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„Culture in the European Union’s External Relations:
The Anna Lindh Foundation as Cultural Diplomacy at
Arm’s Length?”

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Anna Katharina Obenhuber, B.A.

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Ich erkläre hiermit an Eides Statt, dass ich die vorliegende Diplomarbeit selbständig angefertigt habe. Die aus fremden Quellen direkt oder indirekt übernommenen Gedanken sind als solche kenntlich gemacht.

Die Arbeit wurde bisher weder in gleicher noch in ähnlicher Form einer anderen Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegt und auch noch nicht veröffentlicht.

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1. Introduction and Research Interest

Since the founding of the European Union (EU), originally based on an economic framework of co-operation,¹ a variety of initiatives and institutions has aimed at pursuing and highlighting not only the common economic and political objectives of the member states but also a shared cultural perspective. Most of these efforts came from institutions independent from the EU such as the Council of Europe (CoE). The CoE was one of the first institutions that asked for “a more comprehensive and geographically extended integration” and has advocated for cultural programs and actions among its members ever since.² (Sassatelli 2009: 47) Eventually, the CoE’s efforts of emphasizing Europe’s culture, built upon common values and a common cultural tradition, established a discourse on European identity and citizenship that was also picked up by the EU. Especially in the light of the continuous enlargement of the EU and questions regarding its legitimacy, the idea of a European identity gained importance; or as the Hungarian political scientist András Bozóki remarks: “leaders of Europe had the tendency to pay attention to culture only when a crisis or a major new stage of closer integration called for solutions aiming to (re)connect the people to the European project.” (Bozóki: 1) In response to the diagnosed *Eurosclerosis* in the 70s and 80s the European Community institutions published a multiplicity of official declarations and resolutions that first formulated cultural policy directions.³ But it was not until the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 that culture was introduced as an official policy field of the EU. Its Article 128 then defined the first broader legal framework for cultural measures in a further step taken by EU institutions predominantly

¹The EU originates in the signing of the Treaty on the *European Coal and Steel Community* (ECSC) in 1951. In 1957, the economic cooperation among the six founding members (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Germany) was expanded with the Treaty of Rome that established the *European Economic Community* (EEC). For more information see: http://europa.eu/about-eu/eu-history/1945-1959/index_en.htm (03.11.2011)

²The Council of Europe must not be confounded with other European Union institutions such as the European Council and the Council of the European Union. The Council of Europe, already founded in 1949 as an international organization by ten European countries has now come to include 47 member states across the European continent and has mainly excelled at its promotion on issues such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law. For more information see: <http://www.coe.int/aboutCoe/index.asp?page=quisommesnous&l=en> (05.09.2011) With regard to its cultural expertise on a European level the *European Cultural Convention*, drafted in 1954, is the earliest and most relevant document of reference. See: <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=018&CL=ENG> (05.09.2011)

³This is for example the *Declaration on European Identity* agreed on at the Copenhagen summit of the heads of state and governments of the EU member countries in 1973; the *Solemn Declaration on the European Union* in 1983 or the Adonnino Report for *A People’s Europe* in 1985. For a detailed outline of the cultural initiatives in that period see Sassatelli, M. (2009). *Becoming Europeans. Cultural Identity and Cultural Policies*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

by the European Commission. (Sarikakis 2007: 15) According to Article 128⁴ it is the Community's task to:

- “encourage cultural cooperation between member states and facilitating non-commercial cultural exchanges
- improve the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples
- conserve and safeguard cultural heritage of European significance
- promote artistic and literary creation
- foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organizations in the sphere of culture, in particular the Council of Europe.”

The European Commission was then authorized to run its own cultural grant schemes, but its competence until now is bounded by the principle of subsidiarity, meaning that the member states remain by far the principal actors in establishing specific legal frameworks for cultural policy in the EU. And even though the article already called for cooperation with third countries, the initiatives and programs were mostly directed to cultural cooperation among the EU member states and therefore concentrated on a “European” audience.

This geographical limitation has changed considerably during the last decade. Especially in the light of a globalized cultural market, migration and its accompanying xenophobic tendencies, cultural policy received a re-evaluation. The new global circumstances were broadly discussed in the *Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression* published by UNESCO in 2005.⁵ The document has since then served as a guideline for the EU when it comes to facing the present societal and political transformations and to taking up a global perspective on culture.⁶ In view of the reports and the public discourse on the globalization of culture also the EU brought the importance of culture in its external relation to the fore. As a result, its cultural policy was not only adapted geographically but also conceptually.

⁴Article 167 of the Lisbon Treaty (ex Article 151 of the Treaty of Amsterdam and ex Article 128 of the Treaty of Maastricht) now provides the legal basis for cultural policy in the EU. See: Consolidated versions of the Treaty on EU and the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. *Official Journal of the European Union C115 Information and Notices*, 51, p. 123.

⁵See: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001429/142919e.pdf> (22.07.2010)

⁶See: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/doc1741_en.htm (22.07.2010)

To begin with, it was felt that cultural policy no longer should take place within the geographic borders of the EU but should involve increased awareness of cultural relations with non-European countries. This broader geographical focus was put forward in two official documents of the EU:

The *European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World* was published by the European Commission in May 2007. It was one of the first documents that directly proposed culture as a tool for EU's external relations. Beyond that the publication introduced a new form of cultural cooperation among the EU and its member states. The European Commission initiated the *Open Method of Coordination* (OMC) also for its cultural policies with "the goal to have an intergovernmental framework for dialogue, cooperation and feedback with the civil society actors across Europe and to involve them in a structural manner in the policy thinking, decisions and actions." (Varbanova 2008: 1) Hence, the Commission acknowledged the value of participation and broad engagement of the civil society in formulating and evaluating new policy directions.

Seven months later, in November 2008, the Council of the European Union published a conclusion that again stresses the role of culture in the EU's external relations. The Council's *Conclusions on the Promotion of Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue in the External Relations of the Union and its Member States* strongly recommends: "drawing up a European strategy for incorporating culture consistently and systematically in the external relations of the Union and contributing to the complementarity of the Union's activities with those of its Member States."⁷

The documents triggered a wide-ranging debate on the relevance of culture in the EU's external relations which is also described by a European Commission officer:

So when you are looking at European culture in external relations we are talking about something that is very, very new. I mean, five years ago this debate at least at a regional level, at any ENP [European Neighborhood Policy] level was nowhere or very little. It had been one of the things that would need to be done. It was only after the adoption of the communication *EU Culture in*

⁷Council of the European Union: *Council Conclusions on the promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in the external relations of the Union and its member states*. 2905th Education, Youth and Culture Council meeting, Brussels (2008, November 20) p.4. See: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/doc/ICD_external_relations_en.doc.pdf (27.07.2010)

a Globalizing world that things really kicked off in terms of the developing of a competence of the Union in this area. And the conclusions of the Council on that communication provided a slight opening for activity on culture in the context of external relations. (Interview #7)

The debates on how to approach this new cultural policy field of the EU were not only led on an official EU level but also included a diversity of other stakeholders from the cultural sector. Following the OMC model representatives of national cultural ministries and civil society institutions discussed the new international focus of European cultural policy. Alongside these debates concepts at the intersection of culture and diplomacy were introduced; *cultural diplomacy*, *intercultural dialogue* and *soft power* became frequently cited terms around the new cultural perspectives in the EU's external relations.

Additionally, academic studies on the national positions of a potential European wide foreign cultural policy illustrated the increased awareness but also the necessity of EU supported action in engaging with foreign publics.⁸ The cultural policy researchers Dodd et al. have broken down the necessity of a wider European cultural engagement to three main aspects: *visibility*, *security*, and *economic development*. (Dodd et al. 2006: 17ff.)

In the first place, foreign publics are more interested in an overall European perspective, as also the European politician Gijs de Vries points out. It is not so much a British, Lithuanian or Spanish experience they want to be presented, it is a general "curiosity" of Europe that can only be authentically satisfied by common external cultural actions. (de Vries 2008: 17) Moreover, smaller countries often lack the financial and structural resources for a comprehensive cultural diplomacy affordable to the likes of France and the UK, who can also draw on the status of their languages as *lingua francas*. Therefore, smaller countries are very eager for participation in common European action as it is exactly in these activities they find their voice heard. Furthermore overall financial cutbacks in national cultural policies would make a more enhanced coordination within the cultural framework of the European Union desirable. Sharing costs and the added value of a collective European visibility are therefore one of the strongest arguments for a coordinated European cultural diplomacy. A second point revolves around increased *security concerns*

⁸Dodd et al. (2006): *A Cultural Component as an integral part of the EU's foreign policy*. Fisher, R. (2007). *A cultural dimension to the EU's external policies from policy statements to Practice and Potential*. Both Amsterdam: Boekmanstudies; Van Wieringh, K. & Schürmann, E. (2004). Does Europe need a foreign cultural policy? In *Kulturpolitische Mitteilungen*, 3. <http://www.kupoge.de/publikationen/sonstiges/beiheft3.pdf> (23.08.2011)

linked to the global transformations and interdependencies that were shortly touched upon before. The support of an open dialogue between European countries and non-European publics as part of a concerted European cultural foreign policy is assigned the potential of reducing racial, religious and any other forms of xenophobia, “which might otherwise provoke conflict.” (Dodd et al. 2005: 17) Lastly, Europe’s vast cultural heritage and its growing cultural industries are becoming increasingly important for the global European cultural market. Coordinating and systematically strengthening this economic development is seen as beneficial by most of the member states. (Fisher 2007: 9)

However, in what way such a shared European cultural diplomacy could be shaped has not been agreed on. Ideas such as a *European House for Culture* or a *European Union Cultural Institute* in third countries have been expressed but have not been realized yet. (Interview #4; Schäfer 2006: 70) So far, there are existing programs that build on these ideas of a European diplomacy but are still very much based on national approaches. The network of *European Union National Institutes for Culture* (EUNIC) established in 2006 as a common initiative of EU member states can be cited as an example here. The individual European national cultural institutes form regional clusters both in Europe and in third states and work on a concerted European cultural perspective.⁹ Shared buildings of national cultural institutes such as the joint premises of the Goethe Institute and the French Cultural institute in Ramallah are another reality.¹⁰ However, as a representative of a national cultural institute also involved with EUNIC indicates: “It may still take another 50 years until something like a real European House of Culture does exist. Until then there might be still a floor for German cultural programmers, one for the Portuguese and so on.” (Interview #21) But what, until then, is Europe’s response to a shared cultural foreign policy and what is the effort of the EU institutions and its member states to interact with non-European publics? My research interest therefore ties in with the debates outlined above and directs to the question of how does or should the EU as a political entity approach the task of a common cultural diplomacy; coordinate the diverse players on an international level and exchange with foreign audiences? And also, how can we analyze and characterize the underlying structures and principles of this new effort academically?

⁹For more information see: <http://www.eunic-online.eu/> (12.07.2011)

¹⁰See: Franco-German Cultural Center Ramallah: <http://www.goethe.de/ins/ps/ram/deindex.htm> (11.06.2011)

1.1. Research Questions and Objectives

One commonly held opinion of experts engaged in the discussion of culture in the EU's external relations is that the EU's role should be primarily that of a facilitator or initiator, not an organizer of cultural action." (Fisher 2007: 46) The EU should "create mechanisms for civil society cooperation, dialogue, and exchange (people-to-people contacts)" that involve a long term perspective and bring about a sustainable partnership between countries and their peoples. (de Vries 2008: 34)¹¹

Following this academic tenor that the EU should take over the role of a supplier rather than an executor of cultural exchange, I assume that cultural diplomacy as part of the EU's external relations policies can in certain geographical contexts already be characterized as a cultural policy model that embraces such an arm's length approach. European cultural diplomacy is initiated within a regional setting and in a second step transferred to external cultural institutions. This concept of an arm's length structure of cultural policy is strongly linked to the structure of the *British Council* as the UK's cultural representation abroad. Also Germany's foreign cultural policy institution, the *Goethe Institute*, points in this direction.¹² They are both to a large degree funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but the actual cultural work is delegated to an independent external institution. The mediator between the funding body and the operational body is mostly a board or an assembly that is composed of experts and governmental representatives that may have a word in defining the strategies and guidelines of the autonomous institution but the actual work lies outside the government's direct sphere of influence. (Predelli & Baklien 2003: 304) Hence, in these two examples governments serve as facilitator rather than as executors of cultural engagement abroad.

I argue that on a European level this arm's length approach of facilitating mechanisms of cultural exchange is being pursued by the EU through the initiation and support of regional foundations such as the *Asia-Europe Foundation*, the *Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures* and the prospective *European Union-Latin*

¹¹See also Conference Reader CultureWatchEurope Conference 2010 Culture and the Policies of Change: A3 *Culture in International Relations*.

¹²See statutes of the Goethe-Institute: <http://www.goethe.de/mmo/priv/1223959-STANDARD.pdf>, 3ff. and the British Council http://www.britishcouncil.org/new/about-us/how-we-are-run/folder_how-we-are-run/who-manages-us/ (12.05.2011)

American Caribbean Foundation.¹³ These Foundations, financially and administratively supported by bodies of the EU and the respective member countries, operate as external institutions with the aim to establishing cultural exchange networks and financing joint cultural projects across the regions. I thus argue that the EU institutions involved in these foundations act as a facilitators and not as executors of cultural action.

By analyzing one of these institutions – the *Anna Lindh Foundation* (ALF) – endorsing a specific foreign cultural policy model I characterize as cultural diplomacy at arm's length¹⁴ I want to take a closer look at the institutional set-up of these foundations and the structural dynamics among the actors involved. The arm's length principle “may be measured against the actual degree of tension between institutional autonomy and state dependence” (Predelli & Baklien 2003: 315), which is also of highest interest for this thesis.

Being aware that the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), already established in 1997 in Singapore, was the first of these regional cultural foundations, I nonetheless chose the ALF, which is based in Alexandria (Egypt), as the case study for scrutinizing this specific foreign cultural policy model. This is especially due to the fact that ASEF in opposition to the ALF is not working within the unique structure of a network of networks – which I will discuss later on in detail – but also due to the consultative role the ALF played for the European Union-Latin American Caribbean Foundation (EU-LAC).¹⁵

¹³The establishment of the *European Union- Latin American Caribbean* (EU-LAC) Foundation was agreed on at the last *EU-LAC Summit* in Madrid on May 18th, 2010.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/er/114535.pdf (31.08.2011)

¹⁴This also taken in consideration that a survey of arm's length institutions is put forward in research papers on EU foreign cultural policies. See: Varbanova et al. 2006: 1; Dodd et al. 2006: 18.

¹⁵As one interviewee (Interview #13) working at the ALF pointed out there have already been several talks and consultations with representatives of the EU-LAC summit on the functioning of the ALF that might be relevant for the final set-up of the future EU-LAC foundation.

Following these considerations following main research questions can be raised:

- What was the rationale behind the inception of the ALF and out of which international context did the foundation evolve?
- What are the implications of the delegating of cultural agendas to an external foundation?
- What is the trade-off both for the EU and for the foundation when the EU institutions act at arm's length – as a supplier of cultural diplomacy and intercultural dialogue and not as its executive entity?
- What position do the member states involved with the ALF take in consideration of a collective European cultural diplomacy?

My research interest derives from a twofold interest on a personal, academic level but also from current discussions on the installment of the EU External Action Service and its new diplomatic arrangements.

The first motivation arises from my academic background in political science and my experiences in cultural policy research. While discussing cultural policy and cultural diplomacy at university and at different workshops, I was often confronted with chronological listings of cultural initiatives in Europe or descriptions of best-practice examples of cultural diplomacy that sometimes lacked a theoretical perspective. If they were theoretically grounded, they mostly related to constructivist approaches to dualisms such as culture/identity but did not necessarily reveal an institutional perspective. Even though I highly acknowledge the value of constructivist approaches, I was especially interested in the institutional set-up of these cultural policy initiatives, which should be at the center of interest for this study.

Moreover an institutional investigation should also shed light on the diversity of collectives in European cultural policies and the “EU’s preoccupation with networks” (Sassatelli: 2009: 68) that might have contributed to the difficulty to make cultural initiatives of the

European Union theoretically and structurally tangible. Yet, I think by analyzing the ALF and its overall structure on the basis of an institutionalist theory of International Relations I may handle the opaque cultural network structure.

Secondly, my analysis follows the recent changes in EU's foreign policy with the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009 and the provision to establish a European External Action Service (EEAS) taking over the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the diplomatic agendas of the EU. The genesis of the EEAS and the operational shifts related to its establishment as a "functionally autonomous body" (Missirolli 2010: 434) of the EU were also informed by questions of its scope of responsibilities – more precisely which role human, cultural, and social affairs would play beside the economic, political and security cooperation with third states. So far the Lisbon Treaty remains rather vague about its future tasks. How the cooperation among the EEAS and its external partners but also the sharing of responsibilities with other EU bodies – especially with the involved Directorate Generals (DG) of the European Commission (this is mostly *DG External Relations* and *DG Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy*) – will look like still has to be decided. In any case the transformations may also affect the way foreign relations are practiced given the intergovernmental logic of the EEAS and the community logic of the DGs in the European Commission. (Vanhoonacker & Reslow 2010: 8)

Basically during the first weeks of 2011, the *DG External Relations* (DG RELEX) in the European Commission, until then responsible for the overall agenda of the external programs of the EU, was merged with the EEAS, headed by the *High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*, this is Catherine Ashton. Now it is a unit in the EEAS that is responsible for the *Southern Neighborhood and the UfM*.¹⁶ But still, the EEAS is aborning and an EU officer of the EEAS observes that:

the High Representative has indicated that it will take about three years to get the whole structure going with the integration of the Council, the Commission and the member states, [and] until it becomes very clear what the External Action Service will do, how it will organize itself and how it will then articulate and defend European interests. [...] (Interview #7)

¹⁶See draft organizational chart: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/background/docs/organisation_en.pdf (16.06.2011)

So far there is no explicit reference to cultural responsibilities of the EEAS in the Lisbon Treaty and in also in the draft organizational chart of the EEAS¹⁷ there are no declared positions for cultural diplomacy activities. (Schaake 2010: 5) This absence was recently discussed by leading scholars in European cultural policy and the *Committee for Culture and Education* of the European Parliament.¹⁸ Experts accorded that it would be not so much “about new massive structures or centralized external cultural policies.” (Wagner 2011: 169) Rather European cultural diplomacy should “build upon existing intergovernmental [cultural] activities within the framework of EU policy,” as also earlier studies recommend. (See: Dodd et al. 2006: 16) This leads back to my opening argument that regional intergovernmental frameworks for a European wide cultural diplomacy already exist and that these might need further examination. Therefore, my analyses of the ALF as a specific foreign policy model should also serve as a survey or an evaluation of existing practices of cultural diplomacy in the light of the new diplomatic arrangements of the EU.

¹⁷http://eeas.europa.eu/background/docs/eeas_prov_organisation_en.pdf (09.06.2011)

¹⁸A debate was organized by the Chair of the Committee for Culture and Education of the European Parliament and co-organized by *EUNIC* and *A Soul for Europe* initiative on “The Cultural Dimension of Europe’s External Relations,” Brussels. (2010, June 23) See: <http://www.asoulforeurope.eu/spread/messenger> (24.05.2011)

1.2. Theoretical and Methodological Framework

The founding of the ALF was embedded in a continuous political dialogue between the member countries of the European Union and countries of the northern and southern Mediterranean Sea dating back to the 1970s. In 1995 the preceding dialogue was merged with a comprehensive bilateral and multilateral framework of cooperation, termed as the Barcelona Process and characterized as the European-Mediterranean (EuroMed) Partnership. At that time the Barcelona Process comprised the 15 member countries of the European Union and twelve Mediterranean partner countries¹⁹ and focused on a diversity of issues in the region. In 2008, the EuroMed Partnership was relaunched as the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). The new political circumstances increased the cooperation to 43²⁰ member countries and it experienced a reorientation with regard to the covered policy fields.

The intergovernmental and transnational processes of regulation at work within the EuroMed Partnership can be regarded as an institutionalized policy cooperation and coordination with the aim to deal with issues that require solutions on an international level. Similarly, establishing the ALF as a foundation enabling an open cultural dialogue among societies from different countries was very much influenced by the ongoing academic discourse on the increase of cultured conflicts in international relations since the 1990s which were later on emblemized by the terror attacks on 9/11. The genesis of the ALF therefore can be seen as the consequence of a coordinated policy among the countries of the Mediterranean region and the engagement of the EU institutions aiming to forge cultural understanding, tolerance and social cohesion across the region in an unsettled post 9/11 world order. Such processes of international political cooperation and negotiation can be analyzed on the basis of an institutionalist theory of International Relations. One of these theories that deals with the preconditions and outcomes of more or less institutionalized processes of international cooperation is regime theory. Regimes are defined as “social institutions consisting of agreed principles, norms, rules, procedures and programs that govern the interactions of actors in specific areas.” (Levy et al. 1995: 274)

¹⁹In 1995 these were Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom, Spain, Sweden and Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey.

²⁰By 2008 the EU had 27 members and the UfM also affiliated Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Mauritania, Monaco, Montenegro. See also: http://eeas.europa.eu/EuroMed/index_en.htm (17.08.2011)

Following this first preliminary definition and also Norbert Ropers and Peter Schlotters analysis of the CSCE process²¹ alongside regime theory I argue that the EuroMed Partnership similarly forms a “system of negotiation and cooperation that generates a diversity of regimes varying in scope and quality.” (Ropers & Schlottter 1989: 338)²² There are studies which have applied regime theory to the EuroMed Partnership. However, these are mostly concerned with regimes coordinating international trade and environmental issues (see for example Haas 1992 and 2002) and not with cultural agendas. Thus, I start from the assumption that the ALF can also be defined as the nucleus of an issue-specific regime that may now be termed as the *EuroMed cultural regime*. I am convinced that the regime theoretical framework lends itself very well to tracing the specific institutional set-up of these regional cultural foundations such as the ALF.²³

Having the above theoretical definition of regimes and the main research interest in mind, further theoretical questions should be addressed:

- What were the reasons for the EuroMed cultural regime to emerge and what processes were at work?
- Which actors were involved? What role did state and non-state actors play during the process of regime formation? What role did the EU institutions play? How have these various roles evolved?
- Following the definition of regimes on which principles, norms and rules, procedures and programs the actors involved agreed on?

²¹The *Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe*, predecessor of the *Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe* (OSCE), presents a similar (even though geographically more expanded) intergovernmental framework as the EuroMed Partnership and earlier initiatives such as the *Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean*. For more information see: <http://www.osce.org/> (22.09.2011)

²²Original text: „Wie wir gesehen haben, generiert das ‘Verhandlungssystem KSZE’ Regime unterschiedlicher Reichweite und Qualität.“ Translated by the author of this thesis.

