted or pursued by an individual, government, party, business, etc.” (Collins 2003), and, in this case, by European member states. Policies imply a one-sided relationship from EU countries towards their Mediterranean partners. This one-sided relationship is precisely present in the Global Mediterranean Policy, the Renovated Mediterranean Policy and the European Neighbourhood Policy. Strikingly, while in the 1970s and 1980s, policies were qualified as “Mediterranean”, the ENP (2004) affirms the personality of the EU by labeling the project a “European” policy. It comes as no surprise as in almost two decades, the European Union has significantly evolved and deepened, shaping itself a special identity. The unidirectional relationship is particularly epitomized by the Common Strategy of the European Council on the Mediterranean Region. Formally defined as “a particular long-term plan for success, esp in business or politics” (Collins 2003), the strategy offers a lasting view of what should be achieved. It is some kind of pattern into which further actions should be embedded. As explained in the historical chapter of my PhD draft, the Strategy was established in 2000 as an instrument of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy. The term common actually refers to the collective aspect of the Community and not to a hypothetical common management of the strategy by the parties involved, including the Mediterranean partners. This is obvious from the phrase “on the Mediterranean” which clearly indicates that the Mediterranean is the object to which the declaration of intent is directed. Similar to the policies, the strategy was incontestably determined by the European side.

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I use the term “one-sided” here to designate the relationship that the EC/EU has established with Mediterranean non-member countries under the “policies” umbrella. Although based on “bi-lateral” agreements, these relations are in fact unidirectional, from a European point-of-view, in so far as the referred agreements basically emanate from European institutions and that the initiatives essentially remain in EU hands. Conversely, the term “two-sided” refers to those frameworks which ideally seek for similar involvement from all parties.
Second, the term partnership, on the contrary, indicates the will to establish “a contractual relationship between two or more persons carrying on a joint business venture with a view to profit, each incurring liability for losses and the right to share in the profits” (Collins 2003; my emphasis). As illustrated in the diagram, this denomination suggests a two-sided relationship in which the different partners are equally involved. This shift in Euro-Mediterranean relations is made clear through the official texts creating the initiatives. While the GMP and the RMP strictly originated from EC institutions, the Heads of State or Government of all the countries involved in the EMP were signatories of the Barcelona Declaration. In Frederica Bicchi’s words, “the EMP was a major change in Euro-Mediterranean relations. It was a radical departure from previous practices and it aimed to create a new partnership among neighbours, testifying […] to the EU’s attempt to transform geographical closeness into actual collaboration and partnership” (Bicchi 2009: 17). The co-occurrence (and even the fusion) of the terms “Euro” and “Mediterranean” (EMP) strengthens the willingness to share the initiative, in words at least. Interestingly, the recent project of a renewed partnership, or more precisely, of “A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean”, as stated in the document, appears more cautious regarding the chosen words. In the label, the “Euro-Mediterranean” side of it is dropped and the partnership is now to be made “with” the Mediterranean. Third, as far as the word union (in the UfM context) is concerned, the label could have designated “an association, alliance, or confederation of individuals or groups for a common purpose, esp political” (Collins 2003) if the phrase “Mediterranean Union”, initially suggested by French President Sarkozy, had been kept. This union would have then created something more than a relationship, some type of
new structure, as indicated in the diagram below. With the semantic change into a Union for the Mediterranean, what remains is in reality more akin to a partnership. Although institutions and functions particularly devoted to the UfM have been created, there appears to still be the EU on the one side and the Mediterranean partners on the other. The Union (for the Mediterranean) and the (European) Union, for instance, are not comparable. In the UfM, the Mediterranean is indeed clearly designated as the object of the EU approach.

On the whole and in the long term, cooperation models seem to have evolved from “policy-type” of relations towards “partnership-type” of associations. Nevertheless, this analysis is not as smooth as it might first appear. There have been punctual disruptions in this chronological evolution. The European Neighbourhood Policy has actually pointed to a return to the policy and bilateral kind of relations. Besides, in spite of some cooperative denominations, all initiatives have been put forward by the European Union, or at least, by European States. What is obvious though, from this investigation into the various labels, is that the EMP appears to be semantically significant and especially with regards to the following two aspects. First, it is the first time that the idea of partnership emerges. Although theoretically the word “union” might have meant a deeper cooperative agenda, traces of the EMP are still particularly significant today. Second, the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean concept, suggesting a common space, only appears in the Barcelona Process. The lexicological analysis evokes a relation which is no longer exclusively “hold” by Europeans and “taken” by Mediterranean countries but that is engraved in a shared aspiration. Semantically, the Euro-Mediterranean notion is completely innovative. Noteworthy, no following initiative will include it in its label. Even the recent renewed partnership avoids this lexicon.
3.2. **ON THE TERM “MEDITERRANEAN”: WHO DOES IT TARGET?**

“Geographically speaking, the concept of a Mediterranean policy is not without its ambiguities.”

