

relevant. It is assumed that their interplay will determine outcome in practice. Indeed, the degree of societal polarization, the type of state–society relations and political representation may greatly vary from state to state, and the same can be said about international developments that may trigger, or alleviate, domestic identity conflicts. In accordance with the epistemological premises of this book, we thus argue in favor of adopting a particularizing strategy for explaining causes and outcome in international relations.

## Historical Background and Regional Perspective

This chapter puts the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in a historical context while providing a regional perspective on the suggested link between contested state identities and Euro-Mediterranean regional security. Thus, we first discuss previous policy initiatives addressing Mediterranean security and subsequently provide an overview of Euro–Mediterranean relations since the early 1990s. In this context, the response of major states in the southern Mediterranean to the EU’s region-building logic since the launching of the EMP is explored. Finally, this chapter gives an overview of domestic developments in the Mediterranean/Middle East by keeping possible foreign-policy implications in mind.

### Background of the EMP

The preoccupation of the “West” with Mediterranean security has quite a long history. At the same time, the EMP was the continuation of the EC/EU’s Mediterranean policy of the previous decades, as discussed in the following sections. In this context, it should be noted that the EU, and before that the EC, is far from being a unitary actor in world politics—although it maintains a foreign policy (Regelsberger et al. 1997; Tonra and Christiansen 2004; Carlsnaes et al. 2004). In the framework of this book, however, the complex institutional mechanisms of EU foreign-policy making, and the difficulties related to it, will not be considered.

### The "West" and the Mediterranean during the Cold War

The interest of the "West" in Mediterranean security dates back to the beginning of the cold war. NATO, for instance, viewed the Mediterranean as a strategic unit and considered it as Europe's southern flank, which had to be defended from the Soviet threat as much as Western Europe itself. The CSCE also recognized the Mediterranean's relevance for European security. In the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, the CSCE members committed themselves to expand the dialogue "to include all the states in the Mediterranean, with the purpose of contributing to peace, reducing armed forces in the region, and widening the scope of co-operation" (quoted after Fenech 1997: 171). Some states, such as Italy, had also proposed to expand CSCE membership to non-European Mediterranean countries. Although the superpowers rejected this proposition, CSCE members and Mediterranean countries established informal diplomatic contacts. From 1978 on, an official Mediterranean forum within the CSCE was created, leading to a regular Mediterranean security dialogue of the CSCE, and later the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) (UNIDIR 1995). The Barcelona Convention of 1976 established an additional diplomatic forum dealing with nonmilitary aspects of Mediterranean security under the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP). Signed by all the Mediterranean states and the members of what was then the EC, UNEP/MAP monitors the ecological status of the Mediterranean Sea and its environment (Haas 1989; Spiteri 1994).

The EC showed an interest in the Mediterranean since the very beginning of the European integration process. Article 237 of the 1957 Treaty of Rome referred to the possibility of future membership of south European Mediterranean countries, such as Spain and Greece, but Article 131 of the Rome Treaty also specifically addressed "non-European countries which have special relations" with the EC founding members. With this provision, the EC had Morocco and Tunisia in mind, which had just reached political independence from France and Spain (unlike Algeria, which then was still part of France). A separate "Joint Declaration of Intent" communicated the aim of the newly established EC to soon negotiate an economic association with Morocco and Tunisia, as well as with Libya (Grilli 1993: 183).

During the 1960s and the early 1970s, the EC concluded various bilateral trade agreements with Mediterranean countries. This first phase of the EC's Mediterranean policy consisted of partly arbitrary

ad hoc responses to local trade problems, and reflected different economic and political interests of the EC members vis-à-vis Mediterranean countries.<sup>1</sup> Following wide criticism of the rather incoherent approach, the EC adopted its "Global Mediterranean Policy" (GMP) in 1972. Although "global" may not have been the most appropriate label, the new approach nevertheless sought to address the Mediterranean more systematically. Moreover, the EC acknowledged the importance of economic development in the Mediterranean, from which the EC would also benefit. Since trade provisions alone were not viewed as sufficient for achieving this aim, the following round of agreements signed with Mediterranean countries included financial five-year protocols as well as provisions covering cooperation in social matters (Grilli 1993, 185; Lister 1997, 84–87; Tovias 1977).<sup>2</sup>

The GMP certainly aimed at increasing the EC's influence through the distribution of trade privileges to countries that were trade dependent on the EC. But, as Alfred Tovias (1996) argues, the EC sought to increase its influence in areas in which the trade dependence was high and the involvement of the superpowers low. Thus, European Free Trade Area (EFTA) countries and the former colonies in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific clearly enjoyed a higher priority than the Mediterranean. Moreover, the GMP was certainly a regional approach, but it was not multilateral. In addition, the low importance attached to the area resulted in rather limited trade preferences and comparatively modest financial assistance. Nevertheless, with the adoption of the GMP, the EC started addressing the *stability* of the Mediterranean. By declaring that the aim of the cooperation was "the establishment and maintenance of peace, stability and progress in the region" (European Council 1973), the EC adopted the idea that trade, financial assistance, and cooperation in other areas would foster economic growth and stability. Considering the EC's proximity to the Mediterranean—which back then still included several southern European states—the aim of achieving stability and economic progress can clearly be read as a *security concern* of the EC.

The outbreak of the 1973 Yom Kippur/October War between Israel and bordering Arab states, the oil crisis affecting Europe, as well as cold-war politics, restricted a consistent implementation of the EC's policy. In the aftermath of the 1973 war, the EC nevertheless introduced a new tool in its relations with the Mediterranean, or parts of it, namely that of political dialogue. This was reflected in the opening of the Euro-Arab Dialogue in 1975.<sup>3</sup> But several developments stood in the way of the EC's efforts to coherently address the Mediterranean

region. First, the late 1970s and early 1980s witnessed a number of altered regional alignments in the Middle East following the change of regime in Iran, the Camp David peace agreement between Egypt and Israel, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. Although Ghassam Salamé (1994a: 242) suggests that the failure of the GMP "was caused less by Europe than by the complexities and feuds in the Middle East," developments within the EC itself were also significant. The creation of the EC's single market and the admission of first Greece, and subsequently Spain and Portugal into the EC in 1981 and 1986 respectively further widened the gap between Europe and its southern periphery. The EC's southern enlargement certainly succeeded in stabilizing the *northern shore* of the Mediterranean. But it widened the socioeconomic gap between the two shores. Indeed, the EC's southern enlargement increased the self-sufficiency of the EC in typically Mediterranean agricultural products, such as olive oil, fresh vegetables, and citrus fruits, thus reducing the trade preferences of Maghreb and Mashreq countries in exporting these goods to the EC. Moreover, Portugal's textile industry stood in direct competition with that of Egypt and Tunisia.

The countries in the Maghreb and Mashreq thus experienced a further economic marginalization (Edwards and Philippart 1997; Tovias 1996; Joffé 1996; White 2001). Since by the mid-1990s, Maghreb and Mashreq countries—with the exception of Israel—had experienced the largest decline in real per capita income of any developing region, along with a widening trade deficit, a thorough revision of the EC's policy seemed necessary. Thus, in November 1989, the EC Commission proposed the "Redirected Mediterranean Policy," which the EC formally adopted one year later (Commission 1990). In this context, the EC explicitly stated that, due to its proximity "the stability and prosperity of the Mediterranean region are essential to the stability and prosperity of the Community," and that "in a wider sense, the security of the Community is at stake" (Commission 1990). While identifying mass immigration into the EC, religious fundamentalism, WMD proliferation, drug trafficking, and ecological hazards in or around the Mediterranean Sea as security threats, the Renovated Mediterranean Policy put a new emphasis on economic reforms in Mediterranean countries. In addition, it provided financial support for cross-border projects and increased development aid and EIB loans—yet without improving the trade conditions of the Mediterranean partners (Tovias 1996). In addition, the new approach stressed the importance of political dialogue with the southern neighbors.