²³Beyond that, regime theory has also proved to be useful in studies of international regulation of media and communication policies. See for example: Rohn, W. (2002). *Regelung versus Nichtregelung internationaler Kommunikationsbeziehungen. Das Beispiel der UNESCO-Kommunikationspolitik*. Wien: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

- Which conclusions can be drawn from the institutional set-up of the ALF with regard to the initial assumption that the ALF represents cultural diplomacy at arm's length?
- To what extent does the intergovernmental basis of the EuroMed cultural regime enable or restrain the efforts of the ALF?

The main interest of the thesis is therefore to characterize the genesis and the institutional arrangement of the ALF within the interplay of governmental and non-governmental actors during its formation in 2005 until now alongside the regime theoretical framework. The raised questions already direct to the research design and to one of its forms to collect sufficient data to answer my research questions about the structure of EU's cultural relations in third-countries. Following a regime theoretical background qualitative data should be collected to trace the formation of the cultural regime and in a further step its consequences. Besides analyzing literature that deals with the terms and concepts I have shortly touched upon in my introduction also other qualitative data should be analyzed such as:

Written Documents

- Official documents such as conclusions and communications from EU institutions as from the summits of the EuroMed ministerial meetings that relate to cultural agendas and to the establishment of the ALF
- Documents that discuss cultural policy / cultural diplomacy strategies and have been put forward by non-state actors and cultural policy experts at diverse conferences and symposia

Interviews

29 face-to-face interviews were conducted with three different target groups:

- Experts attached to the foundation and its affiliated bodies
- Experts involved with the EuroMed process
- European cultural policy experts

The interviewing phase lasted from November 2010 to March 2011 and took place in Vienna (Austria), Brussels (Belgium), as well as in Alexandria and Cairo (Egypt). In preparing the interviews I fell back on Behnke et al.'s guidelines on qualitative social research and expert interviews.²⁴ In interpreting and analyzing the qualitative data of interviews and the official documents as different “sources of communication” (Mayring 2008: 11) I will follow Philipp Mayring's methodological procedures for *Document analysis* and *Qualitative Content-analysis*.²⁵ Both Behnke et al. and Mayring will be discussed in detail in chapter 2. Beforehand I will address and define the terms applied in the thesis. In chapter 3, I will give a survey of the external policies of the European Union with attention to its cultural dimension and the Mediterranean region. In the major part of the thesis, in chapter 4, the particularity of the cause of the ALF should be endorsed by analyzing the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime with the theoretical and methodological tools at hand.

²⁴Behnke, J., Baur, N., & Behnke, N. (Eds.). (2006). *Empirische Methoden der Politikwissenschaft*. Wien: UTB.

²⁵Mayring, Ph. (2000). *Qualitative Content Analysis*. Forum Qualitative Social Research, 1 (2) <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/viewArticle/1089/2383> (22.07.2010); Mayring, Ph. (2002): *Einführung in die qualitative Sozialforschung*. Weinheim: Beltz; Mayring, Ph. (2003). *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse*. Weinheim: Beltz.

1.3. Definitions

Culture

Reiterating the significance of culture in the European Union's external relations asks for a closer look at the term culture and its different readings.

The semantic field of the ambiguous term *culture* is wide. Each scientific discipline proposes a different concept of culture. Furthermore, a historical and societal embedding contributes to its diachronic character which makes it difficult to ascribe the term an unequivocal meaning. (Knapp 2005: 21).

Yet, the most common and insightful starting point for a definition of the term is its etymological origin. The conjugation of the latin word *colere* – *colo/colui/cultus/* reveals the roots of the term. *Colere* – in the meaning of cultivating – referred to any human interference with nature. (Knapp 2005: 21) Culture included everything artificial and was seen as the result of human civilization.

Later on during the Age of Enlightenment, culture not only described the cultivation of nature but also intellectual growth reflecting the relation of man and nature, and of the individual to society. Culture was then the expression of this reflection but also involved any form of human creativity. At the end of the 18th century the term developed the meaning that prevails in common parlance until today. Culture in a humanistic and idealistic sense came to include the *Beaux Arts* such as art, literature, music, and architecture but also a refined sense of manners, thought, and aesthetics also expressed in the French term *Savoir Vivre*. (Knapp 2005: 22f.; Klein 2003: 31)

This already shows that culture has always ranged between a wide definition – the totality of human modes of life in delineation to nature – and a narrow understanding as high culture and a distinguished taste reserved for the privileged and intellectual classes of society. While culture in its original sense was descriptive and more or less neutral, the term became normative and prescriptive, as expressed in the differentiation of high and low, or popular culture. (Klein 2003: 31)

Only in the second half of the 20th century a revision of the meaning took place. Predominantly Anglo-American ethnologists and anthropologists have significantly contributed to a more integrative and democratic perspective of culture. Culture should not be perceived as high culture only but should be understood as the “whole way of life,

material, spiritual and intellectual” (Raymond Williams as cited in Turner 1990: 43) and involving all levels of society. This inclusive definition was also emphasized by international cultural organizations such as the CoE and UNESCO. In 1982, UNESCO published the Mexico Declaration, which became a reference document for an integrative definition of culture and which is also the linchpin for this thesis, dealing with cultural cooperation in international relations:

In its widest sense, culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs. (Mexico Declaration 1982: 1)

This definition also points to the innate value that is ascribed to culture. Culture and its diverse expressions provide meaning and a sense of belonging for a group of people. (Wagner 2011: 25) Intellectual and cultural engagement is seen as a meaningful force for individual growth but also for the society as a whole. That this purely idealistic perception of the term might also be misleading, especially in the light of the instrumentalization of culture in totalitarian regimes in the 20th century, has been exposed by intellectuals such as Ernst Cassirer and Walter Benjamin and should be mentioned here. (Fuchs 2007:12)

Yet, the positive image of culture in official EU documents prevails. Cultural engagement – with culture being understood as a pluralistic and a non-normative concept – is seen as an important driving force for social development and cohesion, which is also expressed in the *Culture 2000* funding program launched by the European Commission:

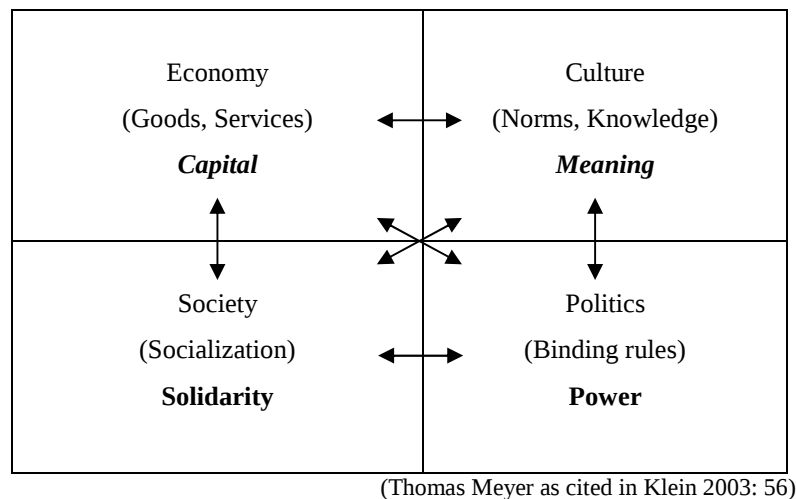
Culture has an important intrinsic value to all people in Europe, is an essential element of European integration and contributes to the affirmation and vitality of the European model of society and to the Community’s influence on the international scene. Culture is both an economic factor and a factor in social integration and citizenship; for that reason, it has an important role to play in meeting the new challenges facing the Community, such as globalization, the information society, social cohesion and the creation of employment. (Culture 2000:1)

Culture and Politics

As with the term culture, the term *politics* can have a range of meanings. As a basic concern of politics one can cite the generation of binding decisions for society in order to solve common problems. (Fuchs 2007: 23) A political system in that sense can be characterized as the “social construction of different approaches to problems and solutions, forwarded by different actors with different motives and in different positions of power [...]” (Predelli & Baklien 2003: 303) Holding on to this first definition of the political system, the interaction between culture and politics can be approached through different routes:

First, the most common reference between culture and the political system is what Gabriel Almond & Sidney Verba termed as *political culture*. Political culture refers to a “particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among the members of the nation.” (Almond & Verba 1989: 13) The patterns of orientation comprise a *cognitive*, an *affective*, and an *evaluative* dimension. The first refers to the knowledge of the public about the political system, the second denotes their individual feelings and perceptions, while the third points to the actual position citizens take toward politics. (Almond & Verba 1989: 14) Political culture here serves as an explanatory variable in order to understand the political system and its transformations. Nevertheless, one has to point out its reciprocal dimension; political culture is not only an independent variable that shapes the political system but also a dependent one, meaning that political culture is likewise influenced by diverse parameters. (Mokre 2011: 66)

Another insightful approach toward tracing the interrelation of culture and politics is provided by American sociologist Talcott Parsons and his model on the social system. In order to make a society function, Parson claims, it has to be built up across four layers of social interaction: *Economy, Culture, Society, and Politics*.



The schematic diagram illustrates the societal embedding of culture that has already been mentioned before. Looking more closely at the interaction between culture and politics one can discuss the *cultural dimension of politics*. According to the German political scientist Isabel Schäfer, this may refer to the effect concrete political decisions but also subtle power constellations have on individuals and social groups. At the same time one can trace the *political dimension of culture*. This involves all the political connotations that culture in its diverse artistic and creative expressions may convey and which it may shape in return. The political dimension also addresses the socio-political responsibility cultural actors may assume in society. (Schäfer 2006: 33) All these processes that take place in the social system also influence the way cultural policy is practiced.

Cultural Policy

Going back to the first definition of politics, similarly culture for different reasons can be said to require a political framework of “binding rules.” Depending on the scope of public responsibilities, and the multifarious interests of the actors involved, cultural policy may assume different shapes and patterns. This diverse engagement of cultural policy may best be illustrated with the common tripartition of *polity*, *politics* and *policy*. Cultural policy can be defined as the governmental regulation of the cultural sector within specific institutional and structural surroundings (*polity*), according to specific intentions and objectives (*policy*), and alongside political bargaining processes among the different actors involved (*politics*). (Fuchs 2007: 9) At each of these three levels, cultural policy may be “enmeshed with national histories and political culture.” (Mulcahy 1998: 10) Furthermore,

what actually is seen as part of cultural policy is very much determined by how the term culture is employed. Cultural policies that rely on a narrow definition of culture as “high culture” will mostly be concerned with funding policies for the arts and the maintenance of cultural heritage. When adopting a more open concept of culture that includes all different fields of “human engagement” such as religion, art, education and sciences, sports and leisure activities, but also architecture, urban planning, and environmental protection, cultural policy must provide a broader legal framework. (Nohlen 2010: 540; Schäfer 2006: 34)

There are a variety of models to describe the different governmental approaches to domestic and external cultural policy. The American cultural policy expert Kevin Mulcahy traced four models of cultural policy altogether, of which I would like to briefly discuss the *liberal patronage* and the *social-democratic models*²⁶ as I think both models serve as a suitable point of reference for the cultural policies of the European Union.

The *liberal patronage model* describes the arm’s length approach already put forth in the introduction. The state or a public authority provides a certain amount of funding for cultural activities but does not administrate the funds. Mostly it is an arts council as a quasi autonomous institution that is in charge of the funding and can decide on the structures and the distribution of the grants (prizes, scholarships, project funding). The institution is then to some extent financially supported by the ministry but should not be forced to follow any governmental directives in the working procedures or staffing. A similar structure can also be found in the EU’s cultural foreign policy as laid out before.

Secondly, the *social-democratic patronage model* originally was introduced in the late twentieth century in the Scandinavian countries in conjunction with a fully-fledged welfare state. Cultural engagement in this context is very much seen as a means for development and social cohesion and should follow a democratic process of participation. Institutionally speaking, cultural patronage in this model is still situated in governmental structures but

²⁶For more information on the *Liberal* and the *Social-Democratic Patronage* and the other two models, the *Royal* and the *Princely Patronage* model, see: Mulcahy, K. (1998). Cultural Patronage in Comparative Perspective. *Journal of Arts Management, Law & Society*, 27 (4), 247-263. Another frequently applied division of different cultural policy models is put forth in Hillman-Chartrand, H. & Claire McCaughey, C. (1989). The Arm’s-length Principle and the Arts: An International Perspective - Past, Present and Future. In M. Cumming and M. Schuster (Eds.). *Who’s to pay for the Arts? The International Search for Models of Support* New York: American Council for the Arts Books. They distinguish among the *Facilitator*, *Patron*, the *Engineer*, and the *Architect model*.

receives a broad educational and social agenda and also includes a broad range of civil society actors. (Mulcahy 2000: 139) The underlying concept of the model of the strong interrelation between culture and social development is also summarized by a European Commissioner's employee:

So we are looking here at culture as a means to complement the other activities that we are doing in the context of economic and social development. Particularly, looking at culture as a means to access and to touch upon areas which otherwise may be difficult in certain countries which are dictatorial or semi-dictatorial. We are looking at culture as a means to open up discussions on issues such as reconciliation, ethnic tolerance, such as touching the areas of responsibility of the state to the citizens, civic cooperation, even corruption [...] Culture is not *art for art's sake* really but it is a means to achieve wider, principal goals which are promoting stability, governance and participation. (Interview #7)

Cultural identity

With regard to different cultural policy models it also seems relevant to take into account the term cultural identity as cultural policies are in "various ways concerned with maintaining or establishing a distinctive cultural identity." (Mulcahy1998: 247)

Thinking about our own identity always involves a conscious seizing of our self as human beings with our individual history and moral context. (Knapp 2006: 31) However, the philosopher Charles Taylor remarks "the full definition of someone's identity thus usually not only involves his stand on moral and spiritual matters but also some reference to a defining community." (Taylor 2006: 36) These communities can be constructed on multiple grounds, such as social, national, local, regional, ethnical, religious or cultural. However, by our reference to a specific community we define not only our self and provide ourselves with a sense of belonging to a specific group but also differentiate "from other collective identities." (Mokre 2011: 67) This processual dimension is highlighted when using the term identification rather than the term identity. Identities are not stable entities but are rather subject to diverse ongoing processes. (Knapp 2006: 31) Especially in the light of global migration, mobility, and an increasing heterogeneous society this open concept of identification is put forward by theorists in the Humanities and Social sciences. In order to anchor and legitimize social collectives and identities people frequently recall cultural associations that are part of our "collective cultural memory," a term coined by the

historians Jan and Aleida Assmann. The collective cultural memory as the “archive of cultural traditions, the arsenal of symbolic forms, the *imaginary* of myths and images, of the *great stories*, sagas and legends, scenes and constellations that live or can be reactivated in the treasure stores of a people” has ever since played an important role for identity constructions. (Assmann, J. 2006: 8) The same holds true for the EU who tends to draw its memory from three different sources: “the Greco-Roman [empire], as the cradle of European civilization and aesthetics, the Judaeo-Christian tradition as its normative foundation, and the Enlightenment as the basis for rationality and rights.” (Staiger 2009: 4)

Furthermore it is interesting to note that according to Mulcahy the liberal patronage model was predominantly put in place in young countries and regions with pluralistic societies that may lack a long common history and identity. (Mulcahy 1998: 247f.) In order to emphasize the uniqueness of the different cultures and to legitimize a country’s *Raison d’être*, an authentic cultural engagement detached from governmental interference should be pursued. This is also an aspect that is regularly debated in the context of the EU. On the one hand, the EU emphasizes the rich cultural heritage of the individual member states but on the other it is invoking a prospective common European cultural space by supporting a diversity of joint cultural projects. Cultural policy in the EU constantly oscillates between the reiterated dialectic of unity in diversity, meaning that the EU strives to build a *cultural mosaic* of the diversity of European cultures and search for common grounds. (Theisen 2011: 487) At the same time the debates on a European identity revolve around questions of the scope of the EU and its external demarcation, expressed, for instance, in the image of the *fortress of Europe* isolating itself and allowing only privileged people to enter. Conversely, a more integrative approach can be found in the wider geographical context of the EU’s external relations. Especially in the Euro-Mediterranean region cultural associations are decisive elements in revitalizing a common European-Mediterranean history and identity. (Schäfer 2006: 13)²⁷ Consequently, one might rather speak of numerous identities than a singular, exclusive European identity.

²⁷ For a detailed study of these identification processes at work in the context of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership see: Schäfer, I. (2006). *Vom Kulturkonflikt zum Kulturdialog. Die kulturelle Dimension der Euro-Mediterranen Partnerschaft*. Baden-Baden: Nomos. Chapter II. But also: Steinbichler, St. (2009). *The Barcelona Process a result of postcolonial politics?* Dissertation, University of Vienna.

This forging of cultural identities is also related to the idea of a European citizenship as Ute Staiger argues in her essay on *Culture and citizenship in EU policy*.²⁸ Citizenship is not only based “on the normative claims for rights and liberties, but particularly on the ground that it is intimately linked with cultural belonging and identity.” (Staiger 2009: 5) In particular the *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union* that has received legal status with the Lisbon Treaty underlines the “values of freedom of expression, the right to freedom of thought conscience and religion, as well as of the arts and sciences,”²⁹ and illustrates the cultural basis of the EU conveyed to its citizens and to foreign audiences. (Sarikakis 2007: 17)

Culture and its External Dimension – Culture in international relations

Culture has played an important role in international relations for centuries. First, culture understood as different modes of life and mentalities has always influenced the way people from different parts of the world encountered each other. Beyond that international cultural exchange – rather in its narrow sense – was deliberately practiced in loose public and private initiatives sending scholars, artists and missionaries abroad in order to discover foreign cultures and to introduce their cultural background to foreign publics. And also Bound et al. observe that “from the reciprocal gifts of ancient rulers to modern-day Expos, culture has been used as a way for leaders and countries to show who they are, assert their power and build lasting relationships.” (Bound et al. 2007: 11) These initiatives paved the way for what became a coordinated cultural diplomacy³⁰ later in the beginning of the 20th century and since then formed one of the three pillars of traditional state diplomacy (next to the economic and political cooperation). (Gienow-Hecht & Donfried 2010: 18)

However, during the last two decades state-driven cultural policy was ousted by new actors. Foremost, the global cultural market, the increasing interdependence of cultural and arts associations but also the transnational character of art itself have undermined the national monopoly of cultural policy. (Schäfer 2006: 45f.) In addition, the concurrent

²⁸Staiger, U. (2009). New agendas? Culture and citizenship in EU policy. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*. 15 (1), 1-16.

²⁹http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf (12.07.2011)

³⁰The terms that describe international cultural cooperation and exchange might be coined differently: foreign cultural affairs, international cultural relations, foreign cultural policy are among the frequently employed terms. (de Vries 2008: 14) But also terms such as social diplomacy or public diplomacy are used depending on their conceptualization. (Claret 2010: 1) However, most of the terms overlap. The author of this thesis uses the term cultural diplomacy as it is the most commonly referred term by stakeholders and cultural policy experts when discussing culture in the EU's external relations.

processes of decentralization and internationalization (Europeanization) processes led to a shift to new levels of governance. (Sassatelli 2008: Abstract) Therefore, cultural policy today may not only be the output of governmental regulations but is rather shaped by a “fragmented set of local, regional, national, and international actors.” (Gray & Hugoson 2004: 365-372) Especially, when looking at private international distribution of cultural products in its traditional sense as the sale of art, music, films, and books but also the emerging cultural industries,³¹ it becomes clear that cultural exchange becomes more and more detached from state regulation and is a huge economic factor with new powerful actors. Questions have been thrown up on copyright and intellectual property issues, and media concentration, which ask for increased transnational regulation. The exclusion of culture in the *General Agreements on Trade and Services* advocated by UNESCO (Fuchs 2007: 74) but also the *Convention for the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression* are prominent responds of global cooperation to the decrease of state regulation of the cultural sector.

Culture in International Relations (IR)

Also the scientific discipline dealing with the patterns of political interactions in international relations did not remain unimpressed by the global transformations during the last 20 years. Especially, the unforeseen decline of the Soviet Union led to new paradigms in IR-research. Neo-realist assumptions assuming that changes in the domestic and global political system can always be traced back to specific power constellations and the material superiority of a number of countries could not be applied to the unexpected Soviet cause and lost their validity. For many theorists it became clear that political transformations on a domestic and global level “are not exclusively based on a material structure, but also on a cultural one.” (Mokre 2011: 66) Hence, culture and cultural identity have emerged as “explaining factors of many processes and conflicts.” (Claret 2010: 1)

For this tendency Samuel Huntington’s notion of a *Clash of Civilization*³² was groundbreaking and once again received a new interest with the terror attacks on 9/11.

³¹Cultural industries involves sectors such as new media, advertising, educational and leisure soft ware, fashion, clothing, film, graphic design, performing arts and entertainments, photography, television, radio and internet broadcasting, video and other audiovisual production, writing and publishing which are ascribed increasing economic relevance. (de Vries 2008: 14)

³²The article was first published in 1993 in the international journal *Foreign Affairs* and in 1996 his propositions were laid out in detail in the monography *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Huntington's assumptions of deep cultural cleavages provided a productive impetus for an academic debate but he was also highly criticized for adapting an essentialized and simplified binary system between the Muslim East and the putative non-Muslim West. In the light of migration and global mobility but also with regard to cultural-theoretical discussions, undermining the idea of fixed entities, such binary assumptions do not seem to be maintainable. Scholars point out that culture rather is part of a permanent process of exchange and the lines among cultures are blurring. Max Fuchs therefore remarks that "the mode of culture is interculturalism. One speaks of creolization, hybrid cultures, interculture and transcultural processes to term the non-static, the constant merging and the openness of the edges."³³ (Fuchs 2007: 13) This processual character of culture was also emphasized in later publications of UNESCO. In UNESCO's *World Culture Report*, published in 2000 and dealing with questions on cultural diversity, conflict, and pluralism, it says that cultures cannot be regarded as "fixed, bounded, crystallized containers" but are rather "transboundary creations." (Lourdes 2000: 15) Culture therefore is always fragmentary. Nonetheless, "this constant becoming frequently collides with the need of actually being something: Individual identities that try to stabilize themselves by the differentiation to others."³⁴ (Theisen 2011: 488) This may also be linked to the observation of the Lebanese philosopher and writer Amin Maalouf that after the decline of Communism a shift from ideology to identity took place. (Maalouf 2010: 21) Identities were constructed on definite cultural and predominantly religious grounds and led to the cultural cleavages we are facing up till now. In order to understand and to approach these global cultural conflicts, new political measures and academic concepts were introduced. Also in the context of the position of the EU in the global world order terms such as *soft power*, *cultural diplomacy*, and *Intercultural dialogue* became the dictum during the last years.