The labels used through the various cooperation plans mirror the evolution of the EU’s representation regarding its relationship with the Mediterranean. Admittedly, however, these labels all have the “Mediterranean” as their object of cooperation. Nonetheless, this core concept is neither clearly defined nor visually delineated.\(^{12}\)

In 1975, the European Parliament already pointed out the following:

> Geographically speaking, the concept of a Mediterranean policy is not without its ambiguities. The Commission considered in its memorandum […] that although the geographic limits of the region could not be precisely defined, it did appear necessary, in the interests of an effective Mediterranean policy, to ‘confine Community aid to countries actually bordering the Mediterranean’, subject to certain adjustments which might be dictated by regional integration policy requirements. (European Parliament 1975, my emphasis)

If the term “Mediterranean” is meant to designate a group of countries qualified as having a Mediterranean quality, which countries can belong to this group? Does the criterion of “bordering the Mediterranean [sea]” (European Parliament 1975; Commission 1989) really matter? Or is the term “Mediterranean” just a concept that manages to fit the EU’s foreign policy aims? This is at least what Michelle Pace suggests by saying that “the term ‘Mediterranean’ […] groups together a group of countries chosen on the basis of criteria sufficiently diverse and incoherent to be qualified as political” (Pace 2002: 200-201). The present section aims to depict which countries have been considered as being part of what is called “the Mediterranean” in official texts along the various initiatives.

The following countries have been involved in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation since the GMP emerged: Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Israel (see table 2). This “basic group” will remain unchanged and is still targeted by European policies today.\(^{13}\) Subsequently, the Palestinian Authority has been included from the 1990s onwards. In the early days of cooperation, European policies also addressed Spain, Malta and Cyprus, for example. These countries later became full EU Member states. But what about Albania, for instance, which has not been consistently associated with all the projects? And what about Turkey, which has reportedly been some type of

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\(^{12}\) For more on this see Pace 2002. She illustrates by many examples the inconsistencies in EU discourse within the EMP framework and particularly stresses that “there is a tension in the way in which the EU refers to the Mediterranean” (Pace 2002: 198). My approach follows a similar path, but while her analysis is rather synchronic (a deep look at the EMP through the study of many documents released by various institutions) mine is diachronic in so far as I envisage Euro-Mediterranean relations from their “formal” beginning onwards.

\(^{13}\) And this relative “stability” of the targeted group which is made up of countries that are de facto excluded from a possible EU membership gives its true shape to the creation of a Mediterranean region as constructed by European policies (see *infra*).
‘special case’ in Euro-Mediterranean associations? Libya is also an exception, and its relationships with European states have experienced many difficulties. Strikingly, discursively speaking, these countries are designated by the European authorities using a vague jargon (the word *Mediterranean*) that is appropriate to the moving geopolitical realities of the region.

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*Cyprus, Malta and Turkey are concerned by the CSM but not as regards to bilateral relations.

*Greece and Turkey had special agreements with the EC. Besides, in the short or long term, they were (still are for Turkey) candidate to membership.

**Yugoslavia signed a non-preferential agreement with the EC and then a cooperation agreement in 1980.

***Libya and Albania were excluded from the GMP and the RMP. Noteworthy Libya has an observer status in the EMP since 1999, Albania is now part of the UfM.

****Western Independent States are Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova; Southern Caucasus refers to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Table 2: Geographical scope of the various European initiatives towards the *Mediterranean*

Furthermore, official texts have also introduced sundry titles and diverging attributes. Depending on the type of project proposed, various subgroups have been introduced, denominations have found different echoes, and new qualifying terms have been created (see table 3). In the Global Mediterranean Policy, although countries are mostly addressed separately, two distinct groups are
The report of the European Parliament refers to Eastern Arab countries and to Western Arab countries. Both however appear to encompass the same group of countries and they are used synonymously (compare page 11 and page 13/16 of this report). In the French version, the group is commonly designated as the “Orient arabe”. In English, the group is once referred to as the “Arab countries of the Levant” and as the “four Arab countries of the Middle East”. In the opinion of the Committee on agriculture, enclosed in the report, the term “Machrek” is introduced but not clearly delineated.

Noteworthy, previous denominations, such as “Maghreb”, are still present but the two terms “MNC” and “SEM” are beyond any doubts the predominant ones within the RMP.

The first communication does not mention the acronym SEM. It only refers to MNC. This can easily be explained by the fact the SEC(89)1961 final document rather provides general guidelines regarding a Renewed Mediterranean Policy and does not give much details about it as compared to SEC(90)812 final.
“South” (this sounds quite normal as all participants were signatories of the official declaration)\(^{17}\). In turn, the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean Region makes wide use of the EMP terminology. As Frederica Bicchi argues, “the Common Strategy followed quite closely the Barcelona Declaration, while at the same time emphasizing the European vision of the EMP” (Bicchi 2006: 156). The declaration addresses Mediterranean partners who find themselves in the Mediterranean region (see infra). No MNC or SEM, nor Maghreb or Mashrek are mentioned. Second, in the European Neighbourhood Policy, although the term “partners” is frequently used, illustrating by words the ENP’s commitment to the EMP, the addressees of the policy are called “neighbours”\(^{18}\). ENP documents distinguish between two types of neighbours, Eastern and Southern ones. As far as the latter are concerned, they are mostly referred to as “Southern Mediterranean”. Strikingly, from the late 80s to the early 21st century, Mediterranean countries have kept their “Southern” attribute and lost their “Eastern” attribute. As a matter of fact, while the group of countries made up of Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel was once qualified as “Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries” within the Renovated Mediterranean Policy (see supra), the very same group, to which the Palestinian Authority and Libya have been added, have now become exclusively “Southern Mediterranean countries”. This comes as no surprise as the image of the “East” has evolved over this period of time. Besides, the ENP also rests upon a dichotomy between Eastern (European) and Southern (Mediterranean) neighbours. The phrase “Southern and Eastern Mediterranean” would have been too confusing in this context.