### *Mediterranean Politics after the Cold War*

As long as the cold war prevailed, Western Europe was mainly preoccupied with a possible superpower confrontation, which as worst-case scenario foresaw a nuclear war on European soil. The quite sudden dissipation of the cold war led to a thorough reassessment of the EC/EU's external relations. At the same time, once the veil of the cold war was lifted, the problems in the Mediterranean periphery seemed even more severe. But immediately after the end of the cold war, German unification and the political transformation in Central and Eastern Europe attracted the EC's main attention, temporarily leaving the Mediterranean aside. However, this development prompted the EC's Mediterranean countries to seek to counterbalance the EC's preoccupation with the east and put the Mediterranean back onto the EC's agenda.

In this vein, during a meeting in the temporarily revitalized Euro-Arab Dialogue in December 1989, former Italian foreign minister Gianni De Michelis proposed to expand the spirit of Helsinki to the Mediterranean, and the governments of Italy and Spain officially proposed the establishment of a Conference on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) at the CSCE opening speeches in September 1990. France, which initially criticized the initiative as inadequate for such a vast area as the Mediterranean, supported a smaller framework of cooperation. This proposal developed first into the so-called 4 + 5 Dialogue comprising Spain, France, Italy, and Portugal as European parties, and Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania as their western Mediterranean counterparts. With the addition of Malta on the European side, the dialogue subsequently became the "5 + 5 Dialogue." Later on revising its position, France signed with Italy, Spain, and Portugal a joint document on the CSCM, published in January 1991. Although the initiative never formally materialized, the idea of addressing Mediterranean security through an overall strategy of cooperation and partnership was reiterated in several initiatives that were to follow.

But the end of the cold war also resulted in altered patterns of global and regional politics. The military and political constellation of actors in the 1991 Gulf War was the most visible case in point, since most Arab countries, including Syria and Egypt, aligned with the U.S.-led coalition against the fellow Arab country Iraq. At the end of the same year, the Madrid peace process started (Peters 1996). With the election of the late Itzhak Rabin as Israeli prime minister in 1992 and the

beginning of the Oslo peace process between Israel and the Palestinians, the patterns of Middle East politics seemed to have changed in a profound and irreversible manner. Hence, an encompassing regional approach toward the Mediterranean seemed possible.

Several international actors sought to seize the opportunity. The West European Union (WEU) launched a Mediterranean dialogue in June 1992, and NATO followed at the end of 1994. The Inter-Parliamentary Union started to implement CSCM conferences at the parliamentary level from 1992 on (as the CSCM proposal had gained support among parliamentarians). Similarly, the North Atlantic Assembly started a Mediterranean parliamentary forum in 1996. The Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) of the multilateral track of the Madrid peace process established at the end of 1991, and the 1991 Egyptian proposal of establishing a Mediterranean Forum, which materialized in 1994, are additional initiatives covering all or parts of the Mediterranean (Selim 1997; Karsh and Seyigh 1994; Maoz 1997).

In the meantime, Europe's Mediterranean countries continued to lobby for giving greater importance to the southern Mediterranean—especially after the events around the Algerian elections of December 1991 and the subsequent outbreak of the civil war. Thus, Spain and France proposed the upgrading of cooperation with Maghreb countries, an idea that was formally endorsed at the June 1992 European Council in Lisbon, and later on extended to Mashreq countries as well (Commission 1992, 1993). In the following years, the Spanish and Italian governments sought to advance the Mediterranean on the agenda of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as an area for joint action. At the same time, the EU Commission prepared its recommendations on establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Commission 1994, 1995a), and started negotiating new bilateral trade agreements with Tunisia, Morocco, and Israel. The recommendations of the Commission were finalized in 1995 under the French EU presidency, and opened the way for the Barcelona Conference under the Spanish EU presidency at the end of the same year. In fact, the subsequent EU presidency of three "Mediterranean EU members," that is, France, Spain, and Italy in 1994/1995, notably favored the materialization of the Barcelona Process, since it permitted a pooling of agenda-setting efforts among Europe's Mediterranean countries.

#### *Summary: The "Mediterranean Experience"*

The EU's launching of the EMP in November 1995 was clearly an attempt to learn from previous mistakes of its Mediterranean policy.

These were identified as inconsistency, a lack of priority, and a lack of a regional perspective. At the same time, the EU's efforts to address the Mediterranean through a regional approach reflected the overall pre-occupation of international players with Mediterranean security after the end of the cold war. Interestingly, however, the idea of a Mediterranean group of states in international relations has quite a long history. Its composition may have witnessed some change over time, and its designation was coined by international actors in relation to specific interests and international constellations, such as the cold war. However, major Mediterranean states gained some experience over the years in acting as "Mediterranean states" in different international institutions and fora. Thus, the beginning of the Barcelona Process was by no means the first experience of southern Mediterranean countries with regional and multilateral initiatives aimed at solving common problems and addressing common interests.

### **Euro-Mediterranean Relations since the 1990s**

From 1995 on, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership became the main framework of the EU's relations with its southern periphery—at least until the launching of the EU's Neighbourhood Policy in 2003–2004. As noted previously, several issues were linked up to the Barcelona Process, and the EU continuously sought to promote the regional component of the latter, along with a specific set of values (Patten 1999a, 2000, 2002; Commission 2000a). But how did the EMP partner states respond to these efforts? Which patterns characterize relations amongst southern Mediterranean states since the mid-1990s as well as their relations to the EU, the main promoter of the EMP?

#### *Relations among Southern Mediterranean States*

##### *Relations outside the EMP Framework*

While the Madrid peace process had entered a stalemate by the end of 1993, the Oslo process resulted in September 1993 in the mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO, and in May 1994 to the transfer of Gaza and Jericho to Palestinian civilian rule under the Oslo I agreement. The Oslo II accord of September 1995 stipulated the conditions and a time table for a further Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian territories, and the transfer of designated areas to the newly established Palestinian Authority (PA). With the start of the Oslo peace

process, the wider Arab-Israeli conflict seemed on the verge of being solved. Jordan signed a "nonbelligerency accord" with Israel in July 1994, followed in October by a full-fledged peace treaty. Morocco established diplomatic contacts with Israel in September 1994, followed by Tunisia one month later. The trend toward peace in the region also included traditionally revisionist Arab states. Damascus had signaled its interest in a dialogue with Israel since mid-1992, and negotiations began shortly afterwards (Shlaim 2000: 508). The Syrian-Israeli track of the Madrid peace process, however, moved quite slowly, mainly because both sides insisted on rather incompatible preconditions for engaging in negotiations.<sup>4</sup> But the fact that Syria and Israel were negotiating on a "land-for-peace" basis was undoubtedly a novelty. Indeed, the argument of the late Syrian president Hafez al-Assad that peace with Israel was a "strategic option"—first announced in January 1994—was a significant departure from Syria's traditional stance (Al-Moualem 1997). Even Libya showed some reconciling signs. Although Muammar Qaddafi officially condemned Oslo and accused the late Yassir Arafat of treason, in 1993 he sent 200 Libyans pilgrims to Jerusalem, and invited Libyan Jews who lived abroad to visit Libya (Deeb 1995: 365).

Egypt reacted to the Oslo peace process in a less reconciling way, although it seemed to legitimize its 1979 peace agreement with Israel in retrospect. In 1995, Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak waged a rather unsuccessful campaign against Israeli nuclear weapons in view of the envisaged extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) (Landau 2003). Moreover, Mubarak ridiculed the late King Hussein for his promise to engage in a "warm peace" with Israel. Egypt's attitude has been linked to the domestic struggle against radical Islamist forces, to whose insurgence the state responded quite mercilessly (Ajami 1999: 202–207, 253–312). Certainly, the peace negotiations brought a number of regional rivalries and incompatible positions to the fore (Peters 1996), and there were also some less promising signs, such as developments in Algeria. All in all, however, by mid-1995, the Middle East seemed to have entered a new era, characterized by a convergence of interests and considerably improved regional relations.