³³Original text: "Man kann sagen, dass der Modus des Kulturellen das Interkulturelle ist. Man spricht von Creolisierung und von hybriden Kulturen, von Interkultur und von transkulturellen Prozessen, um das Nicht-Statistische, das ständige Mischen und die Offenheit der Ränder zu bezeichnen." Translated by the author of the thesis.

³⁴Original text: "Dieses permanente Werden kollidiert häufig mit dem Bedürfnis, etwas zu sein: mit partikulären Identitäten, die sich nicht zuletzt durch Abgrenzung zu anderen zu stabilisieren versuchen." Translated by the author of the thesis.

Soft power a term coined by the American political scientist Joseph S. Nye is described as “the ability to influence the behavior of others to the outcomes one wants, not only through coerce with threats or payments but also through attraction and co-option.” (Snow & Taylor 2009: 3) According to Nye soft power is based on resources and attractions such as culture, political values and foreign policies. (Nye 2004: 11) These are *resources and attractions* the EU regularly avail itself when recalling its European culture and values and deploying them in its global self-assertion to other actors in the world.³⁵ The EU’s attraction is based on being a civilian power that represents values such as democracy, rule of law, cultural and religious diversity, and freedom of speech seen as crucial preconditions to diminish global cultural conflicts that are increasingly becoming security concerns. (Wagner 2011: 161) Hard power – this is military power – in contrast is less effective when solving the global cultural issues today. (Walter Laquer as cited in Bound et al. 2007: 16)

One main instrument of soft power today is a revised concept of *cultural diplomacy*. In its original sense cultural diplomacy as part of public diplomacy was mostly related to governmental communication strategies to engage with foreign publics in order to subversively interfuse and influence a society for one’s own nationalistic ends. Cultural diplomacy was instrumentalized as a means to an end, following the assumption that it is “in cultural activities that a nation’s idea of itself is best represented”³⁶ In that sense, the term was negatively connoted and seen as a euphemistic term for Western cultural export and propaganda frequently practiced during the Cold War in the defense of western democracy and values against Communism. (Gienow-Hecht 2010: 3) This one-dimensional perspective of cultural diplomacy as merely foreign governmental cultural intervention and representation was challenged due to the increasing process of internationalization discussed before. Cultural diplomacy therefore should not only be the domain of the national representatives providing an elitist national image but must rather

³⁵See for example: Mokre, M. & Batora, J. (2008, September 25-27). Lecture at the ECPR (European Consortium for Political Research) Fourth Pan-European Conference on EU Politics. “*Softening*” the CFSP. *Culture in the EU’s External Relations*; Nye, J. (2004, May 3). Europe’s soft power. In *The Globalist*; Rehn, O. (2008, May 1). Lecture at the European Studies Centre, St Antony’s College, University of Oxford. *Europe’s smart power in its region and the world*.

³⁶*Cultural Diplomacy The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy*. (September 2005) Report of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy U.S. Department of State. p.1. see: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/54374.pdf> (12.05.2011)

evolve among different actors involved. Likewise, Jessica Gienow-Hecht and Mark C. Donfried point out in their recent study on cultural diplomacy that:

the more distance there is between the agenda of a cultural diplomacy program and a political or economic agenda, the more likely the program is to succeed. Equally important, the more interactive the structure of the cultural diplomacy program is, the more likely it is to be successful. (Gienow-Hecht & Donfried 2010: 4)

Predominantly civil society actors on grass roots level guarantee a diverse and more authentic cultural image. Similarly, cultural diplomacy practiced by the European Union relates to this broader concept. In the lecture series *Talking without Borders*, initiated by the British Council, politicians, intellectuals, and representatives of civil society assessed the concept of cultural diplomacy in the EU. They presented a concept of cultural diplomacy that detaches itself from the traditional state-controlled cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy should rather move away from presenting the “genuine cultural image” of one nation or one member state but rather consist of a broader multilateral perspective (Davidson 2009: 2). The “once dominant bilateral model of cultural relations, characterized by asymmetric, uni-directional flows, has consequently given way to a multilateral model, based on mutuality and partnership,” which is also at the base of regional foundations such as the ALF. (Paschalidis 2009: 284)

Steve Green, scholar in international cultural policy, summarizes the characteristics of a more open concept of cultural diplomacy and thereby exposes also the weaknesses of tradition state practiced cultural diplomacy.

Cultural Diplomacy should move:

- “from events to projects
- from bilateral to multilateral
- from presentation to cooperation
- from products to process
- from one-way to two-way
- from telling to listening

- from self promotion to values promotion.” (Green 2010: 15)

Additionally, cultural diplomacy has to depart from a narrow concept of culture as art and cultural heritage “but [should] also integrate education, science, sports, and youth policy, as well as civil society dialogues on social, political, and religious subjects.” (de Vries 2008: 3)

Intercultural Dialogue

The deeper agenda for cultural diplomacy can be linked to the concept of intercultural dialogue. One of the main tasks of a cultural diplomacy should be the support of people-to-people contacts and the dialogue among different groups of people and their cultures. UNESCO defines intercultural dialogue as “equitable exchange and dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, based on mutual understanding and respect as well as the equal dignity of all cultures as the essential prerequisite for constructing social cohesion, reconciliation among peoples and peace among nations.”³⁷ Hence, intercultural dialogue in comparison to a cultural dialogue should direct to the open concept of seeing culture not as a homogenized block but rather as an open process of constant reciprocal cultural engagement.

Even though intercultural dialogue may sometimes be used interchangeably with cultural diplomacy³⁸ I would like to limit the term cultural diplomacy to the “initiation or facilitation of such intercultural exchanges”³⁹ My interest therefore concentrates on how the EU as a political entity facilitates these intercultural exchanges among multiple societies. More precisely, this refers to my initial assumption of cultural diplomacy at arm’s length in the Euro-Mediterranean region practiced by the ALF as a multilateral foundation.

³⁷<http://www.unesco.org/en/dialogue/intercultural-dialogue/> (06.05.2011)

³⁸See for example the frequently quoted definition of Milton C. Cummings of cultural diplomacy “as the exchange of ideas, information, art, lifestyles, values systems, traditions, beliefs and other aspects of cultures [...]” (Cummings 2003: 1)

³⁹http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en_culturaldiplomacy (06.05.2011)

2. Regime Theory

When discussing international relations, interdependence can be defined as the dominant characteristic of globalized politics today. (Feldbauer 2008: 22) Issue areas regularly transcend national borders, are closely intertwined and generate a whole new set of international actors. When thinking about security or environmental agendas it becomes clear, that they cannot be dealt with only domestically but need global approaches. Secondly, “issue areas are not neatly separated,” (Levy et al. 1995: 284) developments in one issue area often have substantial consequences for others which results in a decline of predictability and national regulation. This shift in international politics can be summarized by Rosenau’s and Czempiel’s notion of *governance without government* or as *multi-level governance*. (Rosenau & Czempiel 1992) International relations are not only the domain of states anymore, but are supplemented by a whole set of new actors on different political levels. Coordinating the multiplicity of actors and policy processes asks for a global regulation. International institutions are forums where these kinds of regulation take place. Institutional theories such as regime theory then are concerned with the shapes these global institutions may take.

Institutions

Dealing with literature on the characteristics of institutions, it becomes clear that also this term is built on a plethora of theoretical assumptions. On the one hand, an institution can direct to a “public body with formally designated structures and functions, intended to regulate certain defined activities.” (Bealey 1999: 166) This includes traditional notions of institutions and their legal basis like governments or international organizations. In a wider Social sciences perspective, institutions are not necessarily characterized by its formal rules and as material entities but are rather seen as “collections of interrelated rules and routines that define appropriate actions in terms of relations between roles and situations.” (March & Olsen 1989: 22) Institutions in that sense are “social systems that generate regulations of behavior and expectations [...] They are then political in nature when they serve for binding regulation of conflict and the solving of collective issues and if they imply certain norms of social action.”⁴⁰ (Nohlen 2010: 405) International

⁴⁰Original text: „Institutionen (I.) sind verhaltensregulierende und Erwartungssicherheit erzeugende soziale Regelsysteme. Politisch sind I. dann, wenn sie der verbindlichen Konfliktregelung und Lösung kollektiver

institutions serve as presuppositions for or are the outcomes of international *coordination* and *cooperation*. These are two frequently employed terms that direct to “the processes to order and adjust different goals, actions and interests.” (Feldbauer 2008: 19)

Within my thesis I use a definition that lies between these two poles of seeing institutions as legal entities and a more encompassing perspective. Therewith, I argue that the EuroMed cultural regime on the one hand is built upon a legal, material entity i.e. the ALF. On the other hand, the regular political interactions within the EuroMed Partnership direct to the definitions of both James G. March & Johan P. Olsen as well as Dieter Nohlen and are also at the core of regime theory.

2.1. Regime Formation

There is a diversity of regime patterns and “regimes may vary with respect to the number and type of actors involved as well as the type and scope of issues covered or, in other words, the problem structure.” (Levy et al. 1995: 277) As a result, also the theoretical approaches that classify regimes vary in scope and complexity. Each of them “emphasizes different explanatory variables, builds on different meta-theoretical assumptions and states different hypotheses concerning the questions of regime formation and design.” (Feldbauer 2008: 20) Hence, working with regime theory asks for a limitation regarding its questions, typologies and its stages of development. (Lehmkuhl 2001: 256)

My interest primarily focuses on the creation of the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime and the development of the institutional set-up of the ALF. In order to analyze the genesis of the Euro-Med cultural regime, I will fall back on the comprehensive analytic framework and the classifications of regimes that are laid out in a survey on regime theory by Levy et al. in the *European Journal of International Relations*.⁴¹ I will look more closely on some of the main analytic categories that are commonly addressed in the study of regime formation and summarized by Levy et al. as: *Stages of Regime Formation, Actors and*

Probleme dienen und eigens dafür geschaffene Entscheidungs-und Verhaltensnormen sowie Vorkehrungen zu deren Einhaltung beinhalten.“ Translated by the author of the thesis.

⁴¹Levy, M.A., Young, O.R. & Zürn,M. (1995). The Study of International Regimes. *European Journal of International Relations*, 1 (2), 267-330.

Actors' Behavior, Processes of Regime Formation, Driving Social Forces, and Cross-cutting Factors. (Levy et al. 1995: 280-287)

2.1.1. Stages of Regime Formation

According to Levy et al., regime formation can be traced along three sequent phases: *Agenda Formation*, *Institutional Choice* and *Operationalization* (Levy et al. 1995: 282-283)

- The phase of *Agenda Formation* spans the discussion of an issue or the awareness of a conflict at international conferences and forums and its placement on the global political agendas. The reasons and the motives for the treatment of a specific issue can be quite diverse and may differ according to the specific issue areas. Basically, the agenda formation can be put in place by individual leader states following their national priorities. But it can also be the expression of the common interests of non-state actors, activists, or epistemic communities or might be the result of a crisis and a shock that triggers the awareness of both state and non-state actors.
- *Institutional Choice* marks the phase from the articulation of a priority issue to concrete actions and agreements taken by the actors involved in specific meetings such as conferences, committees or established councils.
- *Operationalization* then includes the arrangement of the functional and structural settings to make the regime functioning. This involves the concrete formulation of principles, norms, and rules. But this can also involve the installment of an institution in its material sense that is a foundation, an international agency or an international organization responsible for the implementation of the procedures and the administrative maintenance of the regime.

2.1.2. Actors and Actors' Behavior

Diverse actors are involved in the formation process of regimes. Mostly these are state-actors, but also different non-state actors are involved. Predominantly, in the beginning of regime formation the influence of non-state such as private sector agencies, NGOs, or national but also transnational scientific communities may not be underestimated. (Haufler

2002: 95) This is especially the case in a time when complex issue areas lead to a “[...] transfer of wider areas of public policy from politics to external expertise” (Haas 1992: 8) and when “representatives of non-state actors frequently serve as members of national delegations.”(Levy et al. 1995: 280) Regimes are therefore built upon a diversity of “complex collective entities” with different motives and elusive interests that ask for a comprehensive analysis.

2.1.3. Processes of Regime Formation

Levy et al. subsume three different modes of regime formation. Regimes can either come into existence by the process of *self-generation*, *imposition* or *negotiation*. (Levy et al. 1995: 281-282)

- *Imposition* starts from the assumption that there is one single or several powerful actors that impose(s) to others the principles, norms, rules and procedures involved in regime formation. This authoritarian standpoint of the imposition by a hegemonic state is attenuated by the idea that there is/are one or more prominent and influential actor/s that provide/s “institutional arrangements looked upon as public goods to privileged groups.” (Levy et al. 281)
- *Negotiation* refers to a more or less equal bargaining process among the actors involved in view of a common objective.
- *Self-generation* or a *spontaneous regime* is then based on similar and complementary interests and expectations among the actors involved. Its formation is not necessarily the result of extensive negotiation processes.

However, these three processes illustrate ideal situations and in many cases of regime formation one might find all three elements. (Levy et al. 1955: 281)

2.1.4. Driving Social Forces

Basically, the theoretical discussions and studies on regime theory have generated three major thoughts of independent variables in order to explain different stages of regime formation, its maintenance and effects. All of them center around the question of the distribution of *power*, *interest*, and *knowledge* and their influence on regimes.

- *Power based – Realistic Approaches*

Realistic schools of thought regard the distribution of power – these are mostly material capabilities or the political influence of state actors – as a relevant variable in understanding the formation of regimes. (Haas 2002: 177) They argue “that content and form [of a regime] are determined by the influence of possible asymmetrical power positions.” (Felbauer 2008: 21)

- *Interest based – Neoliberal Approaches*

Neoliberalism looks closely at the (self-) interests expressed in the interactive decision-making process at the base of regime formation. Scholars with a neoliberal focus are interested in the problem structures and interest constellations as determinants of success or failure in efforts to solve collective problems. They perceive “self-interest and the possibilities of common gains as a main motivation for cooperation among states.” (Felbauer 2008: 21)

- *Knowledge-based – Cognitivist Approaches*

For cognitivists international regimes depend on the distribution of knowledge in a particular issue area. Especially in a time of growing complexities and uncertainties “transnational groups of scientists and policy-makers become carriers and transmitters of ways of thinking about international problems and solutions.” (Levy et al. 1995: 284) With regard to the likelihood of regime formation cognitivists believe that “if the knowledge is consensual with regard to the proposed solution the probability to building a regime is

enhanced. If the knowledge about the Cause-Effect-Dependencies is not consensual the probability of building a regime is rather low.”⁴² (Zangl 2006: 137)

The political scientist Peter M. Haas has provided a comprehensive theoretical framework on the influence of these “networks of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular issue-area” which he defined as epistemic communities. (Haas 1992: 3) Though Haas also pleads for not totally dismissing the other two variables especially because “[...] the extent to which state behavior reflects the preferences of these networks remains strongly conditioned by the distribution of power internationally.” (Haas 1992: 7) Hence, one has to keep in mind that all three variables “power, interest, and knowledge interact in the production of international regimes.” (Hasenclever 1997: 211) The formation of a regime cannot be explained by looking at one aspect only and ignoring other potential factors of influence. Rather – also for analyzing the cultural regime in the EuroMed Partnership process – it is highly useful to combine these approaches as each of them sheds light on different structural dynamics.

2.1.5. Cross-Cutting Factors

As cross-cutting factors Levy et al. detected *individual leadership* and *context*. Both variables demand a thorough study of the stages of regimes. Not only does it mean to pinpoint the behavior of leading actors “at critical junctures” but it also asks for an attentive overview of the societal and political context throughout the process of formation. (Levy et al. 1995: 285)

All of the five categories bear useful analytic concepts in order to understand and follow the process of the creation of the EuroMed cultural regime and in a further step its material outcomes, i.e. the ALF. At the same time I think the categories cannot be considered as totally separated from each other, they rather overlap. To be more precise, the driving social forces might be similar as the actors involved and their specific behavior or the stages of formation might be usefully linked to the cross-cutting factors. So, when analyzing the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime I will mostly concentrate on the first two

⁴²Original text: „Ist das Wissen über die Ursachen von bestimmten Problemen und die Wirkungen bestimmter Problemlösungsmöglichkeiten konsensual, so wird die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass Bestrebung zur Bildung eines internationalen Regimes Erfolg beschieden sein wird, groß. Ist das Wissen über die Wirkungs-Zusammenhänge in einem Problemfeld der internationalen Politik hingegen nicht konsensual, so wird diese Wahrscheinlichkeit als gering eingeschätzt.“ Translated by the author of the thesis.

variables: *Stages of Regime Formation* and *Actors and Actors' Behavior* and recall some of the other three categories if applicable.

2.2. Principles, Norms, Rules, Decision-Making Procedures, and Programs

My study of the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime that provides the framework for the work of ALF also deploys the terms laid out by the most common definition of international regimes by the American political scientist Stephan D. Krasner, one of the earliest leading scholars in regime theory. He defined regimes as:

a set of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations. Principles are beliefs of fact, causation and rectitude. Norms are standards of behavior defined in terms of rights and obligations. Rules are specific prescriptions or proscriptions for action. Decision-making procedures are prevailing practices for making and implementing collective choice. (Krasner 1983: 157)

Likewise, Levy et al. define the different variables as “the principal regime components.” (Levy et al. 1995: 275)

- In order to establish a regime, the involved actors have to agree on specific basic principles that legitimate and form the basis of their enduring cooperation. Hence *principles* can be defined as certain “goal orientations and causal beliefs cast at the level of general policy arenas [...]” (Levy et al. 1995: 273)
- *Norms* direct to the general rights and obligations for the involved regime actors. Furthermore, norms involve general expectations of the participating parties. For Levy et al. norms remain frequently very vague; often it is difficult to identify them and to follow the compliance of the actors involved.
- In contrast, *rules*, according to Levy et al., are the most concrete ones as they are part of formal agreements and the working procedures of a regime. (Levy et al. 1995: 273)
- *Decision-Making Procedures* and *Programs* concern the formal modes on how binding decisions are taken as well as the respective content of the individual regime.

The regime proponents shall be traced both through document analysis and through the qualitative content analysis applied on the conducted interviews.

2.3. Regime Consequences and Effectiveness

Primarily my interest lies in looking at the institutional set up of the ALF as an exemplary cause of a regional cultural regime and whether one can speak of cultural diplomacy at arm's length. However, I think to a certain extent it is also necessary to assess the effectiveness and consequences of the respective form of the regime.

The effectiveness and consequences can be followed in different directions. First of all, international regimes always emerge in response to particular problem structures. Hence, the effectiveness "has to do with the contributions institutions make to solve the problems that motivate actors to create them." (Levy et al. 1995: 291) Yet, there are several challenges and presuppositions in this undertaking. To begin with, when looking at the initial incitement for an international regime "it is important to distinguish [...] between types of conflicts, such as conflicts about values, which are the most difficult to solve, and conflicts about absolutely assessed goods, which are relatively easy to solve." (Levy et al. 1995: 284) Similarly, the more concrete problems are the easier it might be to detect the effectiveness of regimes; so a concrete change in trade regulations or environmental protection might be easier to grasp compared to a change in perceptions and values which is at the base of the EuroMed cultural regime. The ALF was initiated as a response to the increasing cultured conflicts and misperceptions of the people across the Mediterranean basin. Whether these perceptions really changed is not only quite difficult to assess but might also be too precipitate as the ALF has only worked in the field since five years. Furthermore, the attempt to measure specific changes in perceptions is still an ongoing process also within the ALF itself. This is illustrated by the *Report on Intercultural Trends* published by the ALF. Its first edition was published in 2010 and until 2013 it should provide a tool for measuring and comparing the perceptions and value systems across the region. Therefore, my interest lays not necessarily on the actual effectiveness of the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime in terms of the reduction of xenophobia, racism or even international terrorism. Rather, I would like to find out, how the dynamics within the

institutional set-up might affect the effectiveness and consequences of the Euro-Med cultural regime. I argue by looking not only at the actual decision-making and working procedures but also its institutional embedding I can also draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the EuroMed cultural regime. This might also be linked to the idea of *path-dependency*; meaning that the original (institutional) path taken very much influences the present outcomes of the ALF.

Considering the order, I will start with my analysis alongside the categories involved with the formation of the regime. In the second place I will dwell on the principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures and programs that form the basis of the regime's maintenance. Beforehand, a more detailed survey of the methodology, my research rests upon, should round up my theoretical and methodological framework.

3. Qualitative Social Research

3.1. Expert Interviews

Beside the pre-existing documents, expert interviews form the basis of my research. According to Behnke et al., research questions dealing with patterns of interaction very well lend itself to qualitative research.” Furthermore, qualitative methods seem appropriate when paying attention “to the appearance of certain characteristics, for example interactions among different actors (individuals or states) in given conflict situations or specific institutions [...]”⁴³ (Behnke et al. 2006: 36) As this is also the interest of regime theory and of my study on the interactions within the EuroMed cultural regime, the use of a qualitative research method seemed adequate.

For the data collection I chose non-standardized expert interviews that were based on a rough guiding questionnaire. Its openly formulated questions and its modular structure allowed the interviewees to answer in open directions and the interviewer was able to adopt to the specific interview situations quickly; i.e. to rearrange the questions, to dismiss questions that had already been addressed or insert aspects that had not necessarily been thought of before. (Behnke et al. 2006: 234)

Following the scope of application of non-standardized interviews, it seems relevant to highlight that this kind of research is useful when the researcher is interested:

- in differentiated opinions, analyses and interpretations concerning a complex issue
- and / or wants to find out about a specific case in detail. (Behnke et al. 2006: 234f.)

Both aspects are relevant for my research. Firstly, the ALF working on intercultural dialogue as part of the EuroMed cultural regime is both embedded in a complex institutional arrangement in the EuroMed region but is also dealing with complex issues such as cultural misperceptions, xenophobia and religious intolerance. The opinions on the institutional arrangements and the chances and limitation of intercultural dialogue are of

⁴³Original text: “...das Auftreten bestimmter Eigenschaften, z.B. Verhaltensweisen bei Menschen in Konfliktlösungssituationen...” Translated by the author of the thesis.

high interest in this thesis. Secondly, the analysis of the EuroMed cultural regime – which has at its core the ALF – should serve as a detailed study of a specific foreign cultural policy model.

However, I am also aware of the disadvantages and the difficulties related to qualitative research; the timely and financial effort of conducting and evaluating the interviews; the problem of representation due to only a small sample of interrogated persons but also the risk of the incomparableness of the interviews because of the different courses the interviews might take. (Behnke et al. 2006: 235) Yet, the financial support of a scholarship from the University of Vienna allowed traveling to three different places. The possibility of a research stay on site at the secretariat in Alexandria for more than four weeks not only made it possible to interview more persons than expected but also allowed to follow the daily work of the foundation. The collected data of 29 interviews therefore provide sufficient information to make a valuable statement on the work and institutional set-up of the ALF. And even though I spoke with three different target groups that were based on open questionnaires, the interviews almost every time boiled down to the same topics and categories, hence the comparableness is given.