The image of the “partner”, mainly created under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, has made its way throughout the following years and has come to be taken for granted in texts related to Euro-Mediterranean relations. The Union for the Mediterranean makes a wide use of the term, and this is actually logical since the UfM was recast in an EMP framework. But as it was all the same mobilized within the European Neighbourhood Policy, it is wise to argue that the Mediterranean “partner” has pervaded the EU official discourse on the Mediterranean. Conversely, within the UfM framework, I have not found any single mention of the term “neighbour”. Admittedly, the centre-periphery approach of the ENP, as condemned by some authors, is the one that allows a “neighbourhood” semantic field, as opposed to the “partnership” or “union” spirit. This is therefore unsurprising to find

\(^{17}\) Noteworthy, in the two other documents analyzed under the EMP, the word “South” occurs at times, following on from the terminology introduced previously in the RMP with the acronym SEM. This is in accordance with the view defended in the literature that while during the Cold War international relations were dominated by a West/East axis, there follows a predominant North/South divide. On this, see the section devoted to Europe’s relationality (theoretical chapter).

\(^{18}\) Some interesting analyses have already been carried out as to the ENP and its semantic structure, especially as regards to EU identity issues. See for instance Holm 2005, Ifversen & Kølvraa 2007.
a return to this kind of vocabulary into the documents released after the Arab revolts since those were presented as revision of the ENP.

<table>
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<th>TITLE</th>
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<th>EMP</th>
<th>CSM</th>
<th>ENP</th>
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<td>(Euro-) Mediterranean Partners</td>
<td>Neighbours</td>
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Table 3: Terms and labels attributed to the Mediterranean Other in the various initiatives

The proliferation of these terms (taken up in table 3), mingling blurred realities with lexical images, generates confusion and could be detrimental to Euro-Mediterranean relations. And the crucial question remains: who is the Other in Euro-Mediterranean relations? Is the Other a partner, a neighbour, a Mediterranean non-member or a southern and eastern country? What is at stake in selecting one expression over the other? The use of the term partner, for instance, is consistent with the intentions of the Barcelona Process (1995): to establish a three-dimensional partnership to promote a shared “area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation” (Barcelona Declaration). The semantics used reflect the desire to collectively address “common challenges calling for a coordinated overall response” (Barcelona Declaration). In the EMP context, in order to achieve Barcelona goals, the Mediterranean is mostly evoked in idealised terms. As Schmid puts it: “the revival of the ‘Mediterranean unity’ myth was admittedly necessary to make the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership credible” (Schmid 2003:26; my translation). Unsurprisingly, lyrical symbols and mythic images are widely used in the speeches related to the EMP. The “magic potential” of the Mediterranean concept is activated (Schmid 2003). In those texts, mare nostrum should unite the partners surrounding its shores.
Conversely, in the European Neighbourhood Policy, as evidenced in the Commission’s communication entitled “Wider Europe-Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours”, partners are also to be qualified as neighbours. The Southern Mediterranean countries are defined according to their geographic position at the EU’s borders. According to Kalypso Nicolaïdis and Dimitri Nicolaïdis, and as already mentioned (see the theoretical chapter), “the very notion of ‘Wider Europe’ […] unsurprisingly conveys, through its very label, the idea of a centre-periphery relationship” (Nicolaïdis & Nicolaïdis 2006: 346). What is more, the wide use of the term “South” in this policy strengthens this observation. This is also true for the documents recently released by EU institutions. In the two documents related to the “New Partnership for Democracy and Prosperity” and the “Response to the Changing Neighbourhood”, the Mediterranean is pictured as the Southern neighbourhood of the European Union. This stands in sharp contrast to the vocabulary used under the EMP and the UfM where the adjective “South” is hardly ever found.

Such a view naturally raises many questions regarding the symbolic meaning attached to the Mediterranean. As illustrated in diagram 1 on Euro-Mediterranean models of cooperation, under the ENP, the relationship between both entities, that is, the centre (the EU) and the periphery (the Mediterranean), is unidirectional. The EU and the Mediterranean are “neighbours”. This interpretation appears to clash with Barcelona spirit in line with which the relation is reciprocal between “partners”. Should the Mediterranean countries eventually be treated as partners (EMP/ UfM) or as neighbours (ENP/RP)? The question could be raised in the following terms:

Should the Mediterranean be considered a demarcation line, an interface between two cultural spheres, Europe and the Arab-Muslim world – in other words the ‘managed periphery’ of a ‘wider Europe’? Or should it be revisited as ‘Mare Nostrum’ sending out its ripples to an ever-expanding circle of twenty-seven, now thirty-six, countries? This is an impossible choice between colonial nostalgia and integrative utopia. (Nicolaïdis & Nicolaïdis 2006: 356)

Admittedly, such a standpoint is Manichean and far too simplistic, as my general study aims to show. Nevertheless, at a first glance and in the above-quoted terms, while the ENP lexical field tends to follow the first path and intends to fix the EU’s new borders, creating some kind of “demarcation line”, the EMP/ UfM advocates for Euro-Mediterranean unity around mare nostrum.

