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STATE-OF-THE-ART OVERVIEW OF EU-MIDDLE EAST STUDIES:

EVIDENCE OF ACADEMIC PRACTICES AND TEACHING METHODOLOGIES ACROSS EUMENIA JEAN MONNET NETWORK PARTNERS

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Introduction

The EU-Middle East Network in Action (EUMENIA²) is a Jean Monnet network, co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. EUMENIA was set up in September 2018 for a period of 3 years³ and it established a first point of contact between academic researchers from the Netherlands, Denmark, Greece, Turkey, Palestine, Jordan, Italy and Lebanon; an equal balance between European and non-EU partners. The scholars in this network bring complementary approaches to EU-ME studies ranging from political science, political geography, EU studies, postcolonial studies, history, economics, business, development studies and area studies. Increasingly, what used to be referred to as “Area Studies” has gradually come to terms with international studies in an increasingly interconnected world.

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The author of this report wishes to thank all the EUMENIA partners for providing summary texts of how the EU/the ME is taught in their respective countries. Some of these texts are replicated in part or in whole in this report. Special thanks to Somdeep Sen who helped collating all this data as well as providing the summary for Denmark.

² <http://eumenia.eu>

³ This period was extended to 4 years due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Cognizant of fragmenting labels in constructions of “the Middle East” (as North Africa, the Maghreb, the Mashrek, the Near East, the “Orient”) and of “Europe” (as the “European Union”, Eastern Europe, Central Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, Western Europe, Continental Europe, Scandinavian Europe, Northern Europe, Southern Europe), the members of this network supersede such logics by immersing themselves as subjects of the study at hand, making themselves simultaneously “students” and “subjects”. Thus, the Middle East and Europe cease to be somewhere “out there” for observing the Others, to become spaces where we observe ourselves, in particular our role and responsibilities as educators in our respective university classrooms. Zooming in on “the classroom” where we teach “Europe” and/or “The Middle East” opens up a wide range of possibilities for superseding visions of so-called traditional Orientalists, to abandon the sets of magnifying glasses through which The Middle East and/or Europe are studied as fascinating objects of desire in their own right(s). In short, what the members of this network set out to do is to embark on a far more introspective study.

How do we negotiate this swamp, that is, the opportunity and challenge of reflexivity in teaching practices? We first need to reflexively understand how we teach Europe in Middle Eastern universities and how we teach the ME in European university classrooms. When teaching about European and Middle Eastern matters, in which politics, history, the economy, as well as social and cultural relations are closely bound up, we cannot be objective and comprehensive in our teaching methods and approaches if we do not tackle these subjects from an open, interdisciplinary perspective. The EUMENIA network has taken this challenge to task. It has established a teaching exchange programme - which promotes access to diverse classroom settings and structures – for its core members. Teaching visits will be a key activity of the Network and will focus on relevant areas of EU-Middle East relations, according to the partners involved, their expertise and how they fit best to the needs of each institution. The aim is to promote the exchange of best and innovative teaching practices among the network partners and to also bring European academics into Middle Eastern universities’ classes as well as Middle Eastern academics into European universities’ classes. The broader objective is to understand how knowledge about the EU and the Middle East is constructed in our respective universities.



Thus, during the life of our project, EUMENIA network members based in European universities are experiencing teaching environments across our ME partner universities and vice versa, our ME network members are teaching in our European classrooms. It should be expected that the centrality of the ME in Europe and of Europe in the ME would translate into a thorough and nuanced understanding of each region on either side. There is however insufficient knowledge of each region's languages together with often simplistic perceptions of their respective political, historical, economic, social and cultural processes. In light of these challenges, what EUMENIA members seek in the other side's "classroom" is a dialogic engagement with students where the latter are free to query and confront the knowledge production and sources of the "visiting lecturer".

The EU has, for a long time, been aiming to increase its international presence and this engagement often brings to the foreground issues of heterogeneity and cohesion that are extremely relevant to our understanding of the EU's role in the world but also more specifically in its neighborhood. Relations with the Middle East require continuous research, improved teaching and exchanges to enhance their understanding by students, academics and practitioners alike but also the wider public. Our network enhances knowledge on various aspects of EU-Middle East relations; it analyses respective developments and spreads relevant information in the framework of teaching activities, collection of data and information, dissemination of knowledge through workshops, publications but also a number of online resources (website, webinars and events with EU and national officials); and finally, explicitly integrates younger scholars into a research network comprising established academics working on EU-Middle East relations.

In order to focus our dialogue and form a basis to start with, the Danish team of EUMENIA approached all our partners with a set of questions about how the ME is being taught in European universities and how Europe is taught on ME campuses. Each partner institution was to provide a one pager detailing the following:

- An overview of the evolution over time of ME/EU studies and the driving forces behind them and
- A brief description of research institutions and under/post-graduate programs / regular courses in EU/ME studies.