As a non-standardized interview, I chose the expert interview that allowed for a comprehensive insight in the topics discussed. One basic condition was that all the interviewees knew about the foundation. Each group experiences the work of the ALF from different perspectives; either by working directly in the foundation's secretariat or in one of the bodies of the ALF or as EU officials who are aware of the policy processes at work within the EMP / UfM. Thirdly, I talked to persons who regularly follow the work of the foundation and the overall cultural policy processes in the European Union.

3.2. Document Analysis

As already laid out in my introductory chapter, beside the interviews I will intensively work with written documents already on hand. According to Mayring, a qualitative interpretation of documents is useful when working on historical events and a chronological overview. (Mayring 2002: 46) With regard to tracing the historical establishment of the foundation, the document analysis will be conducted alongside two thematic scopes:

- *Culture in the European Union's External Relations*

A first survey includes the treatment of the external dimension of cultural policies of the European Union. Not only by looking at the official documents published by the European Commission, by the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council of the European Union but also by analyzing conference papers that are working on the topic.

- *Genesis of the Euro-Mediterranean Cultural Regime*

I will fall back on the conclusions of the Ministerial Meetings of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership / Union for the Mediterranean that raised the idea of establishing a foundation for intercultural dialogue.

Selecting and analyzing the document will always be carried out in reference to my research questions. A critical assessment of the resources should then be at the basis for a reliable interpretation. This includes an awareness of the type of the document at hand, its origin and its external and internal characteristics which can also be subsumed by form and content, but also the proximity to the analyzed object should be given. (Mayring 2002: 48)

The analyzed documents give a first outline of the chronology of the establishment of the cultural regime and allow a first analysis of the ALF alongside the categories discussed in the previous chapters. However, the document analysis should be enhanced by an analysis of the conducted expert interviews. They will be especially relevant for a survey of the regime's working procedures and effectiveness. The basic principles and propositions of the *Qualitative Content-Analysis* will be summarized in the following sub-chapter.

3.3. Qualitative Content Analysis

3.3.1. Basic Guidelines and Principles

Fitting the Material into a Model of Communication

First of all, the linguistic material collected is always incorporated in a complex process of communication. That means it can be analyzed in different ways. Interpreting the material therefore asks for a clear conception on what the researcher tries to extract out of the text. When looking at the basic structure of a model of communication it becomes clear that it always comprises: a *source* – a *communicator* and a *text* in a certain *situational context* with its *recipients* and its *target audience*. (Lagerberg as cited in Mayring 2008: 50) One has to measure the relevance of each of these components of communication. Regarding my interviews I am mostly interested in the *text* and the *content* of the interviews. By looking at the actual comments and opinions the interrogated persons expressed about the object of analysis – this is the ALF – I would like to find out more about the institutional arrangements and about the relevance of the ALF as a specific European cultural diplomacy model.

Systematic Analysis – Following Rules and Theoretical Guidelines

In a further step the selected part of the communication must be analyzed according to previously defined rules. This includes a clear, disclosed process of analysis and its dissection into certain units and categories. However, it is also relevant to keep in mind the theoretical state of the art of the subject discussed, which was also highly relevant when formulating my research question. Within my study the disclosed process of analysis should be given by a detailed survey of cultural policy practices of the European Union, clear definitions of the terms employed and the use of a comprehensive theory of International Relations. These propositions will be kept in mind for all the decision taken when analyzing the material and especially when developing the categories. (Mayring 2008: 52 -55)

Developing a System of Categories

The categories will be developed in a deductive method that is according to a preliminary theoretical framework and issue specific studies.⁴⁴ The system of categories will be discussed in more detail when the document analysis is completed. However, a typical characteristic of qualitative social research is its circular process – meaning the categories can be adapted if necessary throughout the process and should not be conclusively defined. (Behnke et al. 2006: 33)

Reliability and Validity

Taking these methodological principles and guidelines into account secures the reliability and the validity of the interpretation but also directs to the inter-subjective understanding of the analysis.

3.3.2. Procedures of the Qualitative Content Analysis

Presenting and Defining the Material of Analysis

In order to increase the reliability and the validity of the working process it is necessary to present and define the material the researcher will work with. In the case of this thesis the material includes the 29 expert interviews that were conducted between November 2010 and March 2011 at three different locations (Alexandria/Cairo, Egypt; Vienna, Austria; Brussels, Belgium) with the aforementioned three different target groups of experts (European cultural policy experts; persons directly involved with the institutional set-up of the Foundation including the members of the Board of Governors, the Advisory Council, Head of Networks and the network members; experts involved with the EuroMed Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean)

⁴⁴Developing the categories *inductively* would refer to a more open process, meaning the researcher does not work with a prior existing system of categories but would extract them right out of the material which then would lead the researcher to formulate specific hypotheses. (Mayring 2008: 75) One also speaks of explorative research. (Behnke et al. 2006: 32)

All of the interviewees were contacted by a first email laying out my research interest and inquiring about an interview appointment. The subsequent conducted interviews lasted between 40 and 90 minutes and were then transferred into written form by transcripts.

Once the research questions and the first system of categories have been developed the text corpus of the transcripts can be more clearly defined and also reduced. In the case of a deductive method of interpretation Mayring suggests to do this alongside a *structured analysis*, meaning the precast category system is applied to the text; certain passages that feature the respective categories are extracted and specifically highlighted (either by underlining or enumerating the text passages). (Mayring 2008: 120) This was also the case with my transcripts. Alongside regime theory I defined specific categories and sub-categories and according to these categories the text corpus was reduced and put in order by a structured content analysis.

Before turning to my actual analysis of the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime and integrating the reduced interview material I will give an overview on the external policies of the European Union. A further summary of the structures of the external cultural initiatives especially in the Mediterranean region should once again highlight the specific institutional arrangement of the ALF.

4. Culture in the Foreign Policies of the European Union

As mentioned in the introductory chapter “culture has never been at the core of European integration.” (Bozóki : 1) It was and still is foremost built on economic and political grounds. This is also due to the fact that both foreign policy as well as cultural policy ever since has been strongly linked to state sovereignty. Only in the 1970s competences in foreign affairs increased and gradually international cultural cooperation was integrated. (Pollak 2006: 203; Schäfer 2006: 53) This should be illustrated by a short chronological outline of the development of common external policies of the European community.

4.1. Advances of a Foreign Policy of the European Union

Initial attempts to coordinate the foreign policies of the Western European countries were related to the military retrenchment of Germany after World War II. Already in 1950 the *Pleven Plan*, rendered by the French Prime Minister René Pleven, suggested a European Defense Community (EDC) that should incorporate a European army and a European ministry of defense. However, the *Pleven Plan* was abandoned due to national discrepancies and the disallowing of the French National Assembly in 1954 (Bindi 2010: 13f.) In the light of the difficulties with an EDC the Treaty of Rome in 1957 dealt foremost with the economic aspect of international cooperation and commercial exchange but did not mention any deeper measures of a corresponding foreign policy. (Bindi 2010: 15) Nevertheless, the following years were characterized by several advances to institutionalize a common foreign policy. Already in 1958 French President Charles de Gaulle suggested regular meetings between the foreign ministers of the former European Economic Community (EEC). This resulted in the setting up of the Foreign Affairs Council and led to the first meeting of the heads of states and government in 1961 which later on in 1974 became the European Council. (Bindi 2010: 16) Further initiatives failed and only in 1970 the *Davignon-Report* with the idea of a European Political Cooperation (EPC) provided substantial progress in proposing also a common foreign policy. The Davignon-Report put forward “regular meetings among the EEC foreign ministers, eventual meetings of the head of state and government, regular consultations on matters of foreign policy among member states [...]” (Bindi 2010: 19) In 1987, the EPC was integrated in the legal framework of the European Community alongside the first major

reform of the European treaties⁴⁵ with the Single European Act. (Steinbichler 2009: 16) The Maastricht Treaty in 1992 then brought the most far-reaching consolidation of the foreign policy of EU which then was institutionalized as the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in the second pillar of the European Union.

In the 1980s and the 1990s the actions for a common foreign policy laid out in the official treaties were enhanced by a diverse arrangement of reports and association agreements which extended the scope of action both geographically as well as contentwise. Alongside this institutional consolidation of the EU's foreign policy the activities on cultural cooperation gained form. One of the earliest initiatives of a proposed external cultural dialogue of the EU can be found in the late 1980s in the Lomé IV Convention. Article 139 of the multilateral agreement among the 12 member states of the European Community and 69 countries from the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) region proposes:

Co-operation should aim at promoting, in the interests of dialogue, exchange and mutual enrichment and, on the basis of equality, a better understanding and greater solidarity between ACP governments and peoples on the one hand, and between ACP and community governments and peoples on the other hand. (Lomé Convention 1995: 77)

Other measures that go in that direction can be found in the articles 140 - 149 and include: "the promotion of cultural identities and inter-cultural dialogue, safeguarding the cultural heritage, the production and distribution of cultural goods, cultural events, and lastly, information and communications." (McMahon 2004: 331) Since then the Community launched a series of bilateral and multilateral association agreements that include a similar cultural stipulation. The multilateral agreements organized by geographical regions and units (such as the Asian and the Mediterranean region) were mostly regulated by intergovernmental negotiation processes among the member states involved. But also the community support was given by a diversity of involved DGs of the European Commission and the Council of the European Union. In 1992, the Council also published a *Conclusion of the Future of European Cultural Cooperation* which shows the increasing awareness for the inclusion of cultural agendas in its external policies. (McMahon 2004: 333) Though next to the political and economical agendas the cultural diplomacy initiatives were only isolated cases and not based on a coherent framework, and also not

⁴⁵These were the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), and the European Economic Community (EEC).

defined as such in the broader EU discourse. Also, in the late 1990s they were thrust aside by an increasing focus on security and military matters in the EU's foreign policy. The Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997 not only introduced the position of a High Representative for the CFSP, which contributed significantly to the visibility of the CFSP, but also put forward the merging of the Western European Union.⁴⁶ After these institutional arrangements and also as a response to the "key threats of a globalized world today: terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; regional conflict; failed states; and organized crime" (Bindi 2010: 37) the *Political and Security Committee* was established in 2001, a comprehensive *European Security Strategy* was adopted in 2003, and in 2004 the *European Defense Agency* was established. (Pollak 2006: 204f.)

During the following years EU foreign policy was very much shaped by the new cultural conceptualizations that were discussed in the introductory chapter. Not only cultural advocacy discussions led by non-public actors but also the EU institutions emphasized the EU's standing as a soft and civilian power in world affairs and thus lay the foundation for what the political scientist Jozef Bátora terms as the:

transition from a triple to EU's quadruple foreign policy meaning that the CFSP passed through a process of deepening [institution building and consolidation], widening [new geographical and functional arrangements of the addressed regions and countries and the issue areas working on] and hardening [acquiring new security and military capabilities] and now a softening of foreign policy. (Bátora 2011: 82f.)

How this transition of the EU's foreign policy is also expressed in the Mediterranean policies should be illustrated by a short overview of common EU foreign policies and its cultural dimension in the Mediterranean region.

⁴⁶The military alliance was already established in 1954 but until then was placed outside the framework of the European Community. For more information see: <http://www.weu.int/> (22.09.2011)

4.2. Cultural Cooperation in Euro-Mediterranean Policies

4.2.1. Global Mediterranean Policy – Euro-Arab Dialogue – New Mediterranean Policy

The southern Mediterranean countries such as the northern African countries and the countries in the Middle East have always been of “priority interest for European countries.” (Bindi 2010: 32) Also Andreu Claret, current director of the ALF, remarks: “For many reasons, which are historical, political, economical and cultural, it [the Mediterranean region] plays a central role in the setting of the global agenda.” (Claret 2010: 2)

Especially countries such as France and Spain, due to their historical and colonial ties and their geographical closeness, have always held close relations with the southern Mediterranean countries. These countries were the first ones that negotiated sub-regional trade cooperation agreements with North African countries in the Maghreb region. Hence, one could not speak of a coherent community action in the Mediterranean region but rather of a patch-work of several association agreements of the individual member states with countries in the region. (Steinbichler 2009: 26) Only later this cooperation was enhanced by bilateral agreements of the European Community with several other eastern and southern Mediterranean countries. (Schäfer 2006: 88) The diverse association agreements were then harmonized by the Global Mediterranean Policy launched as a common EU policy in Paris in 1972. On the agenda was the common interest to establish “a free-trade area for industrial goods, an easing of custom restrictions for some agrarian products and a closer cooperation in financial, technical, and social affairs.” (Steinbichler 2009: 24) It was therefore mostly based on economic and financial cooperation; broader or even concrete political or cultural issues were not discussed. (Schäfer 2006: 91)

Between 1973 and 1990 the *Euro-Arab Dialogue (EAD)* formed a comprehensive multilateral dialogue between the countries of the Arab League and at that time nine member countries of the EU. The dialogue marked a shift both on a structural as well as on a content level. First of all, the EAD stands for a new measure in collective diplomacy between two groups of states. Secondly, it included not only high-level meetings of the head of states and government and national civil servants but also regular meetings of

scientists, intellectuals discussing a multiplicity of topics. Hence, representatives of cultural organizations such as UNESCO, and ALESCO (Arab League Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) and other cultural actors triggered a first debate on culture in the Euro-Mediterranean region. (Schäfer 2006: 94) Though, the difficulties in tackling the primary objectives (working on an acceptable solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict for all sides involved and to provide a forum of equal partners in order to overcome the oil crisis) for establishing the EAD finally also led to its demise. (Emara 2010: 197; Schäfer 2006: 94) But the idea of a multilateral dialogue marked the characteristic of subsequent programs in the region. (Schäfer 2006: 95)

In the late 1980s several transformations, that manifested themselves inside but also outside the EU, led to “the necessity to redefine political spaces, both at global and regional levels.” (Comelli 2010: 387) To begin with, these were predominantly the end of the Cold War and new global constellations and challenges related to the process of globalization but also the emerging Islamic fundamentalism in some Arab countries. The intra-European changes relate to the south expansion in the 1980s and the increasing institutionalization of a common foreign policy with the European Single Act in 1986. (Steinbichler 2009: 16) Hitherto the foreign policy of the EC/EU had primarily involved economic considerations, now with these developments they were informed by increased social discrepancies and security concerns that resulted in diverse sub-regional initiatives such as the *Mediterranean Forum*, the *Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean*, and the *5+5-dialogue*.

Even though the Mediterranean Forum was rather informed by national positions which can be traced back to the establishment as a clearly national initiative of Egypt, France, and Italy it provided a platform “for governments around the Mediterranean basin to brainstorm on the prospect of the Euromed cooperation.” (Emara 2010: 197) The pan-Mediterranean Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean was modeled after the European equivalent of the intergovernmental Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and was launched by Spain and Italy in 1989. The three baskets similarly included: “regional stability, economic cooperation and dialogue among civilizations and human rights.” (Steinbichler 2009: 28) Slowly the cultural dimension found its way into Mediterranean policies. Nevertheless, the initiative constantly faced difficulties not only within the heterogeneity of the multiplicity of participating countries

but also due the internal European conflicts involving the “competitive positions among France, Italy and Spain concerning a Mediterranean policy.” (Steinbichler 2006: 29) The same happened to the French initiative of the *5+5-dialogue*.⁴⁷ Even though its structure was more informal and easier to coordinate due to its smaller geographic scope it failed due to the unclear position regarding the political relation with Libya, the discrepancies regarding security issues and due to a lack of political will regarding the interregional cooperation and common procedures of the countries involved. (Comelli 2010: 394)

Only with the *Renewed Mediterranean Policy* in 1990 a more coherent European wide framework was established. Besides of being another attempt of a collective diplomacy in the region its structural innovation was the adoption of decentralized cooperation projects that had already been part of the ACP Lomé Conventions.

Excursus: Decentralized Cooperation

Decentralized cooperation built upon the idea that cooperation cannot only take place among governmental representatives but its success is also very much determined by the civil society and how they perceive the political frameworks set up in the Mediterranean region. The decentralized MED-programs intended to circumvent governmental interference and its bureaucratic inefficiencies in order to maintain closer relations to the needs of the civil society in the region. Therefore, the structures of the grant scheme of decentralized cooperation also allowed autonomous local and regional institutions to apply for funding provided by the European Community in order to launch and finance their own initiatives including a wide range of topics (education, environment, youth, and media). (Schäfer 2006: 97) Participating in the project required a *2+2 mode*, which means a project proposal had to involve at least two partners from the South and two from the European countries that would be working collaboratively on a project. Beside this precondition the several funds were directed at diverse target groups: local and regional authorities, small and medium sized businesses, NGOs, and educational institutions. The MED-Programs therefore also included perspectives that could already be subsumed as a Euro-Mediterranean cultural diplomacy, this is for example *MED Campus* (exchange programs for universities and other higher education institutions), *MED Urbs* (twinning of cities and

⁴⁷The participating countries were Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Malta, and the Maghreb countries Mauretania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya.

municipalities), and *MED Media* (training and exchange opportunities for professionals in the media sector) (Schäfer 2006: 98)

The European Commission conceptualized the programs and in the beginning was also in charge of the administration of the projects schemes and their monitoring. Later, they were supported by a *Bureau of Technical Assistance* and an *Agency for Trans-Mediterranean Networks*. But the funding of the numerous small-scale projects was difficult to monitor. In 1995, a report by the European audit court and by the European Parliament that criticized the opacity of the granting scheme led to the abandoning of the decentralized cooperation scheme for a couple of years. (Schäfer 2006: 101-103) Despite these difficulties, the multilateral scheme was incorporated in a revised version later on in the successive Barcelona process and its cultural programs. Especially as decentralized cooperation involved a diversity of stakeholders and enabled the development of numerous issue-specific capacity networks.

4.2.2. Barcelona Process – Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

The most far-reaching and ambitious attempt to launch cooperation in the Mediterranean basin came from the EU in 1995. (Comelli 2010: 387) Scholars detect three main reasons for the new interest of the EU toward the South: To begin with, a renewed engagement in the South should rebalance the preferential economic treatment of the East after 1989. Furthermore, the fear was prevalent that the increasing economic and social instability of North Africa would fuel Islamist ideas and cause a major exodus of economic migrants and political refugees to Europe. Thirdly, it followed the general global development toward regionalization. (Derisbourg 1997: 9) Therefore, on the ministerial conference that took place from the 27th to the 28th of November 1995 the foreign ministers of the former 15 member states of the EU and of twelve southern Mediterranean countries, together with the Vice-President of the European Commission at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Barcelona adopted the Barcelona-Declaration. The Barcelona Process then became a political framework with a more encompassing and long term perspective than in the case of traditional sub-regional Mediterranean policy. The process was built upon the three baskets of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and aimed at:

- improving the political and security dialogue to achieve a common area of peace and stability based on respect for human rights and democracy.
- establishing an economic and financial partnership and the gradual establishment of a free-trade area to create a zone of shared prosperity and to support economic transition in the partner states.
- enhancing a social, cultural and human partnership to encourage understanding between peoples and cultures and exchanges between civil societies. (Steinbichler 2009: 30ff.)⁴⁸

Moreover, the trans-sectoral character of the three baskets led to a more comprehensive perspective. Alongside the three thematic scopes the Barcelona Process comprised a bilateral and a multilateral dimension of actions. The bilateral cooperation concerns activities between the EMP and an individual country on the base of association agreements. The regionalist agenda directed to common projects of multiple actors of the EMP. (Schäfer 2006: 117-118) Though in comparison to the bilateral approach the funding of multilateral programs was rather scarce and made up only 10% of the overall MEDA budget⁴⁹, the former funding envelope for the Mediterranean region. (Schäfer 2006: 150)

The two complementary dimensions should generate a wide framework for political, economic and social exchange between EU member states and partner countries in the Mediterranean and highlight the idea of a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership reiterated in the declaration of the Barcelona Process as in other ensuing conclusions. A partnership in the Euro-Mediterranean region that “presupposes all states are considered as sovereign contractual parties and, in addition, each country obtains the right of veto independently of the political weight.” (Steinbichler 2009: 37) However, the political scientist George Joffe remarks, the Barcelona process still reflected “the hegemony that Europe has established over this region” (Joffe 1997:13) And also in view of the high principles of the Barcelona Declaration one has to allude that they resembled rather a charter than a legally binding document; up to now the agreements on the three baskets are based upon common

⁴⁸http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2005/july/tradoc_124236.pdf (11.06.2011)

⁴⁹The first financial instrument for the external policies in the Mediterranean was MEDA. After the launch of the European Neighborhood Policy in 2004 MEDA was replaced by the European Neighborhood Partnership Instrument in 2007.

memorandum. Nevertheless, observers state that it has to be seen as an achievement that the EMP assembled all parties involved with the Middle East conflict. (Schäfer 2006: 150)

As a result, there remained very ambiguous feelings on the success of the pursued objectives of the three baskets of the Barcelona process. Especially since the establishment of the successor of Barcelona Process, the Union for the Mediterranean in 2008, the success has been put very much in question.

With regard to my thesis, I would like to take a closer look on the structures of the EuroMed cultural programs in the third basket of the Barcelona Process.

As shortly touched upon with the mentioning of the Euro-Arab dialogue and the New Mediterranean Policy there had been debates on cultural issues and financial envelopes for cultural initiatives even before the Barcelona Process. But not until the official introduction of a social, cultural and human perspective in the third basket of Barcelona a coherent cultural program got on track. But still – even though the first ministerial meeting that took place after the *Barcelona Declaration* was actually a meeting of the ministers of Culture of the EuroMed Partnership (together with the European Commissioner for Culture) – the third basket did receive only scant consideration in comparison to the political and economic cooperation projects. (Schäfer 2006: 248) Nonetheless, the *Barcelona Declaration* opened up a diverse field of prospective action and cultural engagement and therewith brings the wide notion of culture to mind.⁵⁰ The first initiative, the *EuroMed Cultural Heritage Program*, that was introduced in the Barcelona follow-up conference of the ministers of culture from the 22th to the 23th of April 1996 in Bologna initially focused on preservation projects and capacity trainings among actors working in the cultural sector. Two years later, the second meeting of Euro-Mediterranean Culture Ministers was held in Rhodes (September 25-26) and *EuroMed Audiovisual* for joint programs in the audiovisual and cinema sector was launched. (Roca I Cortes 2009: 137)

Since then a diversity of projects in the third basket were developed within the regional program schemes and all of them aimed “at the development of human resources, the transfer of know-how, training in culture-related skills, the establishment of joint systems

⁵⁰The Barcelona Declaration included topics such as education, media, youth, and gender equality. See also Barcelona Declaration Point IV: http://eeas.europa.eu/EuroMed/docs/bd_en.pdf (28.11.2011)

of information and communication, the use of new technologies, and the promotion of sustainable economic development [...]” (Roca I Cortes 2009: 134)⁵¹

So far all of the programs were conceptualized by the European Commission, or more precisely DG RELEX, sometimes also in cooperation with the DG for Education and Culture (DG EAC). DG EAC actually is the main actor for formulating cultural agendas on a domestic European level. Yet, DG EAC has no direct involvement with the budgetary envelopes for the external cultural programs, though it regularly provides a thematic framework for the cultural initiatives in third states and advises DG RELEX.⁵² Hence, the *EU Cultural Agenda in a Globalizing World* prepared by DG EAC was also an important stimulus for the DG RELEX and its further initiatives in the Mediterranean region. Also, in 2008 DG EAC launched the *Year of Intercultural Dialogue*, which was then also adopted as the *EuroMed Year of Intercultural Dialogue* in the same year.