Following the assassination of Israeli prime minister Itzhak Rabin in November 1995, the wave of Palestinian terrorist attacks within Israel in early 1996, and the election of an Israeli Center-Right government under Binyamin Netanyahu in May 1996, the Middle East peace process started to derail. However, already at the beginning of 1996, Israel concluded a strategic cooperation agreement with Turkey, which

has been termed "one of the most important political developments in the region since the 1991 Gulf War" (Gresh 1998: 203). Reviving old fears of an anti-Arab alliance, Arab leaders immediately called upon Turkey to reconsider the agreement. In particular, the accord raised suspicion in Damascus, and if "there had been any prospects of Syria's coming to terms with Israel, the Turkish agreement ended it" (Shlaim 2000: 559). The new Israeli government under Netanyahu did not show much commitment to the peace process with the Palestinians, which entered a stalemate of over 19 months. In this period, Jordan and Egypt criticized Israeli policy in harsh tones, while Tunisia and Morocco temporarily withdraw their representatives from Israel. Within a few years, relations between Israel and Arab states had fallen to a low point.

The Netanyahu government lost its parliamentary majority in December 1998, and the succeeding government under Ehud Barak sought to put the peace process back on track. Since the negotiations with Syria did not move substantially forwards, Israel decided to unilaterally withdraw from southern Lebanon in June 2000. At the same time, the negotiations with the PA started to touch thorny issues such as the right of return of Palestinian refugees, Jerusalem, Jewish settlements, and the final status of the Palestinian entity. In September 2000, the second Palestinian uprising (the so-called *Al-Aqsa Intifada*) broke out. Tensions among Israel and its Arab neighbors rose to an unprecedented level since the beginning of Oslo. Morocco and Tunisia closed their representative offices in Tel Aviv in December 2000, and Cairo called back its ambassador. While the peace negotiations broke down shortly afterwards, the *Intifada* entailed a large number of suicide attacks within Israel. In March 2001, after the Barak government lost its parliamentary majority, Ariel Sharon was elected Israeli prime minister. While Sharon refused to negotiate "under fire," the violence continued, and various international efforts to broker a cease-fire failed. Israel's policy to retaliate against Palestinian terror attacks and prevent them witnessed numerous military raids and the reoccupation of the West Bank from 2002 on. While both Israel's policy in the territories and Palestinian suicide bombings led to the killing of many innocent civilians, the resulting spiral of violence lasted until after the election of Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) as the new PLO chairman in January 2005, following the death of Arafat. Israel's policy in the territories repeatedly caused large anti-Israeli demonstrations in the neighboring Arab states as well as harsh criticism by Arab leaders. Thus, if the early 1990s had raised the prospects of solving the

Arab-Israeli conflict, the Middle East seemed a hopeless case a decade later. In the summer of 2005, there were some positive signs at the horizon, including Abu Mazen's announcement that the Palestinian *Intifada* was over, and Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. However, although it is too early for predictions, the victory of *Hamas* in the Palestinian legislative elections of January 2006 do not bode well for Israeli-Palestinian peace-making.

However, in the late 1990s, the derailing Middle East peace process was not the only source of tension around the Mediterranean. Turkey had started to adopt a much more assertive foreign policy since the end of the cold war (Dagi 1993), leading to repeated confrontations with, and open threats toward, Syria over the Kurdish issue. Turkey was particularly disturbed by Syria's support of the separatist Kurdistan Workers Party, PKK, considered a terrorist group in Ankara, and Damascus's hosting of PKK leader Abdallah Öcalan (Sayari 2000). After the turn of the century, however, Turkish-Syrian relations notably improved, leading to the signing of two military cooperation agreements in June 2002. At the end of the 1990s, Turkey also threatened the Greek Cypriot government because of its intention to deploy Russian S-300 anti-aircraft missiles on Cyprus, thus causing serious tensions between Turkey and EU member Greece. However, relations between Ankara and Athens notably improved shortly afterwards—paradoxically prompted by two devastating earthquakes that struck Turkey and Greece in 1999 (Kasaba and Bozdoğan 2000).<sup>5</sup>

The western Mediterranean, which has a long history of rivalry, mutual suspicion, border disputes, and shifting alliances, similarly witnessed changing patterns of relations. At the beginning of the 1990s, there was a trend toward reduced tensions. This détente followed the acceptance of a UN initiative aimed at resolving the Western Sahara conflict, which traditionally pitted Morocco on one side, and Algeria, and Libya on the other (Zoubir 1999b). Similarly, the UMA initiative, involving Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya, had been launched in 1989. But by the mid-1990s, this rapprochement showed the first signs of reversibility. The regional integration effort of the UMA had entered a stalemate, and so did the diplomatic efforts to resolve the Western Sahara conflict. As a consequence, relations between Morocco and Algeria once again deteriorated. They were additionally affected by the domestic violence in Algeria from the end of 1991 on. A hotel shooting in Marrakech in 1994, which was allegedly committed by Algerian fundamentalists, exacerbated the tensions, which led both governments to impose visa restrictions for nationals of the

respective other state (Mortimer 1999). The UMA is still stalled, and in spite of UN pressure, the conflict over the Western Sahara remains unsettled. At the same time, the renewed tensions between Algeria and Morocco went hand in hand with a rapprochement between Tunisia and Libya from 1996 on (Zoubir 1999b). Thus, the old patterns of polarization in the Maghreb were reestablished.

Thus, the political situation in the Mediterranean and Middle East of the early 1990s notably differs from that at the end of the same decade and at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Relations among southern Mediterranean states before and since the beginning of the Barcelona Process have proven to be quite unstable indeed.

#### *Relations within the EMP*

In spite of the establishment of various Euro-Mediterranean networks, regional relations within the EMP framework have remained difficult. Certainly, the EU repeatedly stressed that the EMP was the only diplomatic forum in which Syrian, Lebanese, and Israeli officials would meet (Commission 2000a). But Syria and Lebanon boycotted some of the EMP meetings of foreign ministers after the eruption of the second *Intifada*, and regional EMP projects have generally not been able to bring Syrian, Lebanese, and Israeli participants together. For instance, although Syria and Lebanon are members of EuroMeSCo, they do not participate in practice. There are no youth programs in which the three countries participate together. Similarly, among the large number of projects for the preservation of cultural heritage, Syria and Lebanon participated in only one short-term project in which Israel took part. Israel, which was interested in breaking out of its regional isolation, recurrently complained that the EMP was held hostage to the Middle East peace process. Yet the position of Syria and Lebanon on regional cooperation and confidence-building measures is clear: perceived as steps toward the normalization of relations with Israel, in their view these measures should follow, and not precede, a fair and comprehensive Middle East peace agreement.

Similarly, Egypt voiced opposition to the normalization of relations with Israel whenever there were problems with the peace process, thus affecting the regional dimension of the EMP. Egypt also showed a far greater interest in economic cooperation with other Arab EMP partners. In this context, with the so-called Agadir Declaration of May 2001, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and Jordan agreed on establishing a free-trade area among them within the EMP framework. Yet this development did not quite please Algeria, which, according to EU officials, temporarily

aimed at becoming the *porte-parole* of Arab Mediterranean states vis-à-vis the EU.<sup>6</sup>

Altogether, Morocco and Tunisia were the most active participants in the EMP's regional track, while the other southern participants recurrently squabbled with each other over different issues. Turkey, on the other hand, participated in the EMP with a rather indifferent attitude, as it tended to view the EMP as a temporary phenomenon, EU membership being the real goal. The next section assesses relations between the EMP partners and the EU since the start of the Barcelona Process.