What this section has sought to underline is that there exist ambiguities as to the way the EC/EU has addressed the countries concerned by its succeeding Mediterranean policies. Not only do they encompass varying countries but the labels attached to the latter also diverge depending on the context and on EC/EU’s motivations, among other things. Besides, as the following section will demonstrate the very essence of the so-called Mediterranean lacks clarity as well.
3.3. ON THE TERM “MEDITERRANEAN”: FROM A BASIN TO A REGION

“The Mediterranean region is historically a multicultural region of great importance to Europe. The Mediterranean Basin does not consist of a physical frontier between northern and southern countries.”

Christos Papoutsis, 13 May 1997 (my emphasis)

Whatever it is, be it a “demarcation line” or a “cradle of civilisations”, if the Mediterranean is a single geographical or geopolitical area, which type of space might it be? What does this concept refer to? Throughout the different official texts that have been analysed, it appears that the Mediterranean was first mentally associated with a basin (geographical area), but the concept then evolved to become identified as a region (geopolitical area). This assessment connects with Michelle Pace’s conclusion that the “EU has turned its perception of the Mediterranean from a geographical area […] into a geopolitical area: an area which challenges the EU in terms of foreign policy priorities etc” (Pace 2004a: 295). Table 4 summarizes the various and succeeding conceptions of the Mediterranean along a basin/region axis.

In and of itself, the term Mediterranean, being understood as one single area, first appears in the EC/EU vocabulary with the Global Mediterranean Policy. As Frederica Bicchi notes, “it [could] be argued that with the GMP the EEC invented the Mediterranean and called it into existence, as it chose to emphasise the common interests of states as diverse as Arab coastal countries, Spain, Israel, Turkey, Greece and Cyprus” (Bicchi 2009: 14). At the Paris Summit (1972), when “the overall and balanced approach” (GMP) is launched, the Mediterranean is referred to as the Mediterranean basin. The policy accordingly targets “countries of the Mediterranean Basin” with which the Community has privileged relations. As indicated in the table below (table 4), the basin is there used to denote countries which the EC thinks of as being unified. The Mediterranean Sea is what makes them belong to one and single specific group. Yet, the word basin involves a bit more than purely geological criteria here and points to an “area” (compare to code (b), see infra). It actually follows the formal definition the Oxford Dictionary gives to the term, i.e. “an area of land around a large river with streams running down into it”. This is what the code (a) in the table refers to. Following sentences are considered as illustrations of this meaning. They make reference to “the Community’s commercial policy in the Mediterranean basin” (European Parliament 1975) or to “the overall Community policy towards the countries of the Mediterranean basin” (European Parliament 1975), they remind that “the Mediterranean basin constitutes an area of strategic importance” (COM(94)427 final)); they specify that a major objective is to “turn[…] the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation […]” (Barcelona Declaration); that “the Community should increase the opportunities for dialogue with its partners from the Mediterranean basin” (SEC(90)812 final). Alternative phrases used in these documents (though at a significant lower frequency) to depict what I mean is the Mediterranean area.
or world. In other words and to anticipate a key point of this analysis, this can meaningfully be compared to an early version of what will be later called the Mediterranean region.

This perception of the Mediterranean as being primarily defined by the Mediterranean Sea prevails until the 1990s when the discourse switches and begins to associate the Mediterranean with a region. With the RMP (1989), there is already a degree of hesitation regarding how to define the Mediterranean. Although the Mediterranean is also referred to as a basin, the Community being invited to “increase the opportunities for dialogue with its partners from the Mediterranean Basin” (SEC(90)812 final; my emphasis), there is already one reference to the “the stability and prosperity of the Mediterranean region” (my emphasis). In fact, in texts related to both the RMP and the EMP, the expression Mediterranean basin is used only on a few occasions, and in main cases it designates the Mediterranean in very specific, and even technical, contexts. The term basin therefore rather follows here the formal definition given by the Collins Dictionary, i.e. “the catchment area of a particular river and its tributaries or of a lake or sea”. This is the meaning I give to the code (b) in table 4, which can be differentiated from code (a) (see supra). Following sentences illustrate this connotation: “Given the geographical situation, the resources of the Mediterranean Basin are common to the Community and to its neighbours” (SEC(89)1961 final)), “the protection of the environment in the Mediterranean Basin should without doubt be one of the priority areas [...]” (SEC(90)812 final) or, later in time, “the development of motorways of the sea, including the connection of ports, throughout the entire Mediterranean Basin [...]” (Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean). Noteworthy though, on the whole, whether meaning (a) or (b), the word basin progressively vanishes from the semantics which animate Euro-Mediterranean relations. In the texts under study, except one technical usage of the term within the UF&M framework, it has completely disappeared along the development of the EMP, which, as I will now develop, validates the emergence of the Mediterranean region.