The author of this report is particularly thankful to all our EUMENIA partners as well as other colleagues who were drawn into this dialogue by way of a parallel edited volume that has been put together and entitled “[Knowledge Production in Higher Education: Between Europe and the Middle East](#).” This edited volume (publication date: January 2023) will draw in foci other case countries including the evolution of German, French and Maltese scholarship and teaching on the Middle East as well as Europe’s imaginaries at Egyptian universities. It will also zoom in on teaching challenges in current times marked as “the period of enlightened students” who are convinced that they have overcome orientalism. Moreover, this volume will turn our gaze towards the role of think tanks in knowledge production in and on the ME and Europe as well as a reflexive piece on doing research in the ME and how this impacts upon our pedagogical approaches in the classroom. The front cover of this edited volume is [a painting](#) by Syrian artist Mazen al Feel. In describing his painting Mazen stipulates: “The power of one painting is to push the boundaries of what is perceived as the norm, the particular perspectives that create ‘us’ and the ‘other’.” (Mazen Al Feel, Syrian artist, 24 June 2021).

2. Overview of the evolution of ME/EU studies

The Netherlands: In his famous piece entitled “The ‘Ottoman-German Jihad’: Lessons for the Contemporary ‘Area Studies’ Controversy”, Dietrich Jung (2014) provides some though provoking reflections on how we, as educators, can teach and research a particular region. Drawing upon a historical dispute between Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje and Carl-Heinrich Becker, who, after the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet V declared jihad against the Entente powers in 1914, disputed the role allegedly played by German Orientalists in this affair, Jung sheds light on the entanglements between Europe and the Middle East:

Hurgronje’s religious policy strategy could not prevent the separation of the colony from the motherland, and since the Netherlands finally accepted Indonesia’s independence in 1949, the modernisation of Indonesian society has not been accompanied by the retreat of religious forces. The colonial administration implemented a top-down education framed by political subordination and military occupation. Apparently, this way of modern state-building could not convince the population of



the East Indies to become Dutch citizens ... On the contrary, the new institutions of secular education became a breeding ground for Indonesian nationalists who enhanced the struggle for independence with new organisational means (p. 262).

This foregrounding helps us nuance Dutch colonial entanglements with the Middle East/Islamic world by way of its colonial presence in Indonesia and its impact on the establishment of “oriental studies” in the Netherlands. In fact, the nature of teaching the Middle East across the Netherlands necessitates a contextualisation and historical analysis of Dutch colonial and disciplinary orientalist entanglements. Christiaan Hurgronje played a (controversial) role in the establishment of the Dutch brand of “Oriental Studies” in Leiden which occurred in conjunction with colonial endeavors. Early interest in Islam were triggered via efforts to discern whether or not Indonesians travelling to Mecca came back radicalized. Therefore, such preconceptions of the Islamic world established many of the securitized frames through which the Middle East is viewed today. There are today, however, many scholars (like Paul Aarts) from the critical brand of Middle East studies who criticize Hurgronje and his legacy.

Denmark: Similarly, Danish engagement with the Arab Middle East began over 1000 years ago. Encounters happened for example during Viking expeditions in “the Islamic lands in Eastern Europe and the East, and with the Islamic realms” of the Iberian Peninsula (Kromann and Rosendahl, 1996: 9). Following the Viking Age, Danish contacts with the Arab World were shaped by crusades (Jensen 2007). Participation in the crusades meant that Danes “gradually began to adopt the conventional contemporary antagonism which had by then been customary in other European countries for several hundred years” (Jensen 1996: 19). That said, the crusades also ensured that Denmark had “easier access to the cultural and scientific advantages of the Arab world” (Jensen 1996: 19). By the 18th century Denmark had “very real economic contacts” with the Middle East and Asia. And, while Denmark was not a superpower, it was nonetheless “a power to be reckoned with” that had territories that included parts of Africa, South Asia, the Americas, Germany as well as Norway and Iceland. This in turn resulted in Denmark’s own “brand” of orientalism reflected in artistic, literary and architectural representations of the exotic, yet barbaric “orient” (Zerlang 1997: 82). Danish academic engagement with the Middle East has



its roots in the work of Harald Ingholdt who led a Carlsberg Foundation-funded archaeological dig in Hama between 1931 and 1938 (Ingholdt 1942: 469). During this period Ingholdt was hired at Aarhus University, where he taught Hebrew (ICSRU 2019). Other prominent Danish archaeological expeditions include Peter Vilhelm Glob and T. Geogrey Bibby's 1953 expedition to Qatar, where the latter discovered the Dilmun. In 1959 Jette Bang and Klaus Ferdinand "visited the Bedouin of Qatar" (ICSRU 2019). Such expeditions consequently spurred a significant level of academic interest in the Middle East and led to the establishment of the Institute of Semitic Philology at Aarhus University in 1963 (ICSRU 2019).