### *The EMP Partners and the EU*

Traditionally, the EC/EU had been an important economic player in the Mediterranean and Middle East, yet with a limited political leverage. In the aftermath of the cold war, several Arab states were interested in improving their relations with Europe. This particularly applies to Maghreb states, which had maintained close political and economic relations to their former colonial powers. But also Egypt started to pursue a new foreign-policy strategy vis-à-vis the EC/EU. This became most visible with the Egyptian 1991 proposal to establish a Mediterranean forum, which preceded the launching of the EMP (Selim 1997).

Once the Barcelona Process started, it became increasingly difficult for most southern EMP partners to separate their bilateral relations to the EU from the EMP framework. This particularly regards those states the relationship with the EU of which was upgraded through the EMP. Officially, southern Mediterranean states have repeatedly reiterated their commitment to the EU and the EMP. This does not necessarily mean, however, that these states developed a regional approach while dealing with the EU. As discussed in the following sections, EU-Mediterranean relations were characterized by many disagreements and disputes.

### *Points of Criticism and Disagreement*

The EU's policy toward the Middle East peace process was repeatedly criticized in harsh tones—by all the parties involved. Thus, over the years Syria and Lebanon regularly called for a stronger political involvement of the EU in the peace process. Similarly, Cairo repeatedly expressed its disappointment with the EU's political achievements in the Middle East (*Al-Ahram Weekly* February 22, 2001). Even Jordan, which generally refrains from voicing criticism, expressed its

dissatisfaction with "Europe's long absence from taking part in the peace talks between the Palestinians and Israel and its neutral position in the Palestinian Intifada" (*The Star* November 29, 2000: 1).

On the other hand, in the context of the stalled peace process from 1996 on, Israel repeatedly accused the EU of an anti-Israel bias. Thus, the EU's Luxembourg Declaration of December 1998 calling for Israeli concessions in order to revive the peace process, along with the EU's 1999 statement on Jerusalem as *corpus separatum* (that is, a separated entity in terms of sovereignty), triggered a storm of protests from the Israeli side (Foreign Ministry of Israel 1997; Netanyahu and Sharon 1999). At other times, particularly Israeli Labor governments adopted a more accommodating and even friendly attitude toward the EU (Del Sarto and Tovas 2001). It is true that all Israeli governments were in favor of the EU's economic involvement in the peace process, along with the EU's massive financial assistance to the PA. A quite different matter, however, was the EU's political ambitions. Israel somewhat tolerated the latter as long as the peace process was moving ahead. However, after the eruption of the second *Intifada*, and in view of the EU's critical stance toward Israeli practices in the occupied territories, the EU's political ambitions were not particularly welcome in Israel.

However, the EU's involvement or noninvolvement in the Middle East peace process—depending on who is asked—was not the only source of friction in EU-Mediterranean relations. For example, Morocco had been fighting with the EU over fisheries and tomatoes. In this context, Moroccan officials recurrently complained of a lack of "real partnership" (*Le Matin* February 2, 2000). Similarly, Egypt and the EU disagreed on cotton exports and potatoes, prompting former Egyptian foreign minister Amr Moussa to quite sharply accuse the EU Commission of a "practice of double standards" (Moussa 1998). Israel, on the other hand, had a dispute with the EU over orange juice in 1997, which caused some diplomatic row. In general, southern EMP partners have been accusing the EU of a protectionist agricultural policy that does not compare to the efforts of opening their markets to EU competition in industrial products, as prescribed by the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements.

Human-rights issues have been the subject of additional Euro-Mediterranean disagreement, prompting complaints of some EMP partners about the EU's allegedly patronizing attitude (Aliboni and Said Aly 2000: 213). Algeria, the political reforms of which were being funded through the EMP budget, certainly adopted the most extreme

stance. For instance, a 1996 resolution of the European Parliament calling for the introduction of democratic pluralism was denounced by Algerian government officials as a "flagrant, totally inadmissible and an unacceptable interference" in its internal affairs (*Agence France Presse* December 14, 1996). EU fact-finding missions to Algeria during a wave of killings between 1997 and 1998 met a similar official reaction. And a 2001 European Parliament resolution calling on the Algerian authorities to end the violence in the Kabylie region prompted Algerian representatives to declare a "total rejection of all forms of foreign interference in Algeria's internal affairs" (*Agence France Presse* May 19, 2001). At the same time, however, officials of the EU delegation in Algiers noted that Algeria supported the strengthening of the third basket, which, *inter alia*, envisages democratization programs.<sup>7</sup> Tunisia, as other southern participants, has also been critical of the EU's funding of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) under MEDA Democracy without the government's explicit blessing (Desrués 1999: 108–110). Egypt may have been less critical in the verbal realm, but certainly not less opposed to foreign support for democratization. Thus, while passing restrictive NGO laws, the state has repeatedly harassed pro-democracy activists, as will be discussed further in the chapter on Egypt. Morocco has also voiced some criticism of the EU's human-rights policy. In this vein, Rabat reminded the EU that if human rights were so important to the EU, it better take care of the situation in the Palestinian territories (Benaïssa 2000).

Of all the EMP partners, Syria has maintained the most reluctant attitude toward the Barcelona Process. While insisting on the intrinsic link between Middle East peace-making and the EMP, Damascus remained suspicious toward economic liberalization (Abdel Nour 2001). At the beginning of 2001, negotiations on the bilateral free-trade agreement were broken off, since, much to the surprise of EU officials, Syria suspected the EU of wanting to "dictate" reforms.<sup>8</sup> Syria was the last country to sign a Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement, which, as of early 2006, has not entered into force yet. But neither was Egypt particularly enthusiastic about economic liberalization, and negotiations on the bilateral free-trade agreement proceeded at a very slow pace. According to EU officials, this was due to Egypt's difficulties in "digesting" the idea of tremendous reforms, along with internal opposition.<sup>9</sup> This is somewhat surprising since Egypt initially counted as one of the most fervent supporters of the EMP.

Turkey's relations to the EU are dominated by Ankara's ambition of becoming an EU member, and the EU's feet-dragging on this issue

repeatedly caused tensions between both sides. EU-Turkish relations reached an all-time low after the 1997 EU Luxembourg summit in which Turkey was excluded from the list of accession countries (*Turkish Daily News* April 30, 1998). The EU's decision to accept Cyprus as future member additionally infuriated Ankara. Following the rapprochement between Turkey and Greece in the aftermath of the 1999 earthquakes, Greece gave up its traditional opposition to Turkey's EU accession. However, the EU's insistence on far-reaching human-rights reforms as preconditions for EU membership prompted an ambivalent Turkish reaction. While some public figures expressed their support for both such reforms and EU membership, others criticized the EU for their patronizing attitude, thus questioning Turkey's EU membership altogether. Following the Nice European Council summit in December 2000, Turkish officials were extremely disappointed that Turkey, once more, was not listed as EU candidate country. Only at the end of 2004 did Brussels decide to start membership negotiations with Turkey, which officially began in October 2005. Yet the EU remains hesitant on whether Turkey's EU membership could be an asset (Del Sarto 2004). And while Turkey has met most of the EU's criteria, including far-reaching political reforms and the support of a compromise on Cyprus in early 2004, Ankara can hardly perceive the EU as having acted according to the spirit of "partnership."

#### *The Euro-Mediterranean Motif and the Logic of the EMP*

In spite of the initial enthusiasm accompanying the launching of the Barcelona Process, major EMP partners were rather critical of the EU toward the end of the 1990s. While the EU conveyed its bilateral relations with the "south" through a Euro-Mediterranean "lens," the EMP partners seemed far less convinced of the Euro-Mediterranean logic. Indeed, relations among southern Mediterranean states, as well as relations between the latter and the EU, indicate that the EMP partners did not develop any regional outlook.