Strikingly, the idea of a (Euro-/Southern) Mediterranean region, which was initially and mainly shaped under the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, has progressively and repeatedly invaded all texts dealing with Euro-Mediterranean relations. As attested in the table, this holds true even nowadays. I define the word region, following the Collins Dictionary, as “an area considered as a unit for geographical, functional, social, or cultural reasons”. In official texts, this term came to increasingly replace the word basin. Nonetheless, what it is meant to actually cover is not really clear

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19 For more on region-building in the Mediterranean, see Adler & Crawford 2006 and, more specifically, Bicchi’s article. My own analysis borrows much to Frederica Bicchi’s study but I nonetheless depart from it in so far as I exclusively situate the creation of the Mediterranean region within the EMP framework although I fully recognize that the GMP truly sets the points for further steps. But, in accordance with the official texts; I prefer to keep defining the Mediterranean as a Basin under the GMP and the RMP and this, although the content given to the term is similar to that of the “region” as Bicchi understood it for this period, i.e. more than “a generic geographical expression” as it “indicated instead a specific group of countries, deemed to be roughly homogeneous among themselves and with which the EC had legally binding agreements” (Bicchi 2006: 139).
and fluctuates according to the type of cooperation activated. As illustrated in the table below, in the texts under analysis, the term *region* is articulated according to three axes: the first axis supports the image of a *Mediterranean Region* (code (c)), the second axis restrains the region to the *Southern Mediterranean* (code (d)) and the last one subscribes to the concept of a *Euro(-)Mediterranean Region* (code (e)). Admittedly, from the early days of the EMP onwards, the creation of a *region* is on the track. As a matter of fact, in Adler and Crawford’s words, the EMP actually fosters the “invention of a region that does not yet exist and […] the social engineering of a regional identity that rests, neither on blood nor on religion, but on civil society voluntary networks and civic beliefs” (Adler & Crawford 2006: 19). Nonetheless, the EU has difficulties in defining what this region actually is. The dilemma has been summed up as follows in Bicchi’s work and, although the author refers to a period preceding the EMP, her words are still very much relevant for the present concern:

[…] Was the EC trying to create a region *together* with the Mediterranean, that is, a Euro-Mediterranean region with increasingly tight relations between the EC members and all Mediterranean non-members? Or was it intending to promote the constitution of a Mediterranean region which was in fact *separated* from the EC? (Bicchi 2006: 142)

The EMP obviously follows the first path, i.e., it intends “to create a region *together* with the Mediterranean”, and this scope is mirrored in the semantics. The initiative formulates an original notion, that of a *Euro(-)Mediterranean region* (code (e)). Designated as the *Euro-Mediterranean* partnership, adopted at the *Euro-Mediterranean* conference, the EMP depicts the area as a shared space, a *region in common*. The Barcelona Declaration accordingly refers to the *EuroMediterranean* initiative, to *EuroMediterranean* partners, to *EuroMediterranean* cooperation, dialogue or relationships, to the *Euro-Mediterranean* region or area, and to *EuroMediterranean* agreements, meetings or committees. With or without a hyphen, the two entities – Europe and the Mediterranean – are somehow combined to create a new concept. To Kalypso Nicolaïdis and Dimitri Nicolaïdis, the use of the hyphen between the two semantic units indicates an ongoing tension between two perceptions of the Euro(-)Mediterranean region. The authors refer to

[the] balancing act performed at the launching of the process between, on the one hand, what unavoidably continued to be an EU foreign policy, shaped and steered by EU institutions, and on the other, the appeal to a new era of community-building in the region, combining the logic of alternative multilateralism […] with that of deeper integration and an identity-based discourse. In short, Euro-Med vs. EuroMed. (Nicolaïdis & Nicolaïdis 2006: 339)\(^{20}\)

Whatever it is, a Euro-Med or a Euromed area, within the Barcelona Process, the region the EU is setting into motion gathers *together* the EU and the Mediterranean. Conversely, the *Common Strategy*

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\(^{20}\) Noteworthy this issue makes sense in the English language only. As a matter of fact, in the French version of the Declaration, the hyphenated form of the term is always used.
appears to take the second option considered by Bicchi’s quotation (see supra). Apart from clear references to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (written with the hyphen) and its related agreements, the term \textit{Euro-}Mediterranean is never used. The Mediterranean basin is not mentioned either. The focus is markedly on the \textit{Mediterranean Region} (code (c)), as the very label of the Strategy makes it clear. The \textit{EU} differentiates itself somehow from this region, which is close to it but still \textit{separated} from it. Those who were previously designated as \textit{EuroMediterranean} partners now become, in \textit{EU} terms, \textit{Mediterranean} partners.