Danish academic programs on the Middle East, while an outgrowth of these above-mentioned engagements with the Middle East (especially, at the University of Copenhagen and Aarhus University) are nonetheless largely shaped by contemporary political concerns regarding security and stability, human rights, gender, terrorism and the so-called European refugee crisis. To be sure, the identity of the institutions that offer coursework on the Middle East affects the way in which the region is presented to students. That is to say, the identity of the University of Copenhagen as a traditional, disciplinarily driven university compared to that of Roskilde University that positions itself as a critical, problem-oriented academic institution, plays a significant role in the way the Middle East is characterized in the university classroom. Nonetheless, the approaches to teaching the Middle East at Danish universities can be divided under two broad categories: Invisibility and Hypervisibility (See section 3.0 for more on this). These teaching practices reveal where Denmark's global economic interests lie: "From a continental perspective, roughly three-quarters of Danish exports by value were delivered to fellow European countries. Another 12.6% were sold to Asian importers with 6.2% going to North America. Smaller percentages of Danish exports were delivered to buyers in Oceania (1.6%) led by Australia and Marshall Islands, Latin America (1.3%) excluding Mexico but including the Caribbean, then Africa (1.2%)".⁴

In *Italy*, the Italian multidisciplinary Society for Middle Eastern Studies (SeSaMO) was created in Florence in 1995 and conceptualizes the Middle East in a very broad sense to include not only the Levant but also North Africa and to the East, Iran, Muslim central Asia and to the south the Muslim states of the Horn of Africa. The teaching of

⁴ Source: <https://www.worldstopexports.com/denmarks-top-10-exports/> (1 June, 2019).



the Middle East in Italy has a particular focus on literature, language, philology and cultural studies. While studies on the Middle East began during colonial times and developed along a typically orientalist trope, throughout the years they assumed more ‘contemporary’ connotations. In contrast to other European countries (such as the UK), Italian universities do not have the classic division of Area Studies departments but are instead organized in terms of ‘sections’, such as political science, linguistics, history, and so on. This aspect seems to encourage disciplinary silos and discourage interdisciplinary approaches, in contrast to European trends.

Greece: In contrast to the Dutch, Danish and Italian cases, there is marginal interest in the Middle East as a study area in Greece and this interest is even weaker when English language programs are concerned. Where interest exists, it is mainly driven and inspired by Greece’s economic scenario, in particular discussions regarding energy reserves and pipelines (in turn stimulated by the findings in the Eastern Mediterranean.⁵ Another observation pertaining to the teaching of the ME in Greece is that programs prefer to focus on the Mediterranean region rather than the Middle East as a point of reference. This trend largely reflects Greece’s own self-image and positionality. Although the Mediterranean is a composite region without any internal cohesion, it incorporates all areas of Greek foreign policy: the EU, the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean. In this regard, it is not surprising to discover that several Mediterranean courses also focus on Southeastern Europe. The influence of Greek foreign policy considerations on the design of these programs is manifested in the recent establishment of a program on Energy (see section 3.0 below). All available programs are interdisciplinary, bringing together varied fields of study including International Relations (IR), economics, political science, law and cultural studies. In terms of IR theory, programs mainly adopt rationalist approaches that seek to explicate geopolitical considerations in the region and great power interests. The Greek IR community overwhelmingly yields towards Realism owing to the perceived and uncontested nature of the “Turkish threat” (privileging the preeminence of objective accounts of threats/security). To the best knowledge of the EUMENIA network’s partners, we do not observe much critical IR approaches to the Middle East in Greek taught courses.

⁵ See here for more on this: <https://theconversation.com/five-countries-in-the-eastern-mediterranean-are-shaking-up-europes-energy-map-119619>.



Turkey: Located at the intersection of Europe and the Middle East, “insulator” Turkey has certain capabilities to influence developments in those regions, if not to integrate them (Diez 2013, Barrinha 2014). Particularly following the end of the Cold War and precipitating various chain reactions effecting the country, it became a necessity for Turkey to increase diversification of courses on regional studies in IR departments. This process prompted not only an increase in the number of IR departments, but also, a diversification of courses on regional studies in those departments. Moreover, those priorities and necessities of the political powers at that time have shaped the institutionalization and set the agenda of the IR discipline in Turkey (Keyman and Ülkü 2007: 99, Özcan and Güvenç 2019: 51-52).