With reference to the first cultural programs of the EMP it was DG RELEX that prepared the guidelines and the framework for the cultural programs. But as the European Commission has only the right to initiative and to execute EU policies and does not hold any legislative power, it has to work closely together with the Council of the European Union. The Council constituted by national ministers and representatives according to their respective agendas together with the European Parliament is the legislative body of the EU. Though with regard to the CFSP, the Council still holds the exclusive legislative power and thus concludes on international agreements with partner countries and institutions. Therefore, in view of the cultural programs of the EuroMed Partnership, the conceptual and financial framework laid out by the European Commission had to be prepared and approved by the responsible EuroMed Committee. The EuroMed Committee was constituted by one representative of each of the 12 former partner countries⁵³ of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and of the countries of the EU that held the present and subsequent EU-presidency, a representative of the European Commission and the High Representative of the CFSP. Other EU member countries that were not part of the current

⁵¹For a full listing of the EuroMed Programs in the third basket of the Barcelona process see: Roca I Cortes, I. (2009). *From the Barcelona Process to the Union for the Mediterranean. Cultural Cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership from 1995 to 2008* Mediterranean Yearbook Dossier. Or Schäfer, I. (2006). *Vom Kulturkonflikt zum Kulturdialog. Die kulturelle Dimension der Euro-Mediterranen Partnerschaft*. Baden: Nomos.

⁵²There is also an interinstitutional unit in the DG EAC that is working on international cooperation and programs and serves as an intermediary among the DGs involved with cultural cooperation in third states.

⁵³In 1995 these were Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey.

EU-troika held an observatory status. The EuroMed Committee met regularly (about every two months) to discuss diverse agendas related the EMP process and monitored the implementation of its programs. Beyond that they prepared the working plan for the biennial ministerial conferences. (Schäfer 2006: 149) In 2008, with the founding of the UfM in 2008 the EuroMed Committee became the Senior Officials Meeting.

In a further step DG RELEX and DG Aid and Cooperation (now DG DEVCO⁵⁴) in the European Commission with the support of the delegations and technical assistance offices on site then were working on the actual management of the projects and the communication with participating cultural actors. (Schäfer 2006: 140) Thus, all the program administrations within the framework of the EMP followed roughly the decentralized cooperation measures also adopted in the *Renewed Mediterranean Policy* and were financed and run by community funds and institutions which contributed to an asymmetrical relationship between the EU and its southern Mediterranean partners. Also, as the political scientist Isabel Schäfer points out in her comprehensive study on the first EuroMed programs, the actual decisions on the EuroMed financial agendas were taken even before the official meetings of the EuroMed Committee by the *Med Committee* in the Council constituted only by EU representatives. (Schäfer 2006: 146) As a result, the lack of co-determination regarding the programs shows that there has ever since been some imbalance concerning the principle of a real partnership in the region. Also the fact that the chair of the EuroMed Committee was always held by the country of the present Presidency of the Council contributed to the general perception that the southern Mediterranean countries were rather “policy takers than policy makers with no ownership of the process involved.” (Comelli 2010: 394) Hence, also the cultural programs so far were perceived as “one-way-cooperation” (Schäfer 2006: 247) meaning that a European perspective on ethics and values was transferred to the Mediterranean region and a more reciprocal character on the basis of an open concept of cultural diplomacy was rather dismissed. Therefore in view of the idea of the partnership both on a governmental but also on a civil society level and the emerging discussion on a foundation for intercultural dialogue, stakeholders agreed that such a shared foundation can only work “on the condition of a new intergovernmental instrument.” (Nicolaidis 2003: 92-93) The new instrument then became the ALF which was planned as an institution that should incorporate the idea of a comprehensive partner-

⁵⁴With the institutional rearrangements of the Lisbon Treaty DG Europe Aid was merged with the DG Development and Cooperation (DG DEVCO) which is responsible for the monitoring of the funding envelopes of the EU in third states. (Interview #27)

and co-ownership already in its institutional set-up. Before turning to the actual analysis of this new model of cultural cooperation I want to take a look at the latest institutional developments in Euro-Mediterranean politics.

4.2.3. Union for the Mediterranean

At the *Paris Summit for the Mediterranean* in July 2008 French President Nicolas Sarkozy put forward the idea to relaunch the Barcelona Process as the Union for the Mediterranean. The regional context then rose to 43 member states and once again emphasized the idea of a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and changed the structural arrangements of the Barcelona process. To begin with, the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) replaced the EuroMed Committee and now assembled representatives of all of the 43 member states. Moreover, it introduced a biannual rotating co-presidency of one EU and one Non-EU representative and formalized the participation of a representative of the Arab League (AL) during the meetings. Also in spring 2010, a secretariat in charge for the intergovernmental cooperation was installed in Barcelona.⁵⁵ Initially, the UfM was directed to the economic, security and ecological challenges of the Mediterranean and rather omitted the social and human objectives of the Barcelona Process. Yet, as the present Executive Director of the ALF, remarks:

The permanence of the political problems of the region with their stubborn cultural dimension, recalled the importance of the ‘third basket’ of the Barcelona process for the achievement of any kind of political or economic dialogue in the region. The Paris Declaration therefore underlined the importance of promoting intercultural dialogue and stressed the role of the ALF that was created for this purpose. (Claret 2010: 3)

Since then, the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures covers the cultural dimension of the UfM.

⁵⁵<http://www.EuroMedalex.org/about/our-mandate/union-for-the-mediterranean> (11.06.2011)

5. Genesis of a Euro-Mediterranean Cultural Regime

The idea of establishing a foundation that aims to enable dialogue and exchange not only among people working in the cultural sector but across all levels of civil society had been discussed since 1995. This was especially the case at the first two meetings of the Ministers of Culture, shortly after the Barcelona Conference in Bologna in 1996 and in Rhodes two years later. (Nicolaidis 2003: 91) However, it took another three years that that the topic was brought more prominently on the agenda in the light of the new global context after 9/11.

The meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in April 2002 in Valencia was strongly dominated by the events surrounding the terror attacks that had taken place a couple of months earlier and picked up again on the results of the two precedent conferences of the Ministers of Culture. My analysis of the genesis of the ALF at the heart of the cultural regime in the Euro-Mediterranean region therefore involves the conclusions of the EuroMed ministerial and mid-term conferences since Valencia in 2002. Since then, the idea of a cultural foundation shared by all member states of the EMP gained concrete form. But also further interim meetings of the EuroMed Committee are relevant for following the genesis of the cultural regime and to identify the actors involved. I begin my study by tracing the stages of regime formation and in a further step I integrate other explaining variables in the analysis of the formation of the EuroMed cultural regime.

5.1. Stages of Regime Formation

5.1.1. Agenda Formation

The circumstances around 9/11 made it evident that a dialogue of cultures had to be put forward more ambitiously. This moment of an increased awareness is also summarized by a DG RELEX officer:

And then suddenly [we realized] this is not enough, we would really need a structure that would be the central point of a dialogue among cultures [...] We are in a situation where everything that is said is interpreted as Islamophobia, interpreted as racism – not only as a third country relation, it has become quite an internal affair as well. Probably in the circumstances after 9/11, after the Caricatures, and after the Pope's declarations on Mohammed a strong and visual

sign was needed. That was probably one of the reasons why they did create an institution. (Interview #6)

The call for a visual sign also made it clear that the present structural arrangements had to be reconsidered in order to make the cultural dimension of the EMP more present.

Another interpretation of the mounting endorsement of a cultural dialogue is provided by a former member of the EuroMed Committee who sets the motivations that eventually led to the establishment of the ALF not only in the context of 9/11 but also in the context of the second Intifada in 2000:

With scores of deaths and injuries, the Barcelona Process was in dire straits, so people interested in keeping it alive were looking for a field of action that might be less affected by political and economic conflict and might even help bridge some gaps. (Interview #4)

Both circumstances once again recall the initial assumption that a regime frequently emerges as a response to a state of uncertainty and insecurity. (Haas 1997: 14) The intricate Middle East conflict, the terror attacks of 9/11 and fervid controversies around the Mohammed cartoons in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* in September 2005, the remarks by Pope Benedict XVI on Islam, given in a lecture one year later, manifested the cultural and religious misperceptions that according to the French-Lebanese sociologist Amin Maalouf contributed to the global insecurity and the dissolving of a stable world order that we are facing up to the present day.⁵⁶ All these upheavals not only triggered the phase of agenda formation of the EuroMed cultural regime but have also accompanied and legitimized the structures of the ALF ever since its establishment.

Vth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers (Valencia – April 2002)

Already in the first paragraph in the Presidency Conclusions of the Ministerial meeting in Valencia from the 22th to the 23th of April, 2002 it is stated that the meeting:

took place against the background of the highest levels of tension in the region in recent times. Under these difficult circumstances, the Ministers stressed the need for an increased dialogue and the relevance of the principles and

⁵⁶See also Maalouf, A. (2010). *Die Auflösung der Weltordnungen*. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp.

objectives agreed in the Barcelona Declaration in 1995 to make the Mediterranean a region of peace and stability, development and common prosperity, cooperation and understanding between cultures and civilisations. (Presidency Conclusions Valencia 2002: 1)

It was agreed that the instrument for the “intellectual, cultural and civil society exchanges” should become the EuroMed cultural foundation. (Presidency Conclusions Valencia 2002: 3) Furthermore, it was proposed that the foundation should strive for an authentic partnership, meaning that all partner countries on all levels across the region should participate on an equal footing in the foundation’s work. This already points to a significant difference to other EuroMed cultural programs which do not build upon this clear principle of co-ownership in their institutional set-up. The conference in Valencia included a first action plan; however further steps concerning the content of this dialogue, the structure, the functioning as well as the financing of such a foundation were delegated to future meetings of the EuroMed Committee. (Presidency Conclusions Valencia 2002: 14) The frequent meetings which were discussing the prospect cultural cooperation across the region mark the beginning of the institutionalization of a EuroMed cultural regime.

5.1.2. Institutional Choice

The institutional choice can be traced back to the follow-up work of the *Valencia Action Plan* at several meetings of the EuroMed Committee⁵⁷ and the following ministerial meetings that discussed the prospective structure of the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, whether it should be “based on a federal pattern, with a strong central institution at the heart of a network of cultural centres, or [...] a much looser, almost confederal entity.” (Gillespie 2004: 233)

EuroMed Mid-Term Euro-Mediterranean Conference (Crete – May 2003)

At the Mid-Term Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Crete in 2003 (May 26 - 27) the planned Eastern enlargement and the new framework of the European Neighborhood

⁵⁷Several meetings of the Euro-Mediterranean Committee meeting prepared the launch of the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation. These are a meeting in Copenhagen on November 20th, 2002; Euro-Mediterranean Committee meeting in Brussels on February 4th, 2003; meeting in Brussels on March 27th, 2003; Meeting in Athens on May 6th, 2003; Meeting in Brussels on July 17th, 2003; Meeting in Brussels September on 25th, 2003; Meeting in Rome on October 23rd, 2003; Meeting in Brussels: January 22nd, 2004. See Chronologies of the Mediterranean Yearbooks from 2003 to 2005: <http://www.iemed.org/anuari/2010/apresentacio.php> (12.07.2011)

Policy (ENP) were discussed. The multilateral cooperation among the Euro-Mediterranean Partners should be enhanced by the ENP as an increased bilateral cooperation between the European Union and its neighboring countries both in East and the South.⁵⁸ (Crete Presidency Conclusions Crete 2003: 12)

In further paragraphs the ministers acknowledge the importance of the Mediterranean region throughout history which recalls the invocation of a Euro-Mediterranean identity addressed in other more constructivist oriented studies. Also, they emphasize the strong link between the dialogue between cultures and civilizations and peace-building. In the annex, 23 points stress the foundation's future goals, objectives and activities. In addition, they suggest resuming the concept of decentralized cooperation (see Excursus chapter 4.2.1) in order "to mobilize regional and local authorities, as well as other relevant national institutions." (Presidency Conclusion Crete 2003: 14) Furthermore, they agree to take into account the input of a *High Level Advisory Group*.

The group of experts (also *Groupe des Sages*) was proposed by Romano Prodi – then President of the Commission – and his political advisory department, the *Bureau of European Policy Advisers*, in the same year. (Schäfer 2006: 135) It was composed of 18 experts (scholars, scientists, activists) who were doing research on/in the region and who were assigned to prepare a comprehensive report on the prerequisites for the foundation. In several meetings, between spring 2003 and fall 2004, the experts were discussing the framework in which the dialogue of cultures should take place and provided deeper reflection for the structure and the work of the foundation and other cultural initiatives in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

VIth EuroMed Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Naples – December 2003)

The conclusions of Crete remained rather vague and built on theoretical reflections on the principles of intercultural dialogue that had already been put forward in earlier working documents and conclusions. The actual institutionalization of the Foundation began with the Naples ministerial conference from the 2nd to the 3rd of December in the same year

⁵⁸http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/er/75950.pdf (26.04.2011)

where the findings of the High Level Advisory Group were presented and more structural details were arranged:

Its organization at least in the initial stage as a network of networks with a light administrative structure should allow a regular dialogue, notably between cultural circles outside official diplomatic and cultural forums. Partners confirmed their support for the launching of the Foundation in ensuring on a voluntary basis that it is granted financial resources consistent with the objective of its successful start-up. (Presidency Conclusions Naples 2003: 13)

5.1.3. Operationalization

EuroMed Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Dublin – May 2004)

In the first half of 2004, the EuroMed Committee discussed formal requirements for the creation of the foundation, including its location, budget and statutes. At the conference of foreign ministers from the 5th to the 6th of May 2004 it was decided that the foundation should be known as *The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue of Cultures* in memoriam of the Swedish Socialist politician Anna Lindh who had been assassinated in September 2003 and ever since had advocated for a cultural dialogue in the region. Beyond that, it was agreed that the ALF should have its headquarters in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in tandem with the Swedish Institute in Alexandria. Within the following six months the EuroMed Committee worked on the statutes of the foundation and appointed the German Traugott Schöfthaler as the ALF's first Director. The financing of the foundation was still based on the voluntary political commitment of the member states backed by the principle of partnership. On the 11th of November 2004 the statutes were approved and the first meeting of the 35 representatives of the national networks of the ALF took place. At the Ministerial conference in The Hague from the 29th to the 30th of November 2004 the working program of the Foundation was agreed on and the EuroMed Committee adopted further formal and technical aspects. Ultimately, on the 20th of April 2005 the official inauguration of the foundation was celebrated with the *Farah el Bahr Festival* in Alexandria. During that time the institutionalization also in its legal sense took place. The ALF was set up as an international foundation under the private law of Egypt which then also set the condition to receive funds. (Mediterranean Yearbook 2005: 310) In

the first half of the year 2006, the first programs started and in April the EuroMed Committee met the first time as the Board of Governors (BoG) of the ALF. This then marked the end of the operationalization stage of the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime.

5.2. Actors and Actors' Behavior

As already shortly touched upon before, the European Commission does not hold any legislative power in the context of the European Union; similarly within the EMP and its function in the EuroMed Committee it holds only an observatory status with no right to vote for any directives of the EMP. Directives are decided on an intergovernmental basis by the individual national representatives in the Committee. Nevertheless, the initiatives and communications administrated and published by the European Commission have ever since stimulated reflection in the relevant sectors and brought forward community policies. (Sassatelli 2008: 115). This was also the case with the EMP; its programs and agendas were considerably determined by the initiatives of the European Commission and its affiliated DGs. Also with regard to the establishment of the ALF the former President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, provided an important impetus for the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean cultural foundation by establishing the Groupe des Sages. Moreover, the Commission acted as an important ideator within the diverging national interests of the EuroMed Partnership. In a further step it also took over an important role in the implementation of the organizational set-up of the ALF and the maintenance of the EuroMed cultural regime which will become clear when looking at the working-procedures of the ALF (See: Chapter 5.5.2) But still, as one interviewee remarks, the effort of the European Commission was not more influential “than, say, large and highly interested member states such as France, Egypt, Italy and Spain.” (Interview #4) This also illustrates that even though the idea of partnership is recited like a mantra, there have always been only a few countries that were very active in putting the third pillar of the EMP to the fore. Therefore, the initiative of a cultural partnership emanated mostly much from French, Italian and Spanish diplomats whereas southern and eastern member states basically had only limited interest to participate in the regional and bilateral programs. (Schäfer 2006: 109; 142) In addition, numerous civil society organizations and research institutions from the southern European Union member countries were involved with the advocacy work for a foundation working on intercultural dialogue in the region. (Interview #9) This stems largely from a long and active tradition of Mediterranean research and

exchange in countries such as France and Spain. Also the High Level Advisory Group that represented academics and scholars of research institutions suggest the involvement of epistemic communities. Nevertheless, in the formation stage member countries – especially the northern Mediterranean riparian states such as France, Spain and Italy – were by far the most prominent actors which also resulted in the frequent denomination as a top-down institution. Only when looking at the operationalization stage and the actual working process of the cultural regime the actors multiplied and now the ALF comprises a diverse set of civil society actors.

5.3. Processes of Regime Formation

Recalling the three possible modes of regime formation – spontaneous/self-generated imposed, and negotiated – one can speak of a negotiated regime. This is because all the involved national representatives were very well aware of the negotiated agenda; this can be assumed when looking at the numerous meetings of the EuroMed Committee before establishing the ALF. But also the sensitive issue of culture would not necessarily allow for an imposed regime especially in the northern African countries. This might also have been the reason why the relevant rules agreed on such as the funding were mostly a “gentleman’s agreement” as an officer of the European Commission put it. (Interview#6) As a result, there was no strong imposition involved. Conversely, when perceiving imposition as the provision of certain goods by leadership actors such as France and Spain one might see it as such. This also led to some sort of tokenism of the northern African countries. A perspective that is exemplified by a comment of an interviewed network member of the ALF:

So at the moment for many countries being part of the ALF does not cost a lot, it looks quite nice – especially for a country like Egypt [...] Thus by not costing anything it means one does not have to give the foundation a great thought. ‘Just let them work as long as they don’t make any noise!’ I think this is the way it goes very often. (Interview #21)

Furthermore, when looking at the processes of regime formation it is also a question of perspective; whether one looks at governmental structures or the civil society. Basically, the ALF emanated from an intergovernmental framework that was offered to or /imposed on civil society, which is also expressed by the characterization of the ALF as being a top-down institution. And also the head of one of the national networks explains:

Normally the process of the origin of a foundation is a bottom-up process, people are willing to do something together and they put their resources, their activities together to make something bigger. Here it was decided from the top to the bottom. And it is always a very difficult process to involve the ground level, the grass roots level, in a process decided on by authorities [...] The Anna Lindh Foundation suffers from this origin and it is felt on all the levels of the activities and it also explains why the networks are so frail. If it would have been a bottom-up process we had something to defend together to the authorities [...] (Interview #10)

5.4. Driving Social Forces

When talking about the driving social forces it is not easy to follow only one explaining variable in all the three phases of regime formation. Realists concerned with the influence of power might point out France, Spain, and Egypt as politically powerful actors. They have always been highly economically and politically involved in the Mediterranean region which becomes clear when looking at the numerous initiatives in the Mediterranean region in which these three countries were leading actors. (See also Chapter 4.) Though, beside the material and political capabilities also the interest constellation played an important role. The realities of huge immigrant communities from the Mediterranean region – in particular from the Maghreb region – more manifest in the southern European countries such as in France, Spain or Italy than in other northern European countries have contributed to a major interest in establishing a foundation with a mandate like it has the ALF. Beyond this, EU member countries after 9/11 in general were very much alerted and they agreed on the necessity of establishing a foundation for intercultural dialogue. This also taken in consideration that for example Sweden, not necessarily as an important economical and political player as other countries in the region and geographically rather detached from the Mediterranean basin, was considerably involved with the establishment of the foundation. Just as well one might not dismiss the interests of southern Mediterranean countries that have restrained the efforts to endow the work of the foundation with clear norms and rules due to a lack of interest to forge a democratic intercultural dialogue on values such as freedom of speech and human rights. Moreover, there are multifarious highly politicized national perspectives that not only impede the efforts of the foundation but also the general process of the EMP which becomes clear in an interview statement:

Thus [the ALF] can always only move as fast as the slowest ship in the convoy. The fact that among the Union for the Mediterranean are a number of autocracies and even brutal dictatorships, as well as one partner is occupying another [...] add to the difficulties. (Interview #4)

As mentioned earlier, also epistemic communities and the distribution of knowledge played a major role. This becomes clear when recalling the increased interest of culture in the scientific discipline of International Relations. Scientists and professionals already since the 1990s have expounded the problem structure of new cleavages of cultures and identities. Hereby, they also influenced the overall international context and atmosphere of global politics after but even before 9/11. In contrast, the establishment of a High Level Advisory Group shows the very well intended involvement of external expertise for state actors.