The European Neighbourhood Policy, which does not only target Mediterranean countries but Eastern neighbours as well, brings with it a new variation of the concept of a Mediterranean region. The word \textit{Euro-}Mediterranean is never mentioned, except in reference to the EMP and its corollary. Instead, the policy focuses on the \textit{Southern} Mediterranean (region) (code (d)). As opposed to the Euro-Mediterranean area, this Southern Mediterranean region is unquestionably distinct from the \textit{EU} area. The qualifying adjective “Southern” is useful to distinguish from “Eastern” neighbours in such a policy. Recent documents released by \textit{EU} institutions and aiming at the renewal of the Neighbourhood Policy unsurprisingly take up this vocabulary. The very title of the communication “A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean” makes it obvious. Similarly, the communication released in May 2011 (COM(2011)303) intends to “provide an ambitious response to the momentous changes currently ongoing in the \textit{Southern Mediterranean region}” (COM(2011)303, my emphasis). Both, the \textit{ENP} and what I have termed the “renewed partnership” still have to be understood in the “regional” semantics, as specified in table 4. Nonetheless, in order to address their Mediterranean neighbours, documents refer to the Southern Mediterranean which is actually also in line with the centre-periphery approach as some qualify it (see supra).

The Union for the Mediterranean, on the contrary and as already explained, naturally brings the semantics back to a Barcelona style of discourse. Continuously referring to \textit{Euro-Mediterranean Heads of State and Government}, the final declaration borrows the EMP’s terminology. Allusions to the \textit{Euro-Mediterranean region}, \textit{Euro-Mediterranean relations}, and \textit{Euro-Mediterranean partners} or \textit{ministers} are frequently found. In the EMP, interestingly, the term \textit{EuroMediterranean} often occurs, written in this way, while the hyphenated form is always preferred in the UfM. The UfM therefore links but distinguishes between the European and Mediterranean aspects (\textit{Euro-Mediterranean}), rather than considering that the two form one symbiosis (\textit{EuroMediterranean})\textsuperscript{21}. It is also important to indicate that within EMP and UfM related texts, mentions are also made of the \textit{Mediterranean region}. What this section aims nevertheless to underline is that these two initiatives more specifically foster a Euro-Mediterranean region (code (e)).

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Ibidem}.
As has been described, the European perception of the Mediterranean has evolved through time. While in the early years of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, the Mediterranean was most often referred to as a basin (GMP, RMP), it later became associated with a region (EMP, CSM, ENP and UfM), giving food for thought to region-building theories in the Mediterranean (Adler & Crawford 2006; Bicchi 2006). Strikingly, the emergence of the concept of a (geopolitical) region also connects with Diez’s analysis of a “Return of Geopolitics” in Euro-Mediterranean relations (Diez 2004). According to the author, while European identity mainly focused on its self-reflexive “temporal Other” in the aftermath of the WWII, the 1990s marked a return to another kind of Othering which involves a geographical counterpart. This region is nevertheless designed differently depending on the type of cooperation the European Union seeks to set up. The Common Strategy is directed to a Mediterranean region which is separated from the EU. Conversely, although they are also clearly embedded in a “regional” semantics, the other initiatives go further and suggest alternative outlines to this Mediterranean region. While the partnership and the union, in line with what has been said in the previous section on these terms (see supra), intend to create a Euro-Mediterranean Region which would be shared by both European and Mediterranean partners, Neighbourhood Policies address neighbours, be they Southern or Eastern, which belong to a Southern Mediterranean Region. As will be later demonstrated, further images and metaphors come to complete this picture (see, for instance, discussions on the “ring of friends”, infra).
4. **The End of this Journey: My Research Question**

“Like the European Union, the Union for the Mediterranean is a process to enable the Mediterranean to cope with its past comprising not only the most remarkable historic and cultural achievements, but also, tainted with war and confrontation. The Union for the Mediterranean is a major political initiative to cope with the need to build a shared future for Euro-Mediterranean partners.”

Stefan Füle, 4 March 2010

The initial analysis described in this chapter has been particularly useful to delineate my research question and has allowed me to draw some interesting outcomes which will give this PhD its major impulse. First of all, Mediterranean third countries may rightfully be considered as some of the EU’s most significant Others. The blossoming of the various cooperation models and the continuous interest of the EU in the Mediterranean area attest this special relationship. I do not pretend that the Mediterranean is the only one to attract EU’s attention (ACP also have special relationships with the EU though not for the very same reasons). Nevertheless, it is fair to argue that Euro-Mediterranean relations, if I am allowed to borrow those terms from the European jargon, have evolved in a unique way. This is this evolution that interests me most. From the 1960s up to now, new concepts have emerged and the Mediterranean, which was quite naturally pictured as a basin in the past, has now acquired the status of a region (from the 1990s). Although the very substance of this region is not exactly defined, the concept is validated as some kind of reality within EU official documents. Second, as the results of this introductory study have shown, there seems to be some kind of “matching” between the content and the semantics of the various initiatives. In line with the content formulated in the Barcelona Declaration (see the historical record), the label “partnership” relies on a desired “two-sided” relationship, involving “partners” equally and engaging in creating a shared “Euro-Mediterranean region”. For their part, “(neighbourhood) policies” remain almost exclusively in European hands, designate the addressees as “neighbours” and visualize the Mediterranean area as a “Southern Mediterranean region” which is outside the European territory. This vocabulary somehow reflects what is found in official texts. This observation lends more weight to my argument that discourses are worth studying to grasp “social reality” (see the theoretical chapter). This stance will also be further developed in the section devoted to my methodology. Third, the following figure (figure 2) has been drawn in order to sum up the outcomes of this initial analysis. The various dimensions (time, space and relationality) discussed above (cf. theoretical chapter) are translated into the schema according to a “relational reciprocity/spatial closeness” axis. The vertical path is