This is also reflected in the official discourse. Indeed, the "Euro-Mediterranean" or "Mediterranean" themes were practically nonexistent in the foreign-policy discourse of most EMP partners—even while addressing the EU. In the foreign-policy discourse of Turkey, for instance, there are many references to Turkey's European vocation. And although Turkish newspaper articles and official statements quite frequently refer to Turkey's place in the "eastern Mediterranean," the Euro-Mediterranean theme is notably absent. According to Tayfur (2002), the Mediterranean was never conceptualized in Turkish foreign



policy, and regional cooperation on a Euro-Mediterranean basis is quite irrelevant for Ankara. Seeking references to the Mediterranean theme in the official discourses of Egypt and Israel is a similarly futile exercise. Indeed, only an insignificant number of documents and declarations posted at the official websites of the foreign ministry of Egypt and Israel mentioned the EMP or the Euro-Mediterranean theme. In the case of Egypt, documents on the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement referred to it as a "Euro-Egyptian agreement," thus omitting the Mediterranean theme altogether.

A notable exception is Morocco. King Mohammed VI, who counts as a fervent supporter of Euro-Mediterranean relations, quite frequently refers to the Mediterranean and the EMP. Whether he addresses the Spanish king, Italian or French presidents, or his own diplomatic corps, Mohammed VI (2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2000d) emphasizes Morocco's place within the Mediterranean. As discussed in the chapter on Morocco, speeches of senior Moroccan officials are similarly characterized by a Euro-Mediterranean narrative (Benaïssa 2000, 2001a). In a similar vein, French-language Moroccan newspapers, such as *Le Matin* or *TelQuel*, broadly cover the EU and the EMP, and mention Mediterranean values and identity themes.

Major EMP partners have also sought to reinterpret the logic of the EMP according to their own specific interests. In Jordan, for instance, parts of the political elite perceived enhanced Euro-Mediterranean cooperation as contradicting the concept of the "Arab world" (Joffé 2001). In view of the fate of the peace process, former Egyptian foreign minister Amr Moussa stated that closer *Arab-European* cooperation should be the goal of the EMP (Ezzat 1998), and Moroccan foreign minister Benaïssa (2001a) made a similar declaration in 2001. In this context, the above-mentioned Agadir process may well reconcile the Euro-Mediterranean idea with that of the "Arab world." Indeed, the Agadir Declaration states that the envisaged free-trade area is open to *other Arab states as well*. The necessary pragmatism notwithstanding, these positions do not really correspond to the original EMP logic.

Israel, on the other hand, repeatedly underlined its advanced economic relations with the EU. Therefore, it did not perceive itself as belonging to the group of southern Mediterranean states. In this vein, the Israeli Ministry of Finance repeatedly stressed that its bilateral economic relations with the EU are far more important than the Barcelona Process. From a political perspective, the fostering of economic development and democratization throughout the neighborhood in the framework of the EMP corresponded to Israel's own interest, along

with confidence-building measures.<sup>10</sup> However, as discussed in the next chapter, Israel's commitment to the logic of the EMP was limited from the outset.

Thus, it is certainly no coincidence that at the beginning of 2001, Euro-Mediterranean parliamentarians jointly recognized that the EMP partners lacked a regional perspective, let alone an external policy for the region (Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Forum 2001). Governments and elites of most EMP partners maintained rather mixed attitudes towards the logic and benefits of the Barcelona Process, which remained irrelevant in public opinion (Joffé 2001). According to Aliboni and Said Aly (2000: 218):

There is no parallel in the Middle East to the founding fathers of the European Community. Even when Shimon Peres, the former prime minister of Israel, called for a New Middle East, his ideas were mocked both in Arab countries and in Israel. . . . The end result has been a lack of strategic understanding among regional leaderships about the regional future; and the absence of active support for a Mediterranean Partnership or for a Middle Eastern community.

#### *Euro-Mediterranean Relations and the EMP since 9/11*

If the collapse of the Middle East peace process led to the reemergence of the traditional fault-lines, the events of September 11, 2001 and their aftermath negatively affected Euro-Mediterranean relations even further. On the one hand, 9/11, as well as the terrorist attack in Madrid on March 11, 2004 and in London in July 2005, demonstrated most dramatically that the dangerous phenomenon of Islamist terrorism builds on deep resentments against the "West" in many Arab and Muslim states (Eickelman 2002). Combined with the tendency in "the West" of equaling Islamist terrorism with Islam, along with raising anti-Muslim sentiments in many EU member states, the EMP participants have sought to counteract the emerging rift between "Europe" and "Islam" by establishing an intercultural dialogue and strengthening the EMP's third basket. In this vein, the EU Commission hosted a Conference on Inter-Cultural Dialogue in March 2002, and the EMP participants decided at the 2002 Valencia meeting to establish a Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the promotion of dialogue between cultures. The so-called Anna Lindh Foundation with headquarters in Alexandria, Egypt, started its activities in early 2005. Yet, while the willingness to address prejudices across the Mediterranean is certainly a positive development, the intercultural dialogue phenomenon

unfortunately risks reproducing the “clash of civilizations” logic that it aims at counteracting (Del Sarto 2005).

Moreover, 9/11 and the subsequent terrorist bombings in Djerba (April 2002), Bali (October 2002), Casablanca and Riyadh (May 2003), Istanbul (November 2003), Sinai (October 2004 and July 2005), Cairo (April 2005), and Amman (November 2005) demonstrated that Islamist terrorism not only threatens “the West,” but also the governments of Arab/Muslim states. Not surprisingly, Euro-Mediterranean cooperation to combat terrorism has become a key issue of the EMP since 9/11. Corresponding to a general trend in many “Western” countries of curtailing democratic freedoms in the name of “security,” the priority of fighting terrorism went partly at the expense of the EU’s democracy promotion in Arab Mediterranean states (Gillespie 2006; Haddadi 2006). This attitude is very short-sighted, particularly since the persistent lack of democracy in most states of the Middle East is at least co-responsible for the rise of religious extremism to begin with.

Israel, on the other hand, came to see its policy toward the Palestinian *Intifada* as the legitimate right to defend itself in the global “war on terrorism” after 9/11. While the U.S. administration acquiescently supported Israel’s policy—which included the liquidation of suspected terrorists, the reoccupation of Palestinian territories, curfews and military encirclement of Palestinian cities and villages—the Bush administration also largely ignored the Israeli–Palestinian conflict during much of its first term. The EU, however, has been far more critical toward Israel. Thus, it repeatedly called for an Israeli withdrawal from the territories, full access of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian territories, and the rehabilitation of the structures of the PA (Patten 2002). The EU has also been providing massive humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians. Israel, however, rejects the criticism of the EU, as well as that of Arab states, by pointing to the seriousness of Palestinian terrorist attacks. With it, 9/11 and its aftermath reinforced the patterns of Euro-Mediterranean disagreements that already emerged after the collapse of the peace process.

Finally, the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in the spring of 2003 not only provoked a rift in transatlantic relations, but also within the EU itself. As Britain, (initially) Spain, Italy, and most new EU member states of eastern Europe entered the U.S.-led coalition in staunch opposition to France and Germany, the EU’s policy towards the Mediterranean and Middle East seemed seriously compromised. But it was particularly the imminent EU enlargement of 2004 that prompted a reformulation of the EU’s Mediterranean policy in 2003–2004. While embedding the

southern Mediterranean in a broader policy framework that also addresses the EU’s new neighbors in the east, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) abandons the EMP’s regional logic and proposes a differentiated benchmarking approach instead (Commission 2003, 2004). Although the ENP partly overwrites the EMP (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005), the Commission has been presenting both policies as compatible. While it is not clear whether and how the contradictions between the EMP and the ENP will be resolved, the future of the EU’s Mediterranean policy will obviously also depend on developments in the region, particularly on the Israeli–Palestinian track. Yet the development of EU–Mediterranean relations will also depend on U.S. policy in the region as well as on the future of transatlantic relations.