5.5. Regime Components

5.5.1. Principles and Norms

Partner- and Co-ownership

Both the conclusions of the EuroMed ministerial conferences as well as the interviewees accentuated the importance of an *equal partnership* among the involved EMP member countries. Strongly linked to the substantial value of partnership is the possibility of *co-ownership* for the process not only on the governmental but also on the civil society level. Both dimensions are formally materialized with the possibility of co-determination for governmental representatives in the Board of Governors but also the common actions of civil society partners in the national and overall Anna Lindh Network. (See chapter 5.5.2) Thus, the EuroMed cultural regime was built upon the idea that the ALF is not a project offered by the EU to the Arab countries but that it is perceived as a mutual project shaped by all participating parties. Additionally, some argue that the partnership is not only constructed on the recent political grounds laid out in the previous chapter but also draws from a historical feeling of belonging to a EuroMed region. (Interview #23)

Citizenship

On the civil society level the principle of co-ownership should evoke a sense of *citizenship*. People living across the region should be encouraged to participate and to take over responsibility for their own surrounding. This is something not necessarily put forward in the official documents but stressed by people working in the field who point out that the ALF is not a cultural foundation per se but:

The final goal is to create a sense of ownership among the civil society for the political project [...] The project is to make the countries of Europe and the Mediterranean countries share a common project, in terms of economy, in terms of politics and in terms of values and culture. The role of the Anna Lindh Foundation is not a cultural role, the role of the Foundation is try to create a sense of ownership and a sense of participation on the level of the civil society. We can organize a theatre festival, a workshop on women empowerment, and training session for journalists – different models and formats – but the final goal is that you are part of this EuroMed project. What we are trying to do is create a EuroMed civil society which is necessary for the conciliation and for the success of the political project of the countries. (Interview #23)

Very closely linked to these principles is the causal belief of the correlation between a broad dialogue among the people living in the region and development in terms of “social cohesion, the consolidation of the rule of law and of basic freedoms” (ALF statutes 2004: Article II) but also in terms of economic growth.

Financial and Intellectual Independence

Complying with these principles of an open and equal dialogue on the civil society level would require the foundation to be independent not only with regard to its financial resources but also its content. The *norms* then are expressed by persons directly involved with the foundation’s work and also highly recommended in the report by the High level Advisory Group in 2003. Though the norms were not directly addressed or dealt with in detail in the formal documents and conclusions that consolidate the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime such as the ALF statutes. Yet, as it is often with norms they are the most vague and less stipulated. That this led to a constant contesting of the work of the ALF becomes clear when looking at the rules and procedures of the cultural regime.

5.5.2. Rules and Procedures: the Organizational Structure of the ALF

Looking at the rules and procedures of the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime asks for a detailed analysis of the ALF and its organizational structure.

In the first part, I will refer to the main actors, the rules and the decision-making procedures for interaction, but also its norms by looking at the content (this is the programming) and the budget of the ALF in order to find out about its level of independence and autonomy as an arm's length institution. Hence, the categories applied to the transcripts are mostly deductively drawn from my regime theoretical perspective and the theoretical background on cultural policy/diplomacy. Nevertheless, a further system of categories was adopted inductively by going through the interviews alongside Mayring's structured analysis. Therefore, I will also integrate themes such as mobility and civil society outreach as they were frequently pointed out and debated in the interviews. In a final step the effectiveness of the Euro-cultural regime should be assessed by looking at the institutional embedding of the foundation. I am convinced that the effectiveness is not only influenced by its institutional set-up but is also very much determined by the complex position the foundation takes within other multilateral political arrangements.

Basically, the organizational structure of the regime includes six actors: the *Board of Governors*, this is the member states, *EU institutions*, the *Advisory Group*, the *Network members* and as the focal point of the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime the *Secretariat* headed by the *President* and the *Executive Director*.

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors (BoG) of the ALF assembles the same persons that are representing the individual member states of the UfM in the SOM. Approximately every two or three months a BoG-meeting takes place and as such is part of the two-day SOM. During the first day senior officials discuss general agendas related to the UfM/EMP. On the second day they meet as the BoG of the ALF and discuss the work and the prospective program of the foundation. In addition, representatives of DG RELEX (now a unit in the EEAS) and of the Arab League (AL) take part at the meeting. In the context of the Neighborhood Policy of the EU in the South also a regular involvement of the Cabinet

Füle (Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy) was formalized during the last year. Representatives of the EU and the AL hold an observatory status which shows that the BoG is purely an intergovernmental decision-making body. The Board is presently chaired by Veronika Stabej from Slovenia; its deputy chair is Mohamed Mahjoub from Tunisia which already shows the geographical balance that must be given in all bodies of the ALF. Both are in charge for preparing the agenda of the BoG and serve as the contact point between the BoG and the ALF in Alexandria.

During the meeting the Executive Director of the ALF prepares an overview of the current and prospective activities of the foundation, which must be approved by the BoG. Also, the BoG is deciding on the triennial and annual budget plans. Further competences of the Board include the appointment and the dismissal of the Executive Director and the President as the approval of the members of the Advisory Council suggested by the individual member states. As a result the BoG takes over the role as the “main decision-making body in the Foundation” (Interview #11) and is in charge for the monitoring and the auditing of the foundation’s work. (ALF Statutes, Article IV, 2)

In the first BoG meetings the secretariat in Alexandria was mostly represented by the executive director of the ALF. Only since the second phase also the head of the communications unit of the foundation participates regularly at the meetings. This was endorsed as some of the units in the secretariat had expressed their regret about being excluded from the high officials meeting and the lack of information that had been communicated in the first phase. (Interview #4, 12) Even though that the statutes of the ALF had actually foreseen regular meetings among the different bodies. Now the present director tries to open up discussions between the BoG and the other bodies involved and create a more transparent decision-making process. Yet, there are still doubts about the huge power of the BoG as the national entanglement of its members and the wide areas of co-determination influence the daily work of the foundation. The influence follows different directions: On the one hand, it regularly restrains the efforts of the foundation. The board members represent and reiterate national positions and hence the work of the ALF is frequently enmeshed and bounded by long-term conflicts, which was shortly alluded before. This is also the case with the persistent Arab-Israeli conflict that poses:

the most important line of friction between the Anna Lindh Foundation in Alexandria and the Board of Governors [...] would usually be either Israel complaining about biased programs or events of ‘Israel-bashing’ or the Arab

Group represented by Egypt fearful of too much open and critical debate or too much publicity. (Interview #4)

As a result, the working process often becomes highly politicized, which makes it difficult to take bigger steps ahead. On the other side, many interrogated experts emphasize the importance of the mid-position the ALF takes between the BoG and its network members, which also earned the foundation its denomination as some kind of “Frankenstein: half human, half monster, being intergovernmental in its original nature, but working for and with civil society through a social network of networks deeply rooted in the 43 countries.” (Claret 2010: 3) And the Executive Director adds that:

it gives to all our activities an added value. It means that all of the projects we develop in the fields of Culture, Education, Migrations, Media, Interreligious Dialogue or others are done on behalf of 43 countries and with the participation of the civil society. (Claret 2010: 3)

And also another interviewee addresses the necessity of such an approach:

Even it might slow down the process it gives us much more credibility and access to the society. Because working with civil society in countries that are quite restrictive – you cannot do anything if the country does not allow you to. (Interview #14)

Therefore, the governmental proximity with the BoG also regularly allows the foundation to ask for official support such as a letter from a Ministry of Foreign Affairs that for example facilitates the obtainment of a visa for actors involved in the programs of the ALF. (Interview #26)

But one should not fall into the trap to blame the strong national entanglement of the ALF only to the autocratic structures in the Arab countries that are not willing to support the possible development of a critical civil society. In fact, also on the

European side the feared *danger* of giving a voice to moderate Islamists is presumably the reason why certain governments insisted at the end of the day on placing a strict political control over the new Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue of Cultures [...] (Gillespie 2003: 234-235)

Beyond this, many critiques also see the strong involvement of the BoG basically in the failure of setting clear rules for the working procedures of the ALF. This holds true

especially for its funding structure. In the ministerial meetings they did not agree on any sanctions in the case of a default in paying of some of the member states. Consequently, there is regularly the paradox situation that some of the member states do not at all financially support the ALF but have a right to vote in the BoG and can considerably shape its program and budget.

The President

The position of the President was introduced in the second phase of the ALF in 2008. The idea of having a President for the ALF was very much related to the lack of visibility of the foundation and a conflict of competences in the first phase that resulted from a double leadership of two directors. Therefore, it was decided to establish the post of the Executive Director and the President. (Interview #6, 12) Whereas the Executive Director is responsible for the management of the foundation, the President takes over mostly representative functions. Furthermore, he/she presides over the Advisory Council and supports the Executive Director. The President is selected by the BoG from a short list prepared by the Euro-Mediterranean partners for a term of three years (renewable once). (ALF Statutes, Article IX) The choice of the President is a very political and symbolic one. Also the decision of the current President, the Moroccan André Azoulay, for many of the interviewees was very symbolical. Azoulay, a Moroccan Jew who immigrated to France in the 1950s and now serves as advisor to the King Mohammed of Morocco VI, ever since has lived in different cultural contexts and he has been very committed to the intercultural and interreligious dialogue in the region.⁵⁹ As such he: “[...] was suggested by consensus by the Arab countries which was a positive signal for the unity among the region. For an institution working on intercultural dialogue this decision was very relevant.” (Interview #23) Another EU officer remarks that it was necessary to choose a well known public figure in the region, that is “[...] committed on dialogue in the region, [has] respect throughout the region, and somebody that can make political statements [...] Because at the end of the day culture is a highly political issue.” (Interview #6) Therefore, one of the participants of the BoG observes that Azoulay who is actually not obliged to attend the BoG meetings “normally participates very actively and – let me say politically.” (Interview

⁵⁹Furthermore Azoulay also presides over the executive committee of the *Foundation for the Three Cultures and Three Religions in the Mediterranean*. <http://www.tresculturas.org/> (01.09.2011)

#23) Other interviewees doubt the necessity of such a representative post for the ALF as it is frequently filled with long long-serving diplomats. (Interview #21, 8)

Executive Director

The Executive Director works on the multi-annual budget, appoints and heads the staff, prepares the meetings of the BoG and acts as the legal representative of the Foundation. Moreover, the director has to report frequently on the foundation's budgetary lines and activities both to the BoG but also to the other bodies involved. Hence, he has to "ensure the stability of the structure of the Foundation and its compliance with the Foundation's objectives." With regard to the norm of independence it is clearly stated that the Executive Director "shall neither seek nor take instructions from any government or from any other body." (ALF Statutes 2004: Article X) The Executive Director also takes over responsibility for the programming of the ALF in consultation with the internal executive committee. The executive committee is composed of the four Heads of Unit – this is Administration & Finance, Program, Network, and Communications. In consultation with the executive committee the Executive Director is working on concepts for prospective projects and the program schemes of the foundation. As the foundation is always working in triennial phases, the Executive Director is appointed by the BoG also for a period of three years and his term may be extended once. Also here the geographical balance should be given, thus if the President is from a southern Mediterranean country the Executive Director should be a northern Mediterranean citizen and the other way around. At the moment the Executive Director is the Spaniard Andreu Claret, who has for many years worked as a journalist and as an academic in/on the region.⁶⁰ In opposition to the President of the foundation, the Executive Director is selected by a short list not prepared by the member countries but by the European Commission. The final selection is then taken after a presentation of the candidates by a "board of four or five ambassadors" (Interview #23) Nevertheless, in both cases national representatives are very much involved with the final decision taken. This has led critical voices to question the selection procedures of the top management of the foundation as specific proportional representations must be taken into consideration, national discrepancies may juggle the foundation's political independence and do not necessarily assure that the most qualified candidate may be able to pass the system. (Interview #21)

⁶⁰<http://www.euromedalex.org/about/headquarters/directors-profile> (1.9.2011)

Within the context of the EU institutions the ALF has so far mostly interacted with the DG RELEX in the European Commission which was very much involved with the actual set-up and the maintenance of the foundation. Now with the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty a unit in the EEAS is responsible for the communication with the ALF. So far it is a seamless transition; the persons in charge for the ALF are still the same, only the institutional set-up changed slightly as one officer of the European delegation in Cairo summarizes:

Before [the Treaty of Lisbon] you had DG Aid and Cooperation, DG Development, DG RELEX and Enlargement and now you have DEVCO [Development and Cooperation], the External Action Service and Enlargement. But this is not peculiar for the ALF. This is typical for any kind of [European] external intervention for which you have different actors involved. For DEVCO it is this framework because of the money, the External Action Service because it is in the framework of External Relations, and Mr. Füle because he is the Commissioner of the neighboring countries. (Interview #27)

Basically, now the unit in the EEAS with the support of the delegation to the European Union in Cairo is responsible for the administration and the monitoring of the bulk of budget of the foundation that was legally concluded by an operational grant contract in 2005. The grant contract since then provides the technical and legal framework for the cooperation between the EU and the ALF in Alexandria. Hence, “it is a standard agreement the delegations have with different foundations, NGOs, or companies [...] which then implement a specific project and program.” (Interview #27) The operational grant contract regulates that the ALF receives funding of the EU for the three main interventions of the ALF: this is the *Anna Lindh Report*, the *Network Support Scheme* and the *Anna Lindh Forum*, though they are not as such involved with the content of the projects or with other program schemes of the ALF. Only sometimes through the monitoring and the management of the grant contract and their participation during the BoG meetings the EU institutions can make slight modifications on the overall budget or the program schemes. For example in case of an overlap with already existing EU measures in the region, which was the case in 2010/2011 with the ALF’s intention to launch a mobility fund. (Interview #15, 27) In sum, most of the interviewees remark the European Commission has so far refrained from intervening too much in the foundation’s agendas. It is rather supportive

and an important neutral counterbalance to the national positions of the BoG. (Interviewee #1, 4, 23, 26)

Secretariat

The Foundation's Secretariat according to a host country agreement is based in Alexandria, Egypt and is responsible for the functioning of the foundation and the communication between the different bodies involved.

The ALF is housed in two different premises. The administration unit is based in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the operational section is based in the Swedish Institute.⁶¹

Within the different units⁶² there are regular meetings, an overall staff meeting is scheduled once a month or every two months. Though the division in different buildings does impede efficient coordination; basic tasks like setting a meeting and urgently signing a paper are often very time-consuming. (Interview #11) Furthermore, as an Egyptian network member alluded, the accommodation in an institution such as it is the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, which represents the close relation to the old regime and the superiority of governmental cultural initiatives, contributes negatively to the overall perception of the foundation. And beyond that it not only hosts the foundation but also runs the national network. Therefore the reluctant acceptance of the ALF in Alexandria also can be traced back to a certain extent to the strong relation of the foundation with the Bibliotheca as some kind of pseudo-public actor. (Interview #21) A further challenge represents the environment of the host country and the city itself. Many interrogated persons agree that selecting Alexandria as the headquarters of the foundation was a highly symbolical decision, both due to its historical significance as a cultural melting pot as well as for highlighting the shared Euro-Mediterranean approach by establishing a foundation not in a European but in a southern Mediterranean country. Though for most of the employees the location represents a daily challenge: Travelling from and to Alexandria is strenuous and costly. This is not only difficult for the employees but also for the participants of meetings of the ALF that are regularly dislocated to Cairo. (Interview #13, 15, 16) Furthermore the working conditions

⁶¹Another cooperation program, between the Anna Lindh Foundation and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), is the Children's Literature Program. Its administration unit is based in a third building in Alexandria.

⁶²The Executive Office as the Administration and Finance Unit is housed in the Bibliotheca. In the Swedish Institute a Programme Unit and a Network Coordination Unit is situated. <http://www.euromedalex.org/about/headquarters> (13.07.2011)

such as the actual obtainment of a working permit in Egypt are often difficult. (Interview #16, 27) This might be predominantly due to the political structures but also because of the lack of clarity of the foundation's status in Egypt by being just an international foundation and not an international organization that might receive a more official status. (Interview #26, 27) So an interviewee notes: "the structure is not easy, they do a work that is not easy and they are in a country which is not easy [...]" which summarizes very well the structural preconditions for the ALF in Alexandria. (Interview #6) Furthermore Alexandria so far has lacked – this might change and already changes since the events around the Arab Spring and the overthrow of the Mubarak regime on the 11th of February 2011 – international perspective with few international organizations or NGOs and was characterized by an absence of political debates and a cultural life that regularly faced censorship. (Interview #16, 25) On the other hand one interviewee working on the ALF detects some sort of "cultural satiableness" in European countries. (Interview #1) Therefore also others are convinced: "[for intercultural dialogue] here [in Alexandria] are more opportunities than in a European city." (Interview#13)

The Advisory Council

The Advisory Council (AC) assembles scholars and experts from the Mediterranean region and constitutes the affiliated think tank of the ALF. Its members – nine from EU countries and nine from Mediterranean partner countries – are proposed by member states and appointed by the BoG at the beginning of each phase for three years. Beside the geographical balance also an equal representation of members from the private and public sector and gender should be given. According to the statutes the membership in the AC can be extended up to a six year period. That this would be highly important was made clear by a member of the council who explained: "working in such an intercultural environment makes it difficult to establish something within a three year period. It takes some time to know what someone really means, when he or she says something." (Interview #2)

The selection of the AC draws on persons working in the member organizations of the national ALF networks and of individuals doing either research or working on cultural programs in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Given the multiplicity of partner organizations of the ALF network the AC gathers experts from diverse backgrounds. The AC meets about two or three times per year to reflect about the work and to think about particular

priorities for the activities of the ALF. President Azoulay chairs the AC and also the Executive Director provides an input for the meetings that “give the dialogue both a political and philosophical dimension.” (Interview #2) But basically – as emphasized by a member of the AC – “the meetings are characterized through a very open process that provides time for reflection.” (Interview #2)

Others involved with the foundation but not part of the AC note that it is hardly communicated what actually is discussed in their meetings and they are not really informed about their outcomes and would rather recommend looking for specific experts depending on the respective working program. (Interview #15) Also the missing transparency of the rules for appointment gives reason for concern for the council’s independence outlined in the statutes of the ALF. (ALF Statutes, Article XII)

Network of Networks

One of the main characteristics of the ALF is its structure as a network of national networks. The idea of an overall network structure has existed since the beginning and was also recommended by the Groupe des Sages. It became clear, when talking about intercultural dialogue one cannot work only from one location rather “you need local anchorages” as one interviewee points out. (Interview #6) Or as Gijs de Vries remarks: “in today’s world, cultural cooperation is more credible and effective the more it uses the quality and critical mass of cultural networks and their numerous actors, promoting mobility and interconnectedness.” (de Vries 2008: 172)

In order to find these anchorages it was useful to harness already existing network structures that had been developed by other EuroMed Programs across the region. In each of the 43 member countries of the UfM institutions and organizations working on the promotion for intercultural dialogue and/or doing research on the Euro-Mediterranean region have been invited to become part of the ALF national networks which then constitute the regional ALF network comprising about 3000 members. At the moment the network members are mostly NGOs (53%), public institutions (19%), and foundations (13%). Private organizations, local and regional authorities, and individuals make up about 10% of the overall network. With regard to the content most of the members are involved with *Youth & Education* initiatives, *Arts & Cultural cooperation* projects, and *Democracy & Community Development* programs. (Anna Lindh Review 2011: 13)

Membership

There are no specific or strict preconditions for being a member of a national ALF network. Any organization that is in its broadest sense working within the cultural field can participate. Also the membership is not linked to any expenses as there is no membership fee to pay. Interested parties register by an online application form and the respective Head of the national network has to confirm. Therefore, “the huge number of members does not say a lot. You register and then you can be a member for your whole life, whether you are active or not.” (Interview #15) Yet, as a Head of Network amends and confirms: “The members are very active but not necessarily in the name of Anna Lindh.” (Interview #10) Hence, there are indeed a lot of members but many of them do not show high commitment to contribute actively in the national ALF networks and to use them as a means for exchange with others. In fact, they are more interested in applying for the funds of the ALF. (Interview #22)

The low commitment of some members has multifaceted reasons. In the beginning the lack of interest was strongly linked to the initial missing financial resources to support and build up the national networks. This changed mainly with the establishment of the Strategic Network Development Scheme which will be explained in detail when discussing the Head of Network. Secondly, the ALF networks often lack vision, as some of the interviewees make clear. Members do not know or perceive the meaning of the overall ALF network in creating an overall EuroMed Partnership and belonging. (Interview #10, 21, 22) In this context participating in activities of the ALF and to work on joint projects with partners in the Euro-Mediterranean region may also be very much related to the historical and socio-political context of the respective member countries: There are countries that due to their geographical closeness and historical involvement have a strong linkage to the Mediterranean region. For example in France there are well-established research institutions and diverse grassroots organizations that have ever since worked on common projects in the Mediterranean region. But also in the light of huge immigrant communities, such as in Spain, France and Italy, these countries are much more involved with initiatives embracing the idea of intercultural dialogue and counterbalancing the increasing xenophobic tendencies in their countries. In contrast, Eastern European countries “are still in a very pilot stage” when it comes to research on the Mediterranean and cross-cultural dialogue initiatives. (Interview #6) For example Poland, a country with a quite homogenous population and that rather faces emigration than a diverse migrant

community, might not necessarily be that involved in the concept of intercultural dialogue. (Interview #6, 13) Beyond that, the interest of being part of the ALF is also very much conditioned by previous experiences the network members made by cooperating with the foundation which should be illustrated when discussing the installations of the Head of the national networks and the procedures of the funding.

Head of Network

Each national network is headed and coordinated by a focal point institution named *Head of Network* (HoN), which serves as a mediator between the foundation's secretariat and the civil society member institutions. A HoN is responsible for the maintenance of the national network by distributing information among the network members, and by organizing regular meetings and capacity trainings. But the HoN also supports network members during the application process for the grants of the ALF and makes activities of the ALF known by increasing the network and organizing common projects of the national members. (Interview #1, 10) As the financial resources of the ALF grants are limited and always bounded by a budgetary capping the HoN also tries to support the members to look for alternative funds. Hence, the HoN assumes very much a service and information role for the national network members and is therefore seen as one of the crucial benefits of the ALF network to its members. (Interview #1, 12) The HoN also decides on the Network Internal Rules which include the network's mandate, the structure of the network, the rules for appointment of the HoN and the rules of membership. Sometimes there are different membership preconditions; whether individuals or private companies can become members or whether the national HoN is either appointed by the government or elected by its members. (Interview #11)

The present 43 HoNs meet once a year with the financial support of the Foundation and discuss past and future activities of the ALF, the annual working program and the strategic triennial plan before it is presented to the BoG for approval. (Interview #10) Through the annual meetings as well as ongoing consultations from the Headquarters, the HoNs are very much involved in the development of the program and the activities of the Foundation.