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22 The contents I give to the notions of “reciprocity” and “rapprochement” are relative and contingent on my analysis. Both terms do not exclude one another and they are not closed categories either. “Reciprocity” for instance does not always involve multilateral engagement. Similarly, “rapprochement” and “reciprocity” do not mean “equality”. The EMP has been also criticized for the asymmetrical relations it maintains. These two categories have been selected as they make sense, discursively, in the present context.
developed along the labels given to the various initiatives. It could be roughly termed the relational axis in so far as it takes up the labels according to which the EU categorizes its *relations* with the area. Strikingly, it also corresponds to some kind of “reciprocity axis”. The lowest pole of this path could accordingly be defined by “EC/EU unilateralism” involving asymmetrical relations with the targeted countries. This is at best illustrated by the “strategy” which radically emanates from the EU and which resembles more a declaration of intent far from any kind of association. “Policies” are there too as they rely on EU criteria and very much depend on its good will. On the other side of the path, the “multilateral” and hence reciprocity ideal is longed for and cooperative models of collaboration are put on the foreground. Semantically, the term “union” illustrates this at best, as it theoretically involves all partners on the same level and pragmatically creates new institutional bodies that are independent on EU institutions. The “partnership” also goes in this direction as it really aspires to reciprocal exchanges between both shores of the Mediterranean.

The second (horizontal) path is the one that I define following spatial representations. In the analysis carried out so far, the very notion of “Mediterranean”, which is the object of all the political plans studied here, has strikingly evolved. As explained, a Mediterranean region has progressively emerged, irreversibly blurring the representation of a Mediterranean basin and at times sketching the outlines of a Euro-Mediterranean region. I associate the concept of a *Euro-Mediterranean region* as the deepest step towards a rapprochement with Mediterranean third countries. When considering the Mediterranean purely as a basin, the EC/EU had a distant cartography of the area. This one came

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23 For more on my approach toward “rapprochement”, see supra in the theoretical chapter.
progressively closer to it, and more precisely became its periphery, under subsequent policies which attested the emergence of a Mediterranean region. This is my contention that along this axis the EU mentally situates itself as regards to the Mediterranean area staging its own identity. I have then situated the various initiatives following the two paths’ principles within the schema. Four quadrants consequently emerge. The upper left quadrant has never been materialized, and this is not surprising as the conception of a Mediterranean region has only emerged in the 1990s. Initiatives that were inaugurated before this period were “one-sided” policies, as I have called them (see supra), and mainly consisted in cooperation and aid from the EU and consequently maintaining an asymmetrical relation between all parties involved. The schema actually suggests that the creation of a Mediterranean region was a prerequisite, or rather a necessary (though not sufficient) condition, to the establishment of a more symmetrical relationship between the EU and Mediterranean countries. It seems as if the European Union had to create a similar Other, and by this I mean a coherent region mirroring its own European regional identity. This resonates quite well with Bicchi’s argument that “the attempt at conceptualizing the Mediterranean as a region flows from member states having conceptualized themselves as a region within the EU” (Bicchi 2006: 153). As indicated in figure 2, the EMP and the UfM both belong to the upper right quadrant, embodying the furthest steps undertaken by the EU to foster relational reciprocity and spatial closeness with Mediterranean countries. While the UfM is pragmatically closer to reciprocity (see its institutional structure supra), the EMP is even more committed to a conceptual proximity, stressing the existence of a Euro-Mediterranean Region. As the communication announcing the EMP states, the “partners in Europe and the Mediterranean should be prepared to move to a closer relationship in a wide range of sectors” (COM(94)427 final). In line with the intentions developed in both frameworks, the Mediterranean Other is referred to as a “partner” with which the EU has to establish a dialogue “on the basis of equality and mutual respect” (Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean). Conversely, as previously analyzed, within neighbourhood policies, the Other is a “neighbour” (located in the quadrant below). And the region is no longer common to European and Mediterranean countries, instead the EU distinguishes itself from it, creating more distance than within the EMP framework. This is actually coherent with the fact that

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24 In her article dealing with “The European Origins of Euro-Mediterranean Practices”, Frederica Bicchi situates “region-building in the Mediterranean in the perspective in which the EU conceives it” (Bicchi 2006: 153). She particularly insists on the similarities between what animates the EU and what is pushed forward in the EMP. This article is very helpful to better understand the EMP and the European engagement in the Mediterranean. See Bicchi 2006: pp. 137-167.