European Union studies have gradually developed as an independent sub-field of Social Sciences such as Political Science, Economics, International Relations, Sociology etc. since the end of 1990s: The intensification of the relations between the EU and Turkey was reflected in the development of EU-related courses and programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels in higher education institutions.

In *Palestine*, Europe is largely taught in the context of its colonial past and how this past has contributed to the creation of the question of Palestine. Therefore, a thorough understanding of Europe and its history is indispensable to a nuanced understanding of Palestine itself. This case represents some hard questions about addressing controversial issues in the classroom. In terms of pedagogy and lecturers’ responsibility in teaching Europe’s violent past in the ME region, one needs to keep in mind that students need to develop the skills and tools to help them make sense of a complex and often confusing world. Such courses are therefore crucial in offering Palestinian students opportunities to identify the core issues at hand, to separate facts from opinions, to recognize manipulative arguments and assumptions, and to understand that *the issue* should be controversial, not the people tackling it. A second point of observation from the way in which Europe is taught at Palestinian universities is that as educators we need to be cautious and work on establishing guidelines dealing with our own potential bias, point(s) of view, and the need for reflexive and critical thinking and teaching in the classroom. All of us, even teachers, have biases. Identifying and working to mitigate biases is aided through the presentation of a variety of materials, points of view, and “what about” questions. It is such teaching practices that can facilitate students’ deep learning on controversial topics in particular. The objective of teaching Europe in controversial settings is to offer a



learning resource that does not inherently prejudice the students' thinking. Our role as educators should therefore be to encourage students to avoid simple answers to complex questions. We can do this by challenging any "it was inevitable" thinking, translating statistics into people, distinguishing between reliable and questionable source material, and consciously creating a safe learning environment.

Jordan: Due to the nature of the Middle East's modern history, Europe is considered as an influencer upon the geopolitics of the ME region, limiting the study to one path of how the EU affects the ME, (rather than a two-way relationship that can be considered from many angles and towards many ends). Typically, in Jordan, the EU is taught cursorily as a channel to understanding the Middle East, and as a set of facts in order to compare it to ME political science, and to help explain how the ME system works. For example, when teaching the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community and its present manifestation in the form of the EU, it is taught within the framework of teaching Arab regional (and organizational) unity and development, as manifested with the Arab League. Considering the power balance between the EU and the ME, the former is considered from a comparative stand point. Students are taught to consider how changes in European political power structures impact upon EU-ME relations, for instance on issues pertaining to the Palestinian issue as well as political transformation (and the possibility for democratization) in the ME region. Thus, the study of Europe in Jordan is limited to how Europe influences Jordan. The teaching of Europe considers Jordan's economic benefits from trading with Europe, how Europe could be convinced to assume a role as an effective mediator in the Palestinian question (or other regional issues) as well as on Europe's role in terrorism and security matters in order to strengthen Jordan-EU relations in this regard.

Lebanon: Interestingly there is very scant to no focus on Europe in International Relations (IR) curricula at Lebanese universities. This non-existence/invisibility of Europe in IR curricula and how this "connects" with the way Lebanon sees its place in international politics is worth a thorough investigation in its own right.

In sum, in exploring contemporary university traditions in the teaching of the Middle East (in some cases perceived as the "Orient") in Denmark, the Netherlands, Greece and Italy and of teaching Europe in Jordan, Palestine, Turkey and Lebanon what we discover is that curricula in European universities reflect outstanding economic and



political interests in the ME, while on the part of the curricula in ME universities there is a strong historical embeddedness in the way that Europe is taught.

3. Main programs and lines of teaching in ME/EU studies

The Netherlands:

The Middle East looms large in security studies all over European Universities, and the Netherlands are no exception in this trend.

At the University of Amsterdam, there are two undergraduate courses in English, and namely: “Political Economy of the Middle East”, which provides an overview of the most important developmental issues facing the region, and “International Relations of the Middle East”, which introduces students to basic concepts and policies of IR and the Middle East, with a particular focus on Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Saudi and Iran. There is also a postgraduate module on EU-Middle East Relations which provides students with insights into different aspects related to this relationship. Furthermore, an Open Course is also available, called “The Middle East: History, Politics and Economy”, which provides a broad overview of the most important issues facing the region.

At the University of Maastricht there are two courses facing the issue of EU-Middle East Relations: “External Relations of the EU”, which focuses on the internal and external challenges of the EU enlargement, and “The EU as an International Player”, which examines the EU’s policies and influence in its neighbourhood. Finally, the University of Leiden offers a BA in Middle Eastern Studies, which, nonetheless, is only taught in Dutch.