Even though the structure of a network of networks was chosen in order to make use of already active cultural institutions there were quite a lot of difficulties in the beginning. First, the BoG and the Secretariat "could not expect that suddenly civil society

organizations will organize and spontaneously create [national ALF] networks.” (Interview #6) Secondly, the foundation did not provide sufficient financial resources to built and run the national networks. (Interview #11)

Above all, as an EU officer admits, the foundation was:

born in such a pressure – in a political sense of pressure – that they were obliged to do things just right from the beginning. Instead of actually saying: ‘Well, we take two years on creating something; establishing networks that work properly and going through the region actually talking, listening, learning.’ No, they needed to work. They had to do a little bit of everything and nothing without a clearer strategy. (Interview #6)

Considering this rapid process of establishment, the ALF necessarily had to fall back on the support of public or semi-public institutions that in contrast to NGOs and private organizations provided the means to maintain the first national networks. Therefore, many of the HoN and its affiliated institutions were appointed by governments and until now are still situated in governmental structures. Beside this governmental influence also the perception of being a HoN was sometimes totally in opposition to the idea of the ALF’s mandate as an employee of the ALF states: “many of them [the HoNs] thought to do this job would be just an honor title without any professional background whereas for us the Head of Network is a facilitator or service provider and a mobilizer.” (Interview #12)

As a respond to these structural weaknesses the Network Coordination Unit in the secretariat in Alexandria decided to establish a *Strategic Network Development Scheme* and:

pushed for a policy of democratization and accountability on the networks so that the Head of Networks were not only appointed by a minister or a functionary but through a constitution of the members. [...] As you can imagine we did not succeed everywhere. Both in Arab countries but also in Non-Arab countries we had problems because they [the Head of Networks] did not accept this approach. But we pushed for it, for a fundamental reason, because we believe that a governmental institution in the context of the EuroMed or an institution that is controlled by the government does not reach out for civil society. (Interview #12)

Strategic Network Development Scheme (SNDS)

The SNDS is mainly a financial support program for the national networks. The financial frame can be used for covering running costs (e.g. internet, equipment) but also for regular

meetings and one common operation among the network members such as training or a cultural project that has to be implemented within a certain time frame. The idea of a common action is also strongly linked to the detriment that only a fractional amount of members can be involved in ALF projects through the call for proposals. As a consequence with the SNDS it was intended to bring the network members closer together and to provide more funding opportunities which all the members could benefit from. The experience of actually working together then should lead to the enhancement of the common meaning and objectives of the ALF national networks. (Interview #11) So by launching the SNDS, the ALF networks developed a lot; the number of network member increased and democratic and geographically balanced ways how to organize the national networks were introduced which is outlined by a network coordinator:

In Turkey for example there is one Head of Network appointed by the government and there are two others [from civil society] in tandem. Sometimes there is a super-ordinate institution for the network coordination, but then another NGO is regularly elected and is functioning as the executive body. For example this is the case in Germany. In many countries there is also something that is called a steering committee. For example in Egypt it is a big country and a big network, so they cannot just everything leave in the hands of one Head of Network. The steering committee is a more democratic structure of the network so that the Head of Network does not exclusively take decisions but he/she also consults this steering committee. Some others have regional network coordinators – for example in Italy. (Interview #11)

Nonetheless, on interviewee concedes:

Many of the institutions that host the HoNs are still *hybrid* institutions, meaning they are not 100% public and 100% governmental. Especially in Arab countries at first glance it is often a NGO but when you take a closer look they are are often very much intertwined with national governments. Where in European countries this might have historical reasons and is rather seen as a relief for the NGOs that might lack the financial resources to assume the function of a Head of Network, it is politically very well intended in the Arab countries; they want to keep an overview about the activities.(Interview #1)

Furthermore, when talking to the HoNs it becomes clear that for many of them running the ALF network is only one project beside others and due to the lack of financial resources some of them can only spend a couple of hours per week for the ALF. This might be a reason why there is a lack of information about the ALF and the overall EuroMed process for the network members but also for the general population, which is sometimes mentioned as a huge obstacle for the ALF's work. (Interview #15)

Beyond this, some of the HoNs regret that they are not involved with the discussions going on in the BoG meetings. In the statutes it says that “the Head of Networks shall be invited at least once a year for a joint meeting with the board of governors.” (ALF Statutes Article 2004: XIII) However, these regular meetings did not materialize in the beginning and since then participating or observing the meetings involves huge personal engagement which is pointed out by a HoN:

We wanted to know what is happening on the political level. We organized a very democratic representation: we elected a representative from Europe, one from an Arab country and rotating with every meeting. But all this extra work needs a lot of engagement and timely and financial resources that are sometimes difficult to raise. (Interview #1)

Nevertheless, an employee remarks that they try hard to communicate what is happening at the ALF and that the HoNs are also very much involved with the program of the ALF which should now be discussed in detail.

5.6. Programs

The ALF program scheme comprises regular projects and regional calls for proposals and campaigns that are organized once or twice a year, depending on the budget and the respective thematic priorities. The range of issues covered in the program schemes is quite broad: *Education & Youth, Culture & Arts, Cities & Migration, Religion & Spirituality, Peace & Co-existence, and Media Activities.*⁶³

Regular Projects

Awards – EuroMed Journalist Award & EuroMed Dialogue Award

One of the earliest activities of the ALF was the launch of a EuroMed Journalist Award in 2006. Since then, in partnership with the International Federation of Journalists, COPEAM (the Permanent Conference of the Audio-visual operators in the Mediterranean), the UN's Alliance of Civilizations (AoC), the European Commission, Al-Arabiya News Channel, and Euronews the annual award is "granted to journalists reporting and highlighting on issues of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity."⁶⁴ While the journalists in the first years were suggested, they are now invited to submit their works that were published either in print or online, broadcasted on radio or television. For each medium an awardee is selected. Beyond that each year an award is dedicated to a specific current topic.

Similarly, the Euro-Med Dialogue Award is an annual recognition "for the achievements of individuals and organizations at the forefront of cooperation and addressing common challenges in different social, cultural, and political fields." (Anna Lindh Review 2011). For both of the awards the network members can vote in a pre-selection phase and the final selection of the laureates is constituted by a rotating jury of HoNs, which shows the attempt to involve the national networks as much as possible.⁶⁵

⁶³<http://www.euromedalex.org/fields> (12.07.2011)

⁶⁴<http://www.euromedalex.org/resources/awards>; <http://www.euromedalex.org/fields/media-activities/journalist-award/about-the-award> (12.07.2011)

⁶⁵<http://www.euromedalex.org/resources/awards/euromed-award/regulations> (02.09.2011)

Anna Lindh Forum

Another activity that is intended to be held regularly is the ALF Forum which took place the first time from the 4th to the 7th of March 2010 in Barcelona. The meeting assembled civil society representatives involved with the foundation and with other EuroMed programs and institutions. Especially when recalling the principle of partnership, some of the interviewees agree that the Forum, which should take place biannually, is an essential project to forge the idea of co-ownership within the EuroMed process, which is also expressed by a comment of one of the participants: “Coming top to the bottom with a lot of very difficult procedures in the beginning – but when you look at the results in Barcelona [the ALF Forum], it means that the ALF signifies something for the people.” (Interview #10) On the contrary, some refer to the misdirection of the funds of the ALF to such huge and representative projects targeting people that are already very well aware of the intercultural processes the ALF addresses. The same criticism is related to the report on Intercultural Trends. For some it is a meta-theoretical and high level activity of the ALF. (Interview #27)

ALF Report on Intercultural Trends 2010

In the first years the funding of civil society projects and the developing of the networks have been priorities for the ALF. As the network structure got on track also other initiatives were picked up by the director such as the idea of preparing a report dealing with intercultural trends that had already been proposed by the Groupe des Sages in 2003. The ALF and its affiliated bodies concurred that the operational branch should also be backed up by a deeper research perspective that would formulate and legitimize the priority fields of actions. (Interview #14)

The basic idea of the report was to establish a survey on the values and perceptions of the citizens among the 43 member countries. Over a period of about three years,⁶⁶ people across the region should be interviewed by a comprehensive Gallup Poll about their individual positions on topics such as religion, media, values, mobility but also demographic trends should be integrated and juxtaposed. An annual dossier on a specific

⁶⁶ The first part of the report was conducted in 2009/2010 and covered 13 countries. These were: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Lebanon, Morocco, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Turkey, United Kingdom. See also: <http://www.euromedalex.org/sites/default/files/AnnaLindhReport2010.pdf> (02.09.2011) The report was published at a public event with the Belgium network members in Brussels in December 2010.

topic should also allow for a deeper academic discussion. The data and the academic review at hand should both serve as a reference tool for the ALF and its work but also strengthen the advocacy position of the foundation. (Interview #14, 26)

What is specifically highlighted is the extensive multilateral process of consultation that marked the whole preparation but also the follow-up process of the report. In the initial stage, the present director consulted both the AC as the HoNs about the idea and the content of the report which was then coordinated also with the BoGs. The HoNs were especially important for identifying the demands of civil society and to define the main areas that should be analyzed. Beyond that, in cooperation with the BoG and the HoNs, it was also important to present the report and the findings on the individual member states and the needs of the population to the respective national ministries. (Interview #14)

Arab Children's Literature Program

The Children's Literature and Reading Program, launched in 2006, is an intra-regional initiative among Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria, supported by the ALF and funded by the Swedish International Development Agency. The three year program seeks to forge the education and development of children through promoting children's literature and reading in the Middle Eastern and Northern African region. It does so by cooperation projects and meetings among the different stakeholders involved with the production and distribution of children's literature books but also with educational institutions working on the reading capacities of children. One of the interviewee, who very much doubts the impact of the numerous short-term projects the ALF is funding, emphasizes the importance of these *silent projects* with a more long-term and educational perspective. He is convinced that even though they might not bring a lot of visibility for the ALF they are much more effective and essential especially in this region. (Interview #21)

Farah el Bahr Festival – Alexandria

Visibility is very important in order to work in a structural surrounding that is limited to a three year perspective. The ALF might need its show case projects such as the Forum both to be present in the region and to justify what it is doing. Not only for its legitimacy in front of its funding institutions (such as the European Commission and the member countries) but also with regard to the perception of the foundation in its host country. (Interview #21) As some of the interviewees remark, many people in Alexandria were and are still not aware of the work of the foundation, either they do not know the foundation at

all or they only perceive it as a funding institution. (Interview #22) Therefore, in 2009 the ALF decided on reviving the *Farah el Bahr Festival* which had already marked the inaugural event of the foundation in 2005. The annual festival which takes place at the historic citadel of Qaitbay in Alexandria is a music and arts festival that stages artists from northern and southern countries of the Mediterranean and includes workshops and programs for children and young people organized by local NGOs and social groups.⁶⁷ For the staff of the ALF the *Farah el Bahr Festival* is not only an important means to make the ALF known in Alexandria but also to do something for the local community and its neighborhoods. Whereas others also point out that with participants from all over the region it should also be communicated that the ALF is not only an Egyptian organization but a foundation for the whole region. (Interview #22, 16)

Regional Campaigns and Call for Proposals

Another main branch of the foundation's activities is its grants scheme through regional campaigns and calls for proposals (CfP).

The first region wide campaign was titled *1001 Actions for Dialogue* and was launched in 2008. It followed the *Euro-Mediterranean Year for the Dialogue between Cultures* put forth by the third Euro-Mediterranean Conference of the Minister of Culture in Athens, Greece in the same year. (Conclusions Athens 2008: Point 5) Due to a lack of financial resources the secretariat was not able to launch a wider CfP in order to fund larger projects but had to fall back on a scheme of micro grants distributed as small financial contributions to local and regional cultural activities. Many of the activities had already been planned in different contexts but were incorporated in the overall idea of the ALF and placed also under the ALF, this is the EuroMed Logo. (Interview #14)

The regional campaigns reveal a Janus-faced character. On the one hand, the numerous funded projects presented under the EuroMed umbrella contribute to the visibility of the cultural initiatives that are present in the region and some of the interviewees see the work of the ALF as a means to represent the sum of individual parts. (Interview #10) Whereas others criticize the *watering can* approach of the ALF that dilutes the actual objectives of the ALF as a network member points out: "I do not think we need little things like micro findings here and there, this is not what people are looking for; they are looking for real

⁶⁷For more details of the festival and its programs see: <http://www.euromedalex.org/news/4-5-november-farah-el-bahr-festival-2010>; <http://www.euromedalex.org/events/first-farah-el-bahr-mediterranean-festival-take-place-alexandria> (12.07.2011)

action.” (Interview #22) However, the distribution of micro grants and the piggy-backing on already existing projects is an inevitable regular mean for the ALF to make the most out of its financial imponderabilities and to cooperate with the numerous actors in the region.

Another campaign was launched in 2009 as a response to the Gaza conflict at the turn of the same year. During the subsequent months of the attack of the Gazastrip by Israeli troops at the end of 2008, the EMP process was blocked and with it the regular BoG meetings. But the secretariat was still in contact with the co-presidencies of the UfM which at that time were France and Egypt. Also, the AC was able to meet which then together with the Secretariat and the HoNs conceptualized the *Restore Trust – Rebuild Bridges* campaign that was then developed also in cooperation with the AoC. Considering the sentiments of the interviewees, the campaign is regarded as one of the shining moments of the ALF that gained the foundation huge legitimacy. It is seen as one of the most evident examples of intercultural dialogue and cultural diplomacy as some sort of vanguard for political action within an acute political surrounding. (Interview #2, 6, 10) The tense political surrounding at this time is also described by one of the employees of the ALF as a ”political vacuum that gave space for maneuver [...] If there had not been this vacuum we would not have been able to launch this initiative as it was, or it would have been much lighter.” (Interview #12) This also alludes to the general discussion of the counterbalance of a constructive political influence and partnership – given by the BoG – on the one hand and institutional inertia and intellectual dependence of the ALF’s activities on the other. Given the numerous references of the success of the project by the interviewees, it seems to support rather the first. Recalling the initial assumption of a EU cultural diplomacy practiced at arm’s length, it seems relevant to point out that the European Commission refrained from any interference of the campaign during the Gaza War but rather referred to the set-up of the ALF as an independent foundation. (Interview #2)

Beside the political influence of the BoG there are two other main challenges linked to the program schemes that impede the actual implementation of the programs. They should be illustrated by a closer look at the conceptualization of the program and the CfPs.

A CfP is published by the secretariat once or twice a year and follows a broad overall heading and mostly comprises a larger financial envelope than that of the regional campaigns. The director and also the Head of Units come up with ideas and some

guidelines for the CfP which are then discussed in detail with the executive committee but also with the rest of the staff, the HoN, and the AC. Also here as with the other programs the reciprocal process of consultation is an essential part of the working principles of the ALF. (Interview #12, 14) This is also expressed by a comment of an employee of the foundation: “The questions about whether why we are doing this, why we are launching that is always because they [the network members] asked us to do it.” (Interviewee #13)

After the publication and announcement of the CfP any member of the ALF can apply for the funding but the projects submitted have to follow a *1+1 scheme* which means that the project idea has to involve at least one partner from a southern and one from a northern Mediterranean country. Furthermore, the obtainment of the grant is bounded by the provision of a guaranteed co-funding or own financial means as the foundation does not cover more than 60% (70% for southern Mediterranean countries) of the whole project calculation. (Interview #15) In order to select the projects, an evaluation committee is established with three voting members with at least one Head of Unit involved. (Interview#12) For the actual selection a diversity of aspects must be taken into consideration, most important the equal geographical distribution of grants. The interest to apply for a funding of the ALF is usually very high and the number of applications by far exceeds the financial resources of funding. Therefore, it is often the case that not in all of the 43 countries of the UfM a project is granted. As a result, some network members have stopped applying for the funds of the ALF, also given the disproportion between the actual available funding and the bulk of complicated application procedures. But not only have the network members to comply with the extensive and time-consuming bureaucratic procedures also the staffing of the ALF is struggling with them in their daily work. (Interview #15) The reason is mainly its funding source; the ALF receives most of its funding by the European Commission and has a very complicated grant contract with the Delegation in Cairo. Therefore, the staff and the funded organizations are supposed to apply to EU procedures. (Interview #7, 15) Often the application procedures are not necessarily sustainable for many of the ALF members that work in small structures. A difficulty summarized by one of the network members:

The thing is if you take any other European programs the funding is much higher. So if you know that you are applying for 200.000 Euros in two years you think: ‘Okay, I am going through this whole application and I know afterwards I have to audit, I have to write reports, financial reports, narrative reports but still I’m applying for a big funding.’ If you apply for 5000 Euros and you are going to the same system you think: ‘Is it really worth doing this or

should I just apply to other foundations that have more flexible funding rules?’
(Interview #22)

And also an employee that was a member of the last evaluation committee remarks that there are members who just don’t want to take the effort of applying again. Beyond that there are other structural difficulties that can be traced back to complicated internal procedures but also to the overall heterogeneity of the member countries across the Mediterranean region observed by a staff member:

It is often difficult to find the same language [...] Some countries need more capacity building trainings, language, writing reports. But we have to keep our standards; we have to report to the Commission. We are a European administrative body, so it is often very complicated. We have the objective to mobilize civil society, small structures and we want to have them in our granted projects but at the end of the day they are not able to provide us the document XY. (Interview #13)

Another challenge concerns the constant budgetary difficulties they are facing and which can be mostly traced back to their unclear funding structure.

5.7. Funding

The ALF budget runs within triennial phases and annual working plans. The budget of the ALF follows a 50:50 agreement, meaning that half of the budget is provided by the European Commission and the other half is constituted by the financial support of all the member countries of the EMP. So far this budget plan followed a voluntary basis meaning that the member countries could decide themselves which amount they would pay. This lack of clear statutory provisions has led to an imbalance of a proportion of as much as 65:35. The European Commission is now providing more than initially intended and the ALF even requested for an increase up to 70%. (Interview #27) This financial backup by the European Commission is based on a grant contract between the Delegation in Cairo and the ALF secretariat in Alexandria. It states “that only the Forum, only the Report, partially the Network Support Scheme Mechanism, plus the functioning are financed.” (Interview #27) The Call for Proposal one of the main schemes is financed by the national contributions. The funding actually comes from DG DEVCO that administrates the European Neighborhood Instrument, a financial envelope for supporting the eastern and southern neighboring countries. (Interview #27)

When looking at the actual numbers: the present Phase II that has begun in 2008 and will last until the end of 2011 started with a pre-calculated budget of 14 million Euros. By the third year it so far has decreased to 12.7 million Euros as many of the national contributions were not kept. EU contributions for the second phase amounted: 7 million Euros, the national contributions about 5.7 million Euros. Eight of the 43 member countries have not made any contributions such as Algeria, Bulgaria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Mauretania, Jordan, Palestine but also huge countries such as UK and Ireland are not financially supporting the ALF. Also many of the other northern and southern Mediterranean countries have not met their proposed budgetary contributions or have made them during the whole phase which made planning ahead enormously difficult as one interviewee remarks.⁶⁸ (Interview #11) Nevertheless, the low budgetary contributions and the fact that the Southern Mediterranean countries are mostly receivers are mainly accepted by the ALF. They make concessions as the foundation is very well aware of the diverging interest of the governments not really interested in enabling a critical civil society dialogue and the public that in contrast is really eager to do something. (Interview #1) Others highlight the participation of the Arab countries at least on a symbolic, political level. (Interview #13) Albeit, as one of the staff members notes, the ALF would count on a contribution from France or UK also taking into account their “great responsibility for some of the regional conflicts in the region.” (Interview #12) The financial difficulties very much jeopardize the whole working process of the ALF. Beyond that also the imbalance of the bulk of the funding coming from the EU once again causes a *Europeanization* of the EuroMed cultural regime and challenges the principle of a real partner- and co-ownership both on a governmental and civil society level. Therefore, one employee makes it clear that “if we are intergovernmental foundation, than we also need an intergovernmental approach to the funding!” (Interview #13) As a result there are constant negotiations on changing the voluntariness of the national contributions which might lead to a rearrangement of the rules in the third phase of the ALF. That these unstable budgetary lines have dismantled the credibility of the foundation especially for the network members is exemplified by a national network coordinator who illustrates the situation as follows:

⁶⁸See for a detailed overview the Anna Lindh Review 2005-2011: Allocation of Resources also for Phase I (2005 - 2008) on: http://www.euromedalex.org/sites/default/files/Anna_Lindh_Review_website.pdf p. 142-143. (12.07.2011)

Our budget from the 43 countries for the Call of Proposals in 2010 would have been 900.000 and it was reduced to 500.000 Euros. That means about 10.000 Euros for each country. And with that you have to motivate a network of about 100 members – it very well explains their lack of motivation and participation. (Interview #10)

In addition, this Call for Proposals was postponed almost six months and was finally launched in September 2010 “with half of the budget and half of the time.” (Interview#10)

What also makes the work of the ALF very difficult is its perception as a pure funding institution. Something that also suggests its denomination as a foundation and setting it in comparison to the big funding organizations in the region such as the Ford Foundation, the Open Society, the Young Arab Theatre Fund, the Arab Fund for Arts & Culture (AFAC) or the Dutch DOEN Foundation. And also an employee of the secretariat mentions that “the ALF has the wrong name – being a foundation suggests we have a lot of money, but we do not.” (Interview #19) Furthermore others refer to national funding opportunities that have funding for several years which really make it possible to develop long term capacities. (Interview #22) And also others suggest that “if Europe wants to be a real factor of change in its Southern neighborhood, it has to invest much bigger, as it did for instance in the Balkans.” (Interview #4) Nevertheless, employees counter that the foundation’s task it not so much that one of a financial donor than a distributor of knowledge and information. Though so far it seems this has not been communicated to most of its members which recalls two interview statements that the foundation struggles with their twofold functions: maintaining the ALF network and organizing cultural events. (Interview #4, 21)

Yet, there is not only the lack of financial means but also a lot of other immanent structural problems in the national governments that are impairing even the receiving of the granted funding of the foundation as one of the members of the Egyptian network explains:

In order to receive funding from the ALF in Egypt we had to receive approval by the Ministry of Social Solidarity. Finally we did not get an approval from the Egyptian government even though we had the money on our bank account. But we could not work with it. So we returned the whole funding to the ALF again – and many others face the same problem. (Interview #20)

That the national governmental frameworks very much impede an open intercultural dialogue is remarked by a European Commission officer who highly doubts the efficiency of the foundation and would rather suggest building up appropriate economic and political

structures first and then starting with the idea of intercultural exchange in a complex setting like it is Northern Africa and the Middle East. (Interview #8)

5.8. Institutional Embedding

But the ALF is not only working in complex national contexts but it is also embedded in a diverse institutional arrangement of the European Union Institutions, the Union for the Mediterranean as other regional frameworks.