25 Noteworthy the schema oversimplifies a complex network of initiatives which are all unique in their own way. The Union for the Mediterranean, for instance, is situated on a high level on the “reciprocity” axis. But it must be specified that while this is certainly true from a semantic point of view, especially regarding the structure it sets up (independent bodies which involve all parties equally, the correct word would be “co-ownership”) this must be watered down as regards the “multilateral” ramifications. As a matter of fact, as the relevant literature underlines to some extent the UfM fosters a return to bilateralism. See for instance Bicchi 2011.
they are based on bilateral action plans and do not engage in multilateral discussions (see *supra*). This is also the case of policies that are situated in the third quadrant and which were the very first to address Mediterranean countries as one single area. Their localization in the lower left part of the table does not mean that GMP and RMP were set up to deepen the gap between the EC and Mediterranean countries. Admittedly, all initiatives represented here are engraved in the “rapprochement” process engaged by Europeans. Nevertheless, these are at the very start of this process and mainly address a “distant and unknown” Other which is merely categorized thanks to subgroup denominations.

What this drawing essentially underlines is that, in line with what is usually agreed on in the literature, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership has also been a *semantic* and even *conceptual* turning point in Euro-Mediterranean relations. It is my contention that it has been the furthest attempt so far to bring closer countries of the region. This is also what the introduction of the third axis on the schema aims to point to. The more the initiative fosters relational reciprocity and spatial proximity, the more it is engraved in a rapprochement policy. The present PhD starts with this premise and intends to challenge it, among other things, on a “memory” scale. Is the European Union really engaged in a rapprochement policy with regards to its Mediterranean neighbours? How is such a reconciliation stance translated into words? In order to answer this question, I will make wide use of Valérie Rosoux’s approach regarding rapprochement/detachment policies as developed in the theoretical section and bring a focus on the way the EU deals with the “Mediterranean” past. This will hopefully help me to confirm (or not) that the Europeans are embarked in a rapprochement policy with Mediterranean countries. I will nevertheless not limit my analysis to memory questions as I will broaden it to the “spatial” and “relational” dimensions. These are the three facets of the concept of identity as I have defined it in the theoretical chapter. This PhD will accordingly largely reflect on EU identity and how it is mirrored in its external policy. All this will be done, in the continuity of the primary analysis, on the bases of a discursive analysis. In other words, the memory aspects will basically focus on how historical “leftovers” are dealt with in Euro-Mediterranean relations and how do they impact on the reconciliation process. The spatial aspects will essentially deepen the way the EU represents itself the Mediterranean. In turn, the relational dimension will consist of questioning the various representations of the Mediterranean Other. The data set though will no longer be the same. As

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26 I need here to make a comment regarding the word “reconciliation” and the way I use it throughout this thesis. In the present work, it will be used as a synonym of “rapprochement”. As previously mentioned (see *supra* and as the analysis to come will shed into light, relations between European and Mediterranean countries are marked by conflicting events. It is my contention that historical wounds are less vivid and are softened on supranational levels (EU, Mediterranean region…) I argue that the word “rapprochement” makes more sense in the context studied but I will nonetheless use “reconciliation” as well in order to avoid too many semantic repetitions. Besides, as will be claimed in the analytical part, reconciliation (in its orthodox meaning) will also need to be discussed (see *infra*).

27 Frederica Bicchi also tackles with this issue though following another perspective. See Bicchi 2006.
a matter of fact, inspired by the results collected so far, it has been decided to chronologically restrict the research to a span of time starting in 1995, with the EMP, up to now. The data will no longer be restricted to institutional documents and the focus will instead be on speeches. The latter are also official data but of a different genre.

The analysis conducted so far has allowed me to formulate the following hypothesis which the following PhD work intends to validate:

*The European Union is committed to a policy of rapprochement with the Mediterranean (region) as attested by the creation of the term “Euro-Mediterranean” but, paradoxically, discursively maintains its Mediterranean partners in an asymmetrical relation and therefore pragmatically sets up a detachment policy.*

As will be further explored, there seems to be an ongoing tension in EU’s approach towards Mediterranean partners. It continuously oscillates between a discursively articulated wish of *rapprochement* and a yet potent underlying *alienation* policy fostering indeed some kind of detachment. Etienne Balibar notes this contrast when discussing the EMP:

> There would therefore be a paradox and even a contradiction in this project which is, *in words* and in some heads at least, a project of association and of cooperation, in short some crossing of the sea, a smoothing of the antagonism; and which would actually be, *in deeds*, a way to enclose Europe on itself, to contain it within specific secure borders (Balibar 2003: 169, my translation and my emphasis)

This is the main point of this thesis which strives to shed a light on this persistent incongruity. Accordingly, with the help of a specific discursive analysis, the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA, see *infra*), the following study will tend to argue that the European Union puts into practice the so-called strategy of “positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation” throughout its discourses to the Mediterranean which can potentially be detrimental for Euro-Mediterranean relations. Noteworthy, this PhD does not engage in a normative discussion as regards to European policies, though this might be eventually conducted. Rather, it endeavours to understand how the European discourse is articulated with regards to an area which is of strategic importance and with which the EU shares a specific historical legacy.
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