## Domestic Politics in the Southern Mediterranean

Adopting a broad regional perspective, the following sections discuss major domestic developments in the southern Mediterranean over the last decade. This exploration will keep in mind possible implications of domestic conflicts over state identity for the ability of states to engage in Euro-Mediterranean regional security.

### *Arab Mediterranean States*

#### *Political Liberalization Efforts*

Against the backdrop of worsening living conditions, high unemployment, and rising poverty, most Arab Mediterranean states have been witnessing waves of public demonstrations and riots since the 1980s (Ibrahim 1993; Zoubir 1999c; Chartouny-Dubarry 2000).<sup>11</sup> While the economic decline starting in the 1980s resulted from falling oil prices, a dramatically growing debt burden, high military expenditures, economic mismanagement, corruption, and a rapid population growth (Sela 1998: 218), the economic discontent also gave rise to a growing dissatisfaction with the restricted space to voice opposition.<sup>12</sup> Larbi Sadiki (2000) suggests that the “bread riots,” which were often sparked by the implementation of International Monetary Fund (IMF) structural adjustment programs, evidence the collapse of the socioeconomic basis of Arab rulers, which consisted in the provision of subsidized goods, such as basic food products, education, and health care. In return, the ruling classes demanded deference and political nonparticipation.

However, curtailing the providential platform eroded the domestic legitimacy of the "bread democracy" (*dimukratiyyat al-khubz*), thus prompting increasing public demands for political participation. Thus, half-hearted economic liberalization efforts in many Arab states had a negative social and political impact in the short run (Dawisha 1988a; Ibrahim 1998). Indeed, leaving the economic situation of the elites widely unaffected, the *infitah*, that is, the "opening" of the economy, often increased societal fragmentation, exacerbated the legitimacy crisis of the state, and alienated the weaker segments of society (Gerges 2000; Zoubir 1999c; Pioppi 2004).

With the notable exception of Syria and Libya, most Arab regimes reacted to the public discontent by introducing measures of political liberalization, albeit with a varying degree of determination (Salamé 1994b). Rather wide-ranging political liberalization efforts, at least initially, characterized Egypt, Jordan, and Algeria. Egypt embarked on a democratization process in the early 1980s, which however has not been maintained over the years (Kienle 1998b, 2001). In Jordan, the 1989 parliamentary elections were "among the most open in the Arab world at that time" (Chartouny-Dubarry 2000: 62), and the multiparty-system was reestablished after more than three decades of suspension. With these measures, the Jordanian monarchy also reacted to the eruption of the first Palestinian *Intifada* in 1987, Jordan's renouncing to territorial claims in the West Bank, and Israel's then preferred option of creating a Palestinian state in Jordan. Algeria under Boumediene embarked on an extensive political liberalization process following the 1988 riots, introducing freedom of expression and association, and paving the way for the creation of a multiparty system. The subsequent developments, however, went in the opposite direction, as is well known.

Morocco's liberalization efforts since the early 1990s were more hesitant. The controversial 1993 parliamentary elections caused a deep political crisis, which prompted the monarchy to introduce additional electoral reforms prior to the 1997 elections. Although the former opposition leader Abderrahman Youssoufi was appointed prime minister after the 1997 elections, Morocco's political reforms have been termed a "cosmetic response to domestic and international pressure" (Layachi 1999: 57). However, the reforms opened the way for political change, which continued under Mohammed VI, who ascended the throne in July 1999. Similarly, in Tunisia, the aftermath of the "bread riots" throughout the 1980s witnessed internal power struggles, the removal of President Bourguiba from office, and hesitant constitutional reforms.

Lebanon and the Palestinian territories are particular cases, since both are marked by the long experience with foreign domination, along with particular internal and external conditions. In spite of Syrian control on Lebanese politics after the end of the civil war, Lebanon resumed its model of a relatively liberal consociational democracy. The latter was born out of the need to soothe the communal-religious fragmentation of Lebanese society, although it had not prevented civil wars in the past. While Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon ended in 2000, and Syria withdraw its troops in April 2005, Lebanon still has to come to terms with the armed *Hizballah* militias in southern Lebanon. The demonstrations against Syria (and counter-demonstrations) after the assassination of former Lebanese president Rafik Hariri in early 2005 demonstrated that Lebanese civil society is vibrant, yet still fragmented along communal lines. In the Palestinian territories, democratic structures seemed most adequate for anchoring the political authority of the PLO leadership returning from the Tunisian exile, particularly in view of a traditionally vivid Palestinian civil society. Yet, Palestinian politics were challenged by the simultaneous task of state-building and nation-building, along with the oscillating prospects of peace with Israel (Khalidi 1996; Kamrava 1999). In spite of rather democratic elections in 1996, the regime of the late Yasser Arafat was characterized by autocratic lapses, corruption, the general absence of the rule of law, and serious human-rights violations, including the torture of prisoners, death sentences without court proceedings, and the imprisonment of critics of the PA.

#### *Domestic Opposition: Islamism and Secular Forces*

Much attention has been devoted to the rise of Islamism, which is "fully acknowledged as the main political and ideological force in the Arab world today" (Chartouny-Dubarry 2000: 64). It has been claimed that this development evidences the ideological bankruptcy of socialist ideologies and pan-Arab nationalism (Ajami 1992, 1999). Moreover, Edward Said (1995: 333) stressed that what appears as a resurgence of Islam "is in fact a struggle in Islamic societies over the definition of Islam." In this vein, moderate Islamist opposition movements must clearly be distinguished from radical Islamist groups, which do not refrain from the use of violence. Yet the general focus on Islamism tends to overshadow the presence of secular opposition movements, whose demands for political participation grew stronger over the last decades (Zoubir 1999c; Martín-Muñoz 2000). Arab

regimes have adopted quite different strategies in responding to the growing domestic opposition, including the Islamist challenge.

In the most prominent case of Algeria, the rulers had launched an electoral process the verdict of which—the victory of the Islamist FIS (Front Islamique du Salut)—they refused to honor. The annulment of the second round of elections, and the subsequent military coup in January 1992 led the country into a civil war.<sup>13</sup> However, an important segment of Algerian civil society supported the abortion of the second round of elections “because of the fears the radical Islamists provoked among many Algerians” (Zoubir 1999a: 32). The recurrent efforts to establish a political dialogue among the main political forces since 1995, along with the 1997 parliamentary and 1999 presidential elections, have evidenced the presence of additional important opposition forces. These include leftist and socialist parties, Berbers claiming cultural autonomy, and moderate Islamists (Martin-Muñoz 2000). Although political violence has declined in recent years, repressive measures towards all domestic opposition forces have been maintained.

Egypt, Syria, and Libya have also used repressive strategies toward Islamist forces and secular opposition. Syria widely succeeded in literally eradicating the Islamist movement. In Egypt, the initial “divide-and-weaken” strategy was replaced by plain repression of all Islamist forces after a wave of terrorist attacks between 1992 and 1994 and the Algerian crisis. By the end of the decade, the government widely succeeded in crushing the military capability of the radical Islamists. However, moderate Islamist movements have considerably expanded their societal standing, yet they are still excluded from politics. Secular opposition is similarly repressed in Egypt (Gerges 2000; Kienle 1998b, 2001). In 2003, however, the demands for political change grew louder, and the regime started with some very hesitant concessions. Libya, which witnessed various attempts to overthrow the regime in the last two decades, also reacted with plain repression of its increasing internal opposition, secular and religious alike (Deeb 1999).

Morocco and Tunisia responded quite differently to the growing domestic opposition. Whereas Morocco adopted a divide-and-rule strategy, the Tunisian regime chose a “divide-and-eliminate strategy” (King 1999: 70). The crisis in neighboring Algeria served as a justification for the repression of the Islamists, which was widely accepted by the public. Rather positive economic results in the late 1990s and the high popularity of President Ben Ali’s social policy (thus reasserting the “bread-democracy model”) accounted for the relative wide popular support of the Tunisian regime. In the case of Morocco, moderate

opposition forces were co-opted into the system, while more radical opponents were repressed. The Casablanca bombings in May 2003 resulted in a quite merciless crackdown on suspected Islamist terrorists and their potential sympathizers, which, however, seemed to meet the approval of the wider public.