Denmark:

As mentioned earlier in this report, the teaching of the Middle East at Danish universities can be broadly categorized as invisible / hypervisible:

Invisibility: This is not to argue that the Middle East should be the focus in all coursework. However, when it comes to courses on “global concerns” a Global South



perspective in general and the Middle East in particular, is absent from the curriculum. For instance, the Master's program in Development and International Relations at Aalborg University⁶ requires students to take courses on China and Latin America. Yet, despite being concerned with themes that would otherwise be considered relevant to/for the Middle East, the region is largely ignored in the coursework. The (Danish-language) course "Organizational Philosophy"⁷ and the (English-language) course "Marketing in Emerging Markets"⁸ at the Copenhagen Business School claim to take a global perspective. Yet, the former remains largely Eurocentric – with only one course reading on Israel – while the latter is solely focused on China and India. Similarly, bachelors and masters-level curricula at the Department of Political Science at the University of Copenhagen where, ostensibly, globally oriented courses such as "Culture and Politics - Exploring the Political and Philosophical Base of Culture," "Diplomacy in Transformation" as well as "International Relations" are largely concerned with Denmark, Europe and North America. A notable exception are the curricular practices at Roskilde University wherein globally-oriented courses such as "The EU as a Global Actor," "Revolutions and Contentious Politics" as well as "Urban Growth, Poverty and Development" include the Middle East as a relevant region for theoretical and conceptual discussions.

Hypervisibility: This does not mean that this approach to teaching the Middle East at Danish universities grants too much visibility to the region as an object of study. However, this approach does entail the characterization of the Middle East as a place of difference (*vis-à-vis* Europe/ "the West"/the "Global North"). This is implicit, for instance, in the way the imagery used to accompany the description of the "Global Gender Studies" MA program at Aalborg University features primarily women from the Global South. This tendency is far more explicit in the coursework for the MA degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies at Aarhus University. Alongside generic courses on the history and politics of the Middle East and North Africa, the program requires students to take courses on Jihadism, Scripture as well as Islam and Muslims in the West. Such courses mirror the overwhelming focus of public and political discourses on violence and religion. Moreover and interestingly, a course entitled "Islam and

⁶ <https://www.en.aau.dk/education/master/development-international-relations/>

⁷ <https://www.cbs.dk/en/courses/Organizational-Philosophy>

⁸ <https://kursuskatalog.cbs.dk/2019-2020/KAN-CCBLV1703U.aspx>



Muslims in the West” that, among other things, focuses on concerns regarding security and integration in the US and Europe, is offered to students as part of a degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies. One way of interpreting this teaching approach is to take it as a way of externalizing the West’s internal problems and of treating questions of integration and insecurity (as nothing to do with socioeconomic and political issues within Western countries), and of putting the onus on cultures and identities originating in the Islamic/Arabic-speaking world.

There are exceptions to such approaches: courses taught at Roskilde University (The “Middle East from a Global Perspective”) and at the University of Copenhagen (“The Contemporary Middle East in the Context of Shifting Global Politics”) veer away from perspectives of the Middle East as a place of difference. Instead, such courses treat the region as an extension of Global Politics that is both affected by and also contributes to understandings of global political changes. This conception of the Middle East as deeply embedded in the global is the explicit focus of the Centre for Contemporary Middle East Studies and the related MA program in Middle East Studies at the University of Southern Denmark. Accordingly, outlining its multidisciplinary approach to the Middle East, Dietrich Jung, the director of the centre, wrote: “We consider the Middle East to be an integral part of international and global relations. Therefore, we conduct Middle Eastern studies from a global studies perspective, rather than in the form of a distinct field of area studies” (Jung 2016: 41). This approach is equally evident in the teaching profile of the centre whereby students are both encouraged to think critically about traditional approaches to the study of the Middle East – for instance, through courses like “The History of Research on the Middle East” – and to garner a multidisciplinary perspective of the region that draws on “fields of culture, politics, political economy, research history, and religion” (Jung 2016: 39).

Italy:

In terms of trends in teaching on the Middle East in Italy we note a rather specialized approach in the teaching of the ME - but not necessarily a Euro-centric one. On the contrary, Italy has quite a large number of critical scholars, proving to be less Euro-centric than other countries in Europe. However, the teaching of the ME is very much focused on the study of Islam, looking through the prism of religion and literature. The teaching of the ME is also very much sector-based (literature, language, philology,



cultural studies, history, political science, language and literature), rather than interdisciplinary.

Greece:

An English language program entitled “MA in Mediterranean Studies” is offered in Greece and organized by the department of Political Science & International Relations, University of the Peloponnese.⁹

Another English language program, (though seemingly not of direct relevance but clearly initiated as a result of discoveries of natural gas reserves in the Mediterranean Sea around Egypt, Cyprus, Israel and Greece), is organized by the Department of International and European Studies of the University of Piraeus. Entitled “MA in Energy: Strategy, Law and Economics”¹⁰. There is also the University of Piraeus’s involvement in a regional Jean Monnet Centre of excellence with Ben Gurion University¹¹.

Furthermore, there is a postgraduate program organized by the Department of Mediterranean Studies at the University of Aegean, entitled “MA in Governance, Development and Security in the Mediterranean”.¹²

At the undergraduate level, there are a few isolated Greek language courses dedicated to the Middle East. At the University of the Peloponnese, there are two courses: “Regional Security in the Middle East” and “Asymmetric Threats in the Middle East and the Caucasus”. At the University of Piraeus, there is a course on “Diplomacy and the Economy of the Modern Middle East”. And at the Kapodistrian and National University of Athens there is a course on the “Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East: The US policy towards the region”. Moreover, the Greek language literature on the Middle East is not very vast, neither is it regularly updated: one book found in the suggested readings of all of the above-mentioned courses, is the Greek edition of Fred Halliday’s book on The Middle East in International Relations.

⁹ (Layout and short course description available here: https://pedis.uop.gr/?page_id=1949).

¹⁰ <https://www.des.unipi.gr/en/postgraduate/msc-energy>.

¹¹ Amongst others: <https://www.excelem.info/>.

¹² Although it is a Greek language program, its English website is available here: <http://gds.aegean.gr/academic-schedule/?lang=en>.



The University of Crete has been offering courses in Euro-Mediterranean studies: these courses cover a vast array of Middle East politics too.

Turkey:

Based on the analyses of the syllabi collected from some universities offering EU Studies, we have observed that EU courses at the undergraduate level generally focus on 4 main themes: The Development of the EU's Integration Process, EU Law, Turkey-EU Relations and EU and Democracy. These themes, however, are not dealt with through critical or comparative approaches: rather, they aim to introduce very basic and fundamental aspects.

The scope of EU studies is much broader at the leading universities in Turkey, such as the Middle East Technical University, Koç University, Boğaziçi University and Yaşar University. In addition to some generic courses on the EU at these universities, there are also fields of specializations on different aspects of the EU (also because the existence of graduate programs offers opportunities for greater contributions in this regard).

There is an increasing number of Jean Monnet Programme courses offered under the Jean Monnet Chair scheme or as Jean Monnet Modules. These courses address both the traditional and fundamental approaches to EU studies as well as many alternative perspectives regarding the EU, such as the EU and Migration studies, EU and Social Security, the EU and Transparency, the EU and the Environment etc.

On the other hand, when courses on the Middle East are analyzed, it can be observed that the EU aspect is almost non-existent. However, there are some courses within EU studies that deal with the EU's foreign policy towards the MENA countries. It is important to note in this respect that the reason for the lack of attention to the EU's role in the Middle East and its embodiment in Middle East-related courses can be firstly due to the relative importance of the role played by the United States in the region. Secondly, the geographical location of Turkey and the lingering question as to whether it belongs to the Middle East or Europe can be another reason why there is not sufficient attention paid to the role of the EU in the region.



The promotion of EU Studies at Turkish universities is not significant. The number of platforms which can foster dialogue between academics specialized on EU Studies is not many. The most significant academic platform in this respect is A-NEST (Academic Network for European Studies) which was initiated by the EU Delegation in Turkey in 2015. There are about 200 academics affiliated to this platform. They meet regularly every year since 2015 and discuss the past, present and future of EU Studies in Turkey¹³.

Palestine:

Amongst the offered courses in Palestine, we note the module HIST134 History of Palestine since the 18th Century (3 cr. Hrs). This course offers students a descriptive introduction to key historical events including background knowledge about Zahir El-Omar, Al-Jazzar, the Ottoman Rulers, Egyptian rules, the rise of Ottoman rules, movements, European colonialism, the Zionist movement, Arab Nationalism, the First World War, the British Mandate, the Palestinian Zionist conflict 1935-39, the national uprising, McDonald's white paper, the Second World War, the Palestinian problem in the United Nations, the Palestinian Nakbah (1948 war) and the Diaspora.

There is also the course HIST332 Medieval European History (3 cr. hrs.) The fall of the Roman Empire, and the Middle Ages in Europe, Sharliman, the feudal system, the Catholic church as central organization, the struggle between the Pope and the Emperor, religion, knighthood, the Crusade expedition, France and England in the 100-year war, the Byzantine Empire and its fall in 1453AD, the expulsion of Muslims from Spain, its unification, growth of cities and the rise of the bourgeoisie, the collapse of feudal system, and the Arts renaissance in Italy.