European Union Institutions – Union for the Mediterranean

As earlier mentioned, since 2010 the ALF is in the framework of the EEAS alongside its involvement with the delegation and their administration of the grant contract. On the level of the budget the delegation is interacting with DG DEVCO and DG Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy dealing with the financial and political support of co-operation in the southern neighborhood and therefore also the Mediterranean region. (Interview #13) While in the first years this interaction was clearly based on a donor relationship, it opened up and now involves a higher political engagement as a staff member of the ALF explains:

After the last Board of Governors meeting we had a meeting with someone from External Affairs and the Cabinet of Commissioner Füle [Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy] and the reason was to see if we could have his political involvement as well [...] We wanted to make sure that we are working with Stefan Füle and Catherine Ashton toward a more coherent policy framework. Catherine Ashton wrote the foreword for the Report on Intercultural Trends, Stefan Füle was at the opening of the Forum in Barcelona – which again is the difference between us and maybe another organization. [...] It is recognized that the ALF is more than just a project the Commission is financing; it is also an instrument to try to push ahead with EU policies for the region. (Interview #26)

Even though this sharing of responsibilities and the spread over different DGs and Commissioners is normal for EU policies, it calls for a lot of engagement to establish a coherent strategy on collaboration and consolidation on both sides. Beyond that the period of transition and uncertainty is not only given by the recently installed EEAS but also at the level of the UfM. So far, for many the UfM is only present in form of a secretariat in Barcelona that was established in Spring 2010 and so far has lacked a stable structure – also as the secretary generals resigned in quite brief intervals. (Interview #15) Egypt and

France have constituted the co-presidency since 2008, who the new co-President will be seems to be unclear at the present stage. And even an expert in the Mediterranean region admits that “few EU officials can explain clearly how the UfM relates to the ENP.” (Grant 2011) The same ambiguity holds true for the ALF. For persons working at the Foundation, the actual responsibilities and affiliations concerning the UfM are up to now:

a grey area no one wants to touch [...] This is a very sensitive issue, it is not clear even to the ALF. And for the moment it is not clear which role is played by the Secretariat [of the UfM]. They prefer to keep themselves and their institution outside this institutional setting, so it is difficult to say, how the relation between the two institutions will evolve over time. (Interview #27)

Basically, the ALF is one of the institutions of the UfM and is covering the cultural and social agendas of the UfM but it is functionally not part of its secretariat in Barcelona. In fact, the secretariat itself does have a cultural and social affairs officer and they have an agreement that they are co-ordinating their cultural agendas like with other institutions in the region. (Interview #15, 27) Beside that they are not very much involved and informed about the work of the secretariat. (Interview #26) The coincidence of the first ALF Forum with the opening ceremony of the secretariat of the UfM in March 2010 in Barcelona tells a lot about the communication between the two bodies that actually should work within the same framework. As the opening of the secretariat took place at the same day the ALF had to postpone the opening of the forum and had to rearrange its agenda, as some of the guests had to attend both events. (Interview #15) And even an employee comments: “So we are an institution of the UfM, so there is a link, but what exactly is this link? Unfortunately so far it did not happen to sketch a map that would have made it clear, who is dependent on whom, and where does the ALF take position.” (Interview #15) Indeed, also EU officials are still not aware in which direction the UfM might develop and which status the UfM might embrace also in the overall EuroMed Partnership process. Likewise, an interviewee states frankly “when I use the EuroMed Partnership I think about the entire system, a process also involving the EU institutions. When I think of the UfM I have in my mind a secretariat.” (Interview #27) Therefore, there is also the academic consensus that:

the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation process has become so complex (overlapping cooperation schemes, multiplication of instruments and sectoral dynamics, institutional complexity) [...] that there is a widespread lack of knowledge of how it works and of its details at the technical ground level, even among the experts and actors involved in it. (Lannon 2009: 131)

But then the inevitable question that begs to be asked is: “How should such a complex framework be communicated and transferred in a straightforward manner to the levels of civil society?” Considering the interview statements and the present political circumstances in the region this remains to be seen.

Cooperation with Strategic Partners and other EuroMed Programs

Apart from the policies of the European Union and the intergovernmental arrangements within the UfM, there are other multilateral institutions the ALF is consulting and cooperating with. In the ALF they are frequently referred to as Strategic Partners and with most of them they have signed a memorandum of understanding.

The multilateral initiatives include the *Alliance of Civilizations* (AoC), which is part of the United Nations and follows quite a similar agenda within an even wider scope. Whereas the AoC acts as a global actor of intercultural dialogue, the ALF clearly pursues a regional perspective. (Interview#13) Yet, in November 2010 the AoC launched a regional Strategy for the Mediterranean in Malta and in the subsequent year in April they submitted the Action Plan for 2011-2015 implementing the *Alliance of Civilizations’ Regional Strategy on Intercultural Dialogue and Cooperation for the Mediterranean*⁶⁹ which might direct to a duplication of efforts. Nevertheless, they worked together on the *Restore Trust – Rebuild Bridges* initiative, they collaborated on media programs and the AoC also participated in the launch of the *ALF Report on Intercultural Trends*. In fact, the report illustrates very well the collaboration with its partners: Next to Catherine Ashton (High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security) and Jorge Sampaio (as the United Nations High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations) also Amre Moussa (Secretary General of the League of Arab States and therewith also representing *ALESCO* the AL Education, Science, and Culture Organization) provided a written contribution for the preface of the report. In addition, the first *Arab-West Dialogue Forum*, a joint project among the AL and the ALF, was taking place in the framework of the UN Alliance Regional Strategy for the Mediterranean and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.⁷⁰

⁶⁹<http://www.unaoc.org/wp-content/uploads/MALTA-REGIONAL-STRATEGY-FOR-THE-MEDITERRANEAN-6-nov-Final-document-2010.pdf> [21.06.2011]; <http://www.unaoc.org/wp-content/uploads/UNAOC-Action-Plan-for-the-Mediterranean-20-April-2011.pdf> [21.06.2011]

⁷⁰See also: <http://www.euromedalex.org/sites/default/files/AnnaLindhReport2010.pdf>
<http://www.arabwestforum.org/overview> (15.08.2011)

Moreover, there is a strong commitment to work with *UNESCO*, *ISESCO* (Islamic Education, Science and Culture Organization) and the *CoE*. Furthermore, there are the individual national cultural institutes and numerous other foundations the ALF should cooperate with. That there is the danger of not keeping on track with all the existing programs and actions is illustrated by an employee of the ALF in Alexandria: “The ALF is in the middle of all this multilateral Mediterranean initiatives; our idea is to have an agreement with everyone and not to collapse.” (Interview #13)

Furthermore, they try to collaborate with other EuroMed programs, especially with those that take quite a similar line such as the *EuroMed Civil Forum*, which is an annual meeting of representatives of the Euro-Mediterranean civil society.⁷¹ So far the EuroMed civil forum members participated in the ALF Forum in Barcelona but they have not yet implemented actions together. Beyond that they are also in contact with the *EuroMed University* in Portorož in Slovenia.⁷² Nevertheless, a member of the AC remarks that it needs a tremendous personal effort to get in contact (beside the ALF Forum) with members of other EuroMed programs as it is not financially supported by the EMP. Even though it would be highly recommended to know about what is currently happening at other EuroMed levels in order to avoid overlaps. (Interview #2)

After outlining the organizational structure and the embedding of the ALF in other national and multilateral arrangements, I would like to look a closer at further categories that were extracted by an inductive structured analysis of the interviews and built upon earlier discussions in the introductory chapter.

⁷¹<http://www.medeas.be/en/themes/euro-mediterranean-cooperation/euromed-civil-forum/> (02.09.2011)

⁷²<http://www.emuni.si/en/strani/29/EMUNI-University.html> (15.09.2011)

5.9. Further Categories

Civil Society Outreach

The outreach for civil society across the region is one of the core objectives of the ALF. Therefore, the chances and limits of addressing the civil society were recurrent discussions in the interview talks about the ALF. Most of the interviewees agree that the civil society outreach is given; the member structure of the national networks is quite broad, they are involved with a diversity of activities and the overall network structure of the ALF allows for a multiplication and a cross-fertilization of efforts toward the outreach for civil society. Nevertheless, it could be practiced much more efficiently and there are several obstacles: First of all, network members are mostly based in the capitals, a fact that makes it difficult to speak of a diverse or comprehensive picture of the civil societies in the countries. (Interview #18) Then, there is the lack of perspective both in view of the financial support the ALF can give but also in view of the actual benefits of participation in the ALF networks. (Interview #21, 22) Some groups of civil society deliberately do not participate anymore, as it is too formal and too bureaucratic for them. (Interview #21) But a network member also remarks that: “their aim should not be to represent the whole civil society. It is a network of individual organizations which are working for their own activities.” (Interview #22) Other voices emphasize that the ALF is promoting cultural dialogue only on a higher level that does not permeate the mass of people:

The Forum is for intellectuals especially, the Report involves professors, academics [...] My conception of promoting intercultural dialogue is completely different, my perception would be let's go to the marginal areas, let's intervene in the schools, let's put pedagogues in a school with children from 5 to 10 years and expose them to live together with Christians in a very Muslim area. [...] But if you keep fueling the dialogue among people that are already sensitive – you should go much more to the basics and lower levels of society starting from schools, small cultural centers in more rural areas not so much in the urban areas because [here] you have already other actors. (Interview #27)

Additionally, civil societies “as the ways how a society organizes itself, as different cultures of participation” (Interview #14) are very diverse in the participating countries of the UfM. Therefore, the aspect of co-ownership on the civil society level represents a challenge as an employee states clearly that “you cannot have an equal cooperation between a very active civil society in the UK and a very restricted one in Morocco even in terms of having experience in doing a project.” (Interview #26) Others also indicate that

the civil society structures differ not only between Muslim and non-Muslim countries. Therefore one should not fall into the trap of thinking that in Muslim / Arab countries there is no such a thing as civil society. This is a frequent misconception that an employee of the ALF highly criticizes:

There was this stereotype that the Arabs did not have this idea of organizing a vibrant civil society, because the Arabs are dependent, they need the Pharaoh, they need the father, they need a vertical structure, they don't care about themselves, and they don't care about the public space. And some people now [with the Arab Spring] discover that it was not true. That was why the Report was so important. Of course there were some differences concerning religion but the essential values were the same. People on the streets, what do they want – more or less the same as the Greek youth that was on the streets one month ago. Of course when you go deeper into the country people are more religious and conservative, but it was the same in Spain 50 years ago. (Interview #23)

In fact, European civil society structures are also very different, as the same interviewee illustrates with the diverging idea of secularity and religion between France and Spain. (Interview #23) Likewise, very simple linguistic barriers impede the civil society outreach. A frequent lack of sufficient English language competency makes the application process but also the implementation of the project arduous. (Interview #24)

Intercultural dialogue among different civil society structures and their cultures is considerably related to the mobility of people and also for the ALF the topic of mobility “is transversal – it goes through all the activities” (Interview #26) and should be paid attention to in the next sub-chapter.

Mobility

In almost all of the projects of the ALF mobility plays a central role. But actually going to different places is often restrained by structural and political obstacles and participants of a project are often denied their visa in the very last minute. (Interview #15, 22) This concerns mostly people from the southern Mediterranean countries that want to enter the European Union as an interviewee illustrates:

If you are not travelling within very, very official frameworks you have to proof that you have to have a bank account, that you are not going to travel to find some work – because that is the great paranoia of all the European countries [...] As long as the issue of mobility is not solved one cannot speak of an equal partnership, because so far the situation is not equal for half of the citizens of this region. (Interview #22)

But also the south-south movement between the Arab countries is often quite difficult.

That mobility is central for a feeling of partnership and belonging is also put forward by a network member of the ALF. Also the awareness of and the feeling of belonging to Europe and the European Union is very much related to the freedom of movement throughout the region without any problems. (Interview #2)

In this regard, a network member made the point to emphasize more clearly the advocacy power of the national networks:

Maybe this is something we could do as a network to say: 'Okay, we are representing the civil society, let's lobby, let's do something!' Because this would be something concrete that would affect all the organizations. We need some concrete results, little things that we as a network of the ALF did and that are affecting me as an organization and all the other organizations. Also, trying to solve this problem of [complicated] registration, this is something we always talk about. It could be something else for mobility as well. We lack meaning through concrete actions. (Interview #22)

This once again triggers critique of putting in place a foundation with the objective of intercultural dialogue and exchange in a political surrounding that does not bear the necessary structural preconditions. Whereas some other counter by referring to the ALF's advantageous interlocutor position between civil society interests and the governmental bodies such as the Ministries of foreign affairs which allows them to force their advocacy position for structural regulations in the national (cultural) policies. (Interview #26) Others also mention that mobility might be overrated and intercultural dialogue cannot happen after a weeklong seminar of exchange, but it rather needs a longer awareness raising process that has to start on-site in the home countries both in Europe as in the Mediterranean countries. Only then it can be transferred to another level. (Interview #16)

Soft power and Cultural Diplomacy

Most of the network members that are actually working on cultural programs in the region hardly refer to terms such as soft power and cultural diplomacy. Whereas others that are involved with the conceptualization of the program schemes avail themselves of the terms

and concepts laid out in chapter 1.3. In fact, the more politically involved the persons are the more they are concerned with cultural diplomacy. In that sense some interviewees refer to the level of the Executive Director and the President of the ALF as they are the actual ones that practice cultural diplomacy. (Interview #2, 10) This also refers to what Max Fuchs remarks in his introduction on cultural policy: the higher the political level, the more prevalent are theoretical discussion on cultural policy. (Fuchs 2007: 52) But it also shows that cultural diplomacy still stands in strong relation with cultural interference and engagement abroad on a higher political level.

When asking whether the ALF is practicing cultural diplomacy, interviewees mostly mention the campaign *Restore Trust – Rebuild Bridges* around the Gaza War in 2008/2009. Also the accompanying workshops during the ALF Forum that involved broad discussions on the cultural and social agenda of the UfM and which were then submitted also to the official political levels, can be described as some sort of cultural or, as the Executive Director terms it, as social diplomacy. Eventually, various terms are employed which also reveal their fuzziness echoed by a comment of an interviewee who consciously avoids the term as:

I'm not sure what cultural diplomacy actually means, I'm not quite sure what public diplomacy means. [...] A lot of this jargon is amorphous and not quite definable. Perhaps what we are doing is cultural diplomacy, perhaps it is not [...] I would consider myself pretentious when calling myself a cultural diplomat. (Interview #7)

But all of the interviewed persons dissociated themselves from the narrow traditional concept of cultural diplomacy and stress: “[...] when we were doing our cultural corporation we are trying to sustain the culture of the areas and regions that we are targeting, so it is a sort of an intercultural diplomacy. [...]” (Interview #7)

6. Conclusion

When recalling the formation of the EuroMed cultural regime, the ALF was first and foremost created through an intergovernmental cooperation process that can be traced back to the global instability after the attacks of 9/11 and to the gridlocked situation in the Middle East. Intercultural dialogue, perceived as an open process of cultural encounter among people coming from different parts of the region, “attracted a great interest as a means of pursuing a *convergence of civilisations* and thereby frustrating any Huntingtonian *clash of civilizations*.” (Gillespie 2003: 234-235) The original intergovernmental genesis of the ALF was perpetuated in the institutional set-up of the foundation with the installment of a BoG. The governmental involvement was not only relevant for emphasizing the shared national approach of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership but was also chosen for keeping track of the activities of the ALF on both sides of the Mediterranean Sea. The strong influence of the BoG – and whether it restrains or promotes the foundation’s objective to forge an intercultural dialogue among the civil societies across the regions – has remained a point of debate among the bodies of the ALF and academics. Those who refer to the principles of the EuroMed Partnership and the advocacy role of the ALF see the BoG as an essential added-value for the foundation and suggest that without their involvement the dialogue would not be possible at all. Others very much doubt the benefits of the governmental involvement in the working process of the foundation. Furthermore, there are critics that in general highly disbelieve in the much vaunted panacea of intercultural exchange in a politically unstable region such as it is the southern Mediterranean. They would rather propose to invest more in the economic and political structures in order to build up an appropriate environment that then would allow for efficient cultural exchange and debate.

Hence, in view of these structural circumstances it becomes clear that the ALF is not a vehicle for a European Union cultural diplomacy per se. But, in fact, the ALF tries to distance itself from the idea of being a purely European institution by constantly emphasizing the idea of a Euro-Mediterranean partnership, as the following statement demonstrates:

[...] it would not work that effectively as another European project which is rolled out in the region [...] We are trying to create a new geopolitical concept and to do that, people have to have a lot of ownership. We are not creating something from the European Union plus its neighbors; we are creating a shared idea. (Interview #26)

Nonetheless, the EU institutions have so far played an important backup role both in the formation process as well in the maintenance of the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime. Particularly, the generous allocation of funds shows that the EU can definitely be seen as a facilitator and supplier of cultural exchange. Therefore, when recalling the liberal concept of patronage it may hold true that the EU so far has mediated as a neutral and supportive party among the national interests which embraces an arm's length approach. Indeed, one of the interviewees actually compares the structure of the foundation to that of the Goethe Institutes. However, in contrast to the Goethe Institutes the EU institutions and the member states involved failed to agree upon clear rules and guidelines as to the areas in which the the government – i.e. the Board members – may interfere or may not. (Interview #21)

When it comes to the involvement of the BoG in the ALF one can detect several ambiguities: Members of the BoG have a right to vote and decide on the prospective program, have a say in the appointment of the management of the foundation and in financial decisions, even though some of them do not support the organization financially. So far, no clear rules have been agreed on how to solve this dilemma or what kind of sanctions are foreseen when member countries are late with their payments or do not meet their financial targets for the ALF at all. So even though it might be normal for an arm's length institution that there is a board that serves as a watchdog, observing a foundation's activities, the board's surveillance and monitoring of the ALF does not stand in balanced proportion to its actual contributions. This also taken in consideration, as a cultural policy expert remarks, that in order "programs of inter-cultural (and inter-religious) dialogue do succeed; it is essential that they involve local citizens as much as possible – and national officials as little as possible." (De Vries 2008: 62) In this regard, it seems that the ALF is too closely intertwined with governmental positions. Not only the involvement of the BoG, is slowing down and restricting the work of the foundation due to diverging national interests and sub-regional conflicts, but also the structure of the HoNs impedes the success of the foundation. Many HoNs are still appointed by the national governments and are thus not necessarily representing the interests of civil society. That reduplication of national influence considerably undermines the credibility of the foundation's work and contributes to its "greatest disadvantage, the lack of independence in its decisions." (Interview #4)

That the BoG considerably influences the work of the foundation has become clear with regard to the productive vacuum after the Gaza War in 2009 that resulted in one of its flagship projects, the *Restore Trust – Rebuild Bridges* campaign. Thus, while the involvement of the governments in a Board might be common for an arm's length

institution – the term “arm’s length institution” already suggests it is not totally removed from governmental influence – the actual national networks and hence the overall ALF network must refrain from any political interference. As long as the guidelines for the BoG – especially when it comes to the funding of the ALF – have not been clarified and the reduplication of the political interference is not prevented one cannot speak of cultural diplomacy at arm’s length. The ALF works independently from the community institutions but not from many of the member countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Another rule of procedure that still has to be negotiated concerns the communication among the different bodies. They all take crucial decisions but seem to be very detached from each other; the BoG working with the management of the foundation is hardly in contact with the HoNs or the staff of the foundation. So the staff and the HoNs only receive directives from the BoG but they might not necessarily have been coordinated with the other bodies even though the higher management tries to serve as a mediator. The national networks would highly recommend institutionalizing regular meetings between the BoG and the HoN but also the AC and the staff ask for an increasing harmonization of their efforts.

A commission officer sees the reasons for the unclear rules and working procedures mostly in the hasty formation of the foundation after 9/11. And also the ALF staff is aware of the fact that they represent a new concept of regional cooperation and that they “are in a process of something that until now has not reached its objective.” (Interview #13) This once again triggers some of the initial questions, such as which conclusions we can draw from the institutional set-up of the ALF? A question that is not only relevant in the light of the present discussions on a European cultural diplomacy but also with regard to one of the basic questions of regime theory whether regimes do actually matter? Several aspects might legitimize the need for the set-up of a cultural regime based on intergovernmental cooperation: First of all, a pan-European cultural diplomacy is still mostly practiced on “national desks.” (Interview #21) A joint engagement like it is practiced in the context of the ALF and the EuroMed Partnership might therefore be a first common approach. Nevertheless, member states highlight that the ALF is predominantly a “dialogue actor.” Culture within the ALF is seen as a means for development in the sense of the social-democratic model laid out in the introduction. (Interview# 21, 23) Therefore, the work of the ALF is very important for enabling intercultural dialogue between different public and non-public actors but it does not follow that it replaces other actions more focused on

cultural and creative expertise which might then be the *métier* of the regional EUNIC clusters, as an interviewee points out. (Interview #21) But also in the light of the frequent critique of imposing European values to Arab countries, this shared national approach of cooperation seems to be adequate for practicing a multilateral cultural diplomacy supported by the European Union. Especially, in the light of the problem structure involving abstract categories such as values and perceptions, “the model put in place makes sense until now,” as another interviewee puts it. (Interview #13) In a region where there are so many “unsettled and contested identities” (Gillespie 2003: 234-235) a cultural foundation with the ALF’s set-up seems to have validity and can be regarded as a least common denominator. Beyond that, one has to highlight the considerable achievements of the cooperative structure of the ALF as a network of networks that has mobilized a huge number of transnational actors working together in the region. The value of the institutional structure with its 43 networks is linked to a huge organizational effort, but the scope should not be underestimated. Also, the idea of a network of networks equally positioned between civil society and the governmental level backed up by the EU has its strength and if wisely adopted could be useful in other global contexts.

As mentioned in the introduction the EU-LAC foundation intends to follow a similar model of cultural diplomacy. A model that then might benefit from the ALF’s experiences; that works not only at arm’s length from the European Union institutions but is also less intertwined with governmental representatives on the Board of Governors level and predominantly on the level of its Head of Networks, which very much challenges the denomination of the ALF as an arm’s length institution. As the Latin American region is currently facing less troubled times the institutionalization stage of the EU-LAC Foundation might allow for a well thought-through process of consultation⁷³ and establishment. This might be more time-consuming but helps the foundation not to end up as a pure top-down institution, which is not endorsed by broader levels of society and thus becomes a more mature regional cultural diplomacy agent. Also in the light of the new structural arrangements of the EEAS, the future EU-LAC foundation could be a positive and credible model for the EU’s global self-assertiveness as a soft and civilian power.

With regard to the ALF, specific measures have to be taken to adapt the cultural regime and to modify the present structural inertia that the ALF is struggling with. Predominantly,

⁷³The process of consultation so far has already involved several discussions and meetings with representatives of the ALF in order to avoid similar structural shortcomings. (Interview #13)

the formalization of norms and the member's compliance with these norms would constitute a crucial step toward financial stability and intellectual independence. In order to remain credible this is a process that the involved departments in the European Commission as in the EEAS have to follow cautiously in order not to lose support both among the public in the region as well as among its own ranks in Brussels by supporting a piecemeal and highly politicized foundation. In the light of the current political upheavals in the Arab countries since the beginning of 2011 this might actually be another productive political vacuum the European Union together with the affiliated bodies of the ALF may harness for overdue structural reforms.