Co-option of Islamist forces also characterizes the experience of Jordan and Lebanon. In the case of Jordan, the Muslim Brotherhood has enjoyed a large “freedom of action in the spheres of culture, education, and public morality in exchange for the movement’s loyalty to the monarchy” (Chartouni-Dubarry 2000: 66). However, Jordan’s peace treaty with Israel put a strain on this arrangement. In the case of Lebanon, both moderate and radical Islamist forces, such as the political wing of *Hizballah*, are integrated into parliamentary politics, which may be explained by the communal structure of Lebanese politics. As far as the Palestinians are concerned, the situation was characterized by changing patterns of confrontation and cooperation between the PA and radical Islamist forces such as *Hammas* and Islamic Jihad, often correlating with progress or stalemate in the peace negotiations with Israel. Yet, toward domestic secular opposition, former chairman Arafat and his regime did not show much tolerance (Kamrava 1999).

Thus, our brief journey shows that most regimes have been struggling with both rising religious and secular opposition. The resulting political reforms, however, often led to a strengthening of the Islamists, which, along with the real or portrayed threat of Islamist fundamentalism, often served as a justification for repressing the opposition altogether. Although repressive policies prompted some temporary alliances between secularists and moderate Islamists, the religious-secular fault-line has deepened in many Arab states. Radical Islamists also recurrently targeted secular intellectuals, often in the physical sense of the word, while they did not refrain from attacking religious minorities, such as the Copts in Egypt (Hammond 2000). In addition, a growing presence of religion can be observed all over the Arab Mediterranean—and beyond. Although this phenomenon must clearly be differentiated from the rise of Islamist fundamentalism, it often entails a growing rift between the traditionally Western-educated, secular elites and the wider population. Against this background, many Arab regimes started to “frame political appeals in Islamic terms, since Islam is a means of legitimizing rule” (Roberson 1998b: 121). Thus, *traditionally secular* Arab leaders such as Egypt’s Mubarak and Libya’s Qadafi increasingly portray themselves as defenders of Islam (Gerges 2000: 603; Deeb 1999). But these

concessions—even if limited to the rhetoric realm—may actually backfire and affect domestic politics, while curtailing a government's foreign-policy options. As Fouad Ajami (1992: 199) sharply formulated: "We are free to choose the symbols we wish to fight others with, but the symbols we use make their own demands."

### *Turkey and Israel: The Shattered Consensus*

Turkey and Israel count as rare examples of Middle Eastern democracies with multiparty parliamentary elections. Turkey follows its democratic constitution "with legalistic precision" (Harris 1995: 19)—except when the whole system is overturned by the interventions of the military. Israel has an independent judiciary system and a free press, which is hindered only by censorship on military issues, and the opposition's criticism of government policies is usually quite vociferous. However, there are some difficulties in comparing Turkey and Israel to the model of a liberal democracy, even if we admit that there are no perfect examples of the latter in the real world. For instance, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch repeatedly criticized Turkey for its human-rights record, particularly vis-à-vis its Kurdish minorities. Human-rights organizations also regularly denounce Israel's human-rights violations in the Palestinian territories under Israeli control. Moreover, the unclear separation between state and religion, along with discriminatory practices toward Israel's Arab minorities, casts a shadow on Israeli democracy (Smootha 1998; Sprinzak and Diamond 1993).

In recent decades, Israeli domestic politics has been characterized by an increasing polarization between supporters of territorial compromises in the search for peace, and advocates of peace without, or with limited, territorial concessions. The 1982 Lebanon war, the outbreak of the first *Intifada* in 1987, and the beginning of the Oslo process went hand in hand with the erosion of the national consensus on basic security issues (Weissbrod 1997). The assassination of Itzhak Rabin following the signing of the Oslo accords was probably the most serious evidence of this development. In addition, Israel has witnessed an increasing divide between religious and secular forces, a dormant, but still relevant, fault-line between Jews of European origin and Oriental Jews, and an increasing societal fragmentation after the Jewish mass immigration from the former Soviet Union (Evron 1995; Kimmerling 1998). Moreover, there is an important divide between Israel's Jewish majority and the widely ignored Arab minority, which however accounts for almost 20 percent of Israeli citizens. As discussed

more in detail in the next chapter, the societal fragmentation and the challenges of the peace process have put a strain on Israel's governability, and early elections have become the rule. Government coalitions consist of different parties with partly incompatible platforms, and since they tend to enjoy a rather small majority, small parties are often the "king-makers" of Israeli politics. The fragmentation of Israeli society is also reflected in the large number of political parties that are voted into parliament, accounting for 13 in the 2003 elections. Moreover, the frequent alternation of Israeli governments, which run on diametrically opposed platforms, is striking. And while Sharon was the only incumbent prime minister to win a reelection since the 1980s, predictability has certainly not characterized Israel domestic politics over the last decades.

Volatility has also been characterizing Turkish politics. The gradual restoration of parliamentary procedures after the 1980 military coup went hand in hand with economic liberalization efforts under former prime minister Turgut Özal. The 1980s and early 1990s saw the emergence of new political parties, along with rising Kurdish violence in the southeast of Turkey, renewed Islamist agitation, and economic hardship resulting from increasing inflation. From the mid-1990s on, Turkey's secular establishment was confronted with the increasing political power of the Islamist Welfare Party, which emerged as the largest political force in the elections in March 1995. Two secular Center-Right parties, the True Path Party and the Motherland Party, formed a coalition in order to exclude the Welfare Party from political power, but it collapsed in June 1996. This opened the way for a coalition government between the True Path Party and the Islamist Welfare Party. In February 1997, however, the military stepped in through the National Security Council, outlawed Islamist parties, and forced the government to step down (Ergil 2000). The military establishment also imposed the closing of religious seminars, a halt of recruiting Islamists into government positions, and a careful scrutiny of the economic activities of Islamist groups (Yavuz 2000). However, in the parliamentary elections of November 2000, the Islamist-oriented AKP (Justice and Development Party) under Recep Tayyip Erdogan won a landslide victory. Turkey must also confront militant Islamists, who are held responsible for the murder of mostly Kurdish businessmen and moderate Islamist intellectuals in early 2002 (Kasaba and Bozdoğan 2000: 8), along with the bombings targeting Istanbul's Jewish community in November 2003. Yet the relation between state and religion is a complex matter, particularly since Sunni Islam has

traditionally been part of Turkish national identity, albeit never explicitly. The role of the military in preserving Turkey's traditional secularism also raises some serious questions. And while the status of the Kurdish minority has not been sorted out yet, an important Shi'ite Alawi minority began protesting against its marginalization in the 1990s (Shankland 1999: 132). Although Turkey has implemented some serious democratic reforms in recent years, modern Turkey is increasingly internally divided, and it faces some difficult choices.

### *Domestic Fragmentation and National Politics*

The domestic developments in the southern Mediterranean discussed so far build on preexisting patterns of fragmentation of Mediterranean societies, which challenge the state from within. One of the main features of Mediterranean societies is their pronounced ethnic and religious diversity. Indeed, there are more than 55 ethnic groups around the Mediterranean (Kliot 1989: 45). With its 18 religious communities or so, Lebanon certainly is an extreme example of religious diversity. Yet, maybe with the exception of Tunisia, the population of which is relatively homogeneous, important ethnic and/or religious minorities are present in all the states of the Mediterranean and Middle East. In some cases, ethnic minorities represent the ruling class, such as the Hashemites in Jordan or the Alawi in Syria. Moreover, through the ages, Mediterranean cultures have tended to be organized around ethnic, religious, and wider family structures, which remained largely unaffected by foreign domination. In this vein, Vatikiotis (1998: 24) still observes the imprint of "a tribal ethos on most Muslim Arab societies," while Israel's political culture is characterized by a "tribal identity" (Ezrahi 1993: 259). Other scholars have identified a tendency of underlining differences as a basic pattern of Mediterranean societies (Isen 1998).