Moreover, a course HIST339 entitled Europe from Renaissance to Enlightenment (1453-1789) (3 cr. Hrs) is also on offer. This covers the study of the rise of the Nation-State in England, France and Spain, Reformation, Counter Reformation, the Thirty-Year war, European colonial expansion, the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, as well as a background to the revolution on the European continent.

¹³ <https://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/a-nest-professors>



Another course HIST4301 Modern and Contemporary History of Europe (3 cr. Hrs) focuses on the “European Renaissance” or the construction of European modernity, the Industrial revolution, the French Revolution, the Napoleonic wars, the Vienna Conference (1815), Italian unification, German unification, the First World War, the Bolshevik Revolution, the Paris Peace Conference (1919), the League of Nations, the growth of fascism and the Nazi movement, Stalinism, the Great Depression of 1929, the Spanish Civil War, the Second World War, the founding of the United Nations, the Cold War, and plans for European unity.

The course CULS331 Modern and Contemporary European Thought is concerned with the study and analysis of classical texts (complete or in partial selection) of European thought from the Renaissance to the present. The texts are meant to represent important intellectual currents and schools of thought (philosophical, social, and political) which contributed to the definition and structuring of European culture over the past few centuries.

Furthermore, the course JURI336 International Organizations offers students an introduction to international organizations, types, and legal capacity; Consequences of recognizing the international juridical personality of an organization; Introduction to the League of Nations, including objectives, principles, membership, and public bodies. Introduction to the United Nations, including phases of establishment, objectives, principles, and public bodies, as well as an Introduction to international regional organizations, including the League of Arab of Nations and European Union.

The course POLS337 International Institutions and Organizations reviews the creation of International Organizations and Institutions that were established after World War I, the emphasis being on the motives and purposes behind their foundation. Hence, this course presents the contributions and efforts of these organizations, especially the United Nations, in the achievement of International Stability and Security. It covers some of the Regional Organizations, such as the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Union, the European Union, and others.

Course POLS431 European Union explores the emergence and development of the European Union. It traces the most important historical events and agreements that



developed the cooperation between European States leading to what is known today as Europe.

Course POLS432 Comparative Politics (International Regions) introduces students to various Regional and International Organizations, such as South-East Asia, East Europe, and Africa. It reviews the main political, economic, and social transformations that occurred in these regions. It addresses these transformations in relevance to the effects of Globalization and the International Market on the development and integration of these Organizations. The course addresses the effects of these Regional and International Organizations on the Palestinian Question and the Arab World.

EDUC3341 Social Science Curriculum1: Teaching History and Civic Education in the School Curriculum 1 covers history topics that are related to some issues that the Arab world faced such as ancient civilization, colonialization, and Europe history Europe in Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution, and the First and the Second World Wars. The civic education topics such as the child's rights, the perseverance of the public interests, violence in schools, family and the reproduction health, the values of the civic society, human rights, and democracy and upbringing. Also, history and civic education teaching methods and strategies that are related to the above topics and grade (5-10) students.

There is also an MA Course entitled "European Union: History, Law and Institutions". Topics include: Introducing the European Union as a unique regional organization; The way it developed after World War II, and how it contributed to the resolution of conflicts between European states; The accession of new members; EU institutions and the decision making process at different levels; The international founding and organizing conventions of the EU, the new European law and its relation to the national laws of member states; The single market and currency; Contemporary developments in foreign and security policies; and the impact of creating the position in EU of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs on the foreign policy of EU members.

Jordan:

In Jordan, Political Science is taught in five public and two private universities. The only formal module dedicated to European Studies is taught at the University of



Jordan. Other than this course, there is no other formalised EU Studies teaching pertaining to specific EU matters at any creditable higher educational level. However, issues regarding Europe are taught in indirect ways and across a number of courses, touching on the subject in terms of colonialism, development, aid, foreign relations, and strategic alliances/coalitions (as selected issues that are considered particularly pertinent when studying Europe).

Public Universities teaching Political Science in Jordan include:

Jordan University

The Hashemite University

Yarmouk University

The Al Hussein Bin Talal University

Mutah University

Private Universities teaching Political Science in Jordan:

The Applied Science Private University

The Middle East University

How Europe is Taught at the Jordan University

Undergraduate Level

At a BA level, Europe is taught from a postcolonial perspective with a special focus on Britain's and France's role in the Levant, and the encounters of Jordanians and the rest of the regional populations in resisting colonial powers and gaining independence. These studies are not limited to Political Science departments, but extend to Jordan's General Requirement courses, such as National Culture and Military Studies, which all university students in Jordan are required to take.

The following is a list of modules or courses at the University of Jordan that have content pertaining generally to the European Union or the study of European countries.

- General Requirements Module and Military Studies Module:



Topics regarding the EU or European countries: Belfour Declaration; Sykes-Picot Agreement; Letters between Sharif Hussein and McMahon; Treaties; Conferences: Paris Conference 1919; San Remo Conference; Battle of Maysalun 1920.

Political Science Department, BA Courses and Modules

In Political Science departments these historical perspectives are expanded upon and students are taught about Jordan's relationship with various European countries and how these relations influence contemporary politics of the ME region, zooming in on European countries' stances in regards to critical events in Jordan such as the peace treaty with Israel and regional conflicts.

- European Studies Module

This course discusses the European Coal and Steel Community and its development from 1952 through the Rome Treaty, the Single European Market of 1973, and its enlargement process to include Greece, Spain, and Portugal (which joined in the 1980s), up until the Maastricht Treaty and the establishment of the European Union. The value of unity, its benefit to Europe, where agreements have been reached or have failed to be agreed upon (such as a European constitution) and the institutions that arose from the European Union and the way decisions are made at the EU level are critically scrutinized, in order to extract lessons to be learnt for Arab unity and to understand the failure of Arab regionalism.

- Foreign Policy BA and Diplomacy and Negotiations BA

Jordanian relations with various countries/regional organizations such as the European Union, and the role of the EU in mediation and intervention in conflicts, critical events such as the signing of the Jordanian peace treaty with Israel, international aid, how Jordan uses its diplomatic skills in its relations with the EU.

- Comparative Politics BA

Government formulations, lobbying, political parties in Europe, differences between presidential and parliamentary systems, elections and political systems in EU countries. Main countries analysed: Britain, France, and to a lesser degree, Germany.

Resources: Gabriel Almond, "Comparative Politics Today"; Patrick O'Neil "Cases in Comparative Politics".



- **Political Philosophy BA**

Based mainly on European literature studying the main political thoughts and ideologies, starting with Rousseau's "Social Contract", Montesquieu's "The Spirit of Laws", and moving to Hegel and Marx. Compares the work of these philosophers and their contribution to Arabic and Islamic philosophers such as Ibn Khaldoun Abdullah al-Jabri.

Postgraduate Level

European studies are not commonly taught at postgraduate level in Jordan. However, in the University of Jordan's International Relations Department, EU-ME relations are touched upon through individual research and MA theses. Courses include: International, Political, and Economic relations; Theories of International Relations; Conflict Resolution, Foreign Policy, and Diplomacy and the study of negotiation skills.

Students are encouraged to examine state-to-state relations for example, how many diplomatic representatives are present in Jordan, how regularly decision makers between countries meet, growth figures for the Jordanian economy as a result of trade exchanges, investments, military coalitions and support provided by external actors such as the US. When relationships between Jordan and specific EU countries are studied, the outcome of any analysis focuses on how the relationship with that country benefits Jordan (economically and politically).

Lebanon:

(The information we gathered mostly pertains to the AUB – American University of Beirut):

- 1) Seminar: EU Foreign Policy in the Mediterranean: Human Rights, Security, & Mobility. Course: Transition Processes in the MENA. Thematic Section: Political Transitions to Democracy. Location: Social Sciences Campus (USJ) (taught by a Danish lecturer, Peter Seeberg).
- 2) Title: EU foreign policy. Democratisation and HR the Middle East and North Africa. Course: Transition Processes in the MENA. Thematic Section: Political Transitions to Democracy. Location : Social Sciences Campus (USJ) (taught by Karolina Podstawa of the University of Maastricht).



Short questionnaire for EUMENIA partners on the study of the ME in European universities and of Europe in ME campuses

How is Europe/the EU taught in Palestinian universities?

Questionnaire for the EUMENIA project

1. Which is the prevalent pedagogical approach to Europe/the EU and the curricular practices available in Palestine?

(e.g. political science, postcolonial studies, languages, literature, regional studies, etc)

2. Which are the main academic fields that address Europe/the EU in Palestine?

(e.g. Literature, language, philology, cultural studies).

3. Which are the trends in teaching on the EU/Europe in Palestine? (e.g. multidisciplinary or specialized approach).

4. Would you argue that available curricular practices do challenge (stereotypical) constructions of Europe/the EU in Palestine or not?

5. Are teachings on the EU/Europe in Palestine mainly carried on in international programs?

6. Which are the main languages in which the EU/Europe is taught in Palestinian universities?

7. How connected are Palestinian academics in the field with the ones outside Palestine?



8. Do you think that the focus on the EU/Europe in Palestinian universities is just enough or should it be enhanced?

9. Which is the role played by Associations of Palestinian scholars of the EU/Europe (if any) in regard to the teaching of the EU/Europe in Palestine?

10. Please, use this space to leave your independent reflections.

For example are EU studies coming a long way in Palestine in terms of socialization of Palestinian scholars of the EU in the global epistemic community?