However, the political set-up generally does not reflect the pronounced diversity of Mediterranean societies. Indeed, Mediterranean and Middle Eastern states predominantly define themselves in ethnic-religious terms—much in contrast to, say, Western Europe. This implies that states necessarily give a preference to one ethnic and/or religious group over others. Thus, conceding equal standing to ethnic or religious minorities would entail a redefinition of a state's defining themes. Indeed, fully integrating the Kurds in Turkey, for instance, would necessitate a departure from Turkey's Kemalist self-definition, which is based on the dominance of ethnic Turks, and implicitly, Sunni

Islam. As for Israel, recognizing Israel's large non-Jewish minority as *de facto* equal citizens undermines the concept of the "Jewish state." Similarly, Berbers in the Maghreb and Copts in Egypt cannot stand on an equal footing as long as the respective states define themselves as predominantly Arab and Muslim.

But the demands for equality of ethnic groups that live across national borders—such as the Kurds, Berbers, Druze, Alawi, and Palestinians—also undermine the logic of the "nation-state" itself, since national distinctiveness laid the foundations of the modern "nation-state" in the Middle East and North Africa, as everywhere else. In a similar vein, the growing importance of religious ideology throughout the southern Mediterranean challenges the state from within. Indeed, religion—whether Islam, Judaism, or Christianity—does not recognize territorial boundaries (Halliday 2000: 26, 45–48). Certainly, most *moderate* Islamist movements are widely operating within the boundaries of the state (Sela 1998: 350), but the phenomenon of *Al-Qaeda* demonstrates that Islamist fundamentalism does not necessarily respect national borders. In Arab states, however, national identities already coexist uneasily with the broader discourse of (secular) pan-Arab nationalism since independence, often nurturing domestic conflicts and regional competition (Luciani and Salamé 1987). Certainly, the political fragmentation of the "Arab world" and its economic decline generated the crisis of pan-Arabism from the late 1970s on. Combined with the 1979 regime change in Iran, this paved the way for the rise of Islamism as political ideology (Heikal 1993). As a reaction, some Arab political leaders sought to construct *territorial* identities that were based on the pre-Islamic era. But in spite of the "triumph of the state" (Sela 1998: 350), the contradictions within different political identities and loyalties in Arab states still persist.

Turkey, on the other hand, has also repeatedly witnessed severe internal crises, such as the emergence of a revolutionary leftist movement in the 1960s, which prompted a military coup—one among several. As for Israel, contradicting religious and secular interpretations of Israel's political identity, along with the problems of defining the state and the nation, are as old as the state itself.

Thus, increasing economic and political discontent, the strengthening of both secular and Islamist opposition movements, Islamist fundamentalism and terrorism, globalization, and the advent of the peace process reinforce preexisting social and political tensions, or create new sources of friction. With it, there is a mounting pressure on the legitimacy of the state. Furthermore, the post-9/11 "war on

terror," along with the "clash of civilizations" discourse, is prompting a redrawing of identities in the Mediterranean and Middle East, and beyond. In view of these challenges, the political survival of governments may well depend on the modification of the political discourse, for instance by absorbing religious themes, or by promoting an "authentic" political identity as a basis for state authority. Underlining *uniqueness and difference* thus becomes the name of the game. Yet, while restricting the space of maneuver of foreign policy, these attempts are hardly compatible with the promotion of values that a state allegedly shares with present enemies, former adversaries, or former colonial rulers. Against this background, then, fostering identity themes on a Euro-Mediterranean basis and developing a strategic outlook for the Euro-Mediterranean security region may be simply impossible.

### Preliminary Findings

The EMP, which builds on a long history of Euro-Mediterranean relations, initially met on a positive response of most southern partners. This went hand in hand with dramatically improved relations among southern Mediterranean states, which were also interested in upgrading their relations with the EU. However, over the years, the EMP partners repeatedly questioned some of the underlying principles of the Barcelona Process, as well as the EU's role in, and commitment to, the region. At the same time, the apparent convergence of security interests around the Mediterranean of the early 1990s did not persist for long. A decade later, the traditional fault-lines across the Euro-Mediterranean had reemerged, reinforced by the collapse of the peace process and the events of 9/11. Whereas the EU nevertheless sought to uphold its vision for the Mediterranean, most EMP partners did not develop a consistent Euro-Mediterranean strategy in the time span under discussion.

Our discussion showed that most states in the southern Mediterranean are deeply divided over religion, culture, ethnicity, and the desirable way of life. Most states have been witnessing a deepening fault-line between more conservative, or even reactionary, domestic forces, and supporters of a more liberal and Western-oriented make-up of the state. In the Arab Mediterranean, a number of developments have exacerbated the domestic divisions, such as altered socio-economic patterns, growing space to voice demands for political reforms, and rising religious ideology. At the international level, the beginning of the Arab-Israeli peace process partly eroded the thus far prevailing themes of state identity, thus challenging state authority from within.

More important, however, is that different domestic preferences potentially imply different types of Euro-Mediterranean relations, along with different concepts of regional order. Thus, Islamist forces may object enhanced relations with Europe and the "West," and are likely to be skeptical of the recipes for modernization prescribed by the latter. Moreover, the idea of a Euro-Mediterranean region, which includes Israel and originally Turkey, is likely to encounter important domestic opposition, particularly in light of deteriorating relations between Israel and the Palestinians.

In the case of Turkey and Israel, the question of regional order may also touch upon a number of domestic divides. As for Israel, we alluded to the significant domestic opposition to Shimon Peres's vision of the "New Middle East," even in the "good times" of the peace process. As for Turkey, the concept of a Euro-Mediterranean region may meet the suspicion of those who support Turkey's EU membership—and, at least theoretically, also of Islamist-oriented domestic forces. In the parliamentary political systems of Turkey and Israel, domestic politics have in fact evidenced a strong societal fragmentation and increasing polarization.

In the authoritarian systems of Arab Mediterranean states, the link between domestic fragmentation and altering patterns of Euro-Mediterranean relations is more difficult to trace. However, since the observed domestic fragmentation poses a threat to political authority, political leaders may be forced to promote identity themes based on cultural *distinctiveness* and *authenticity*. Similarly, in view of the challenges, most Arab governments will prefer not to affront the domestic opposition to the normalization of relations with Israel. In this context, the concessions that many Arab rulers have made to growing Islamist pressures are relevant. Indeed, Arab regimes cannot adopt religious motives in their discourses and simultaneously be indifferent toward the future of Jerusalem's *Al-Aqsa* mosque, Islam's third-holiest place. Similarly, it is difficult to stress the authenticity of Arab and/or Islamic culture, despise the "West," and concurrently embrace the United States or Europe without hesitation. Thus, internal fragmentation seems to exclude the search for common ground with Euro-Mediterranean neighbors, particularly in view of the historically conflictual relations between "the Arab world," Israel, Turkey, and Europe. In view of these constraints, Arab governments may find it extremely difficult to internalize the logic of the Barcelona Process, or develop a Euro-Mediterranean strategy of their own.

While the collapse of the peace process and the events of 9/11 may have prompted a closing of some domestic divides and reinforced Euro-Mediterranean divisions along the traditional fault-lines, the link between contested state identities and regional security on a Euro-Mediterranean basis in the time span before these events is intelligible. In the next three chapters, a close look at three different cases, namely Israel, Egypt, and Morocco, is offered, thus seeking to deepen and validate our preliminary findings.

## Part II

### Case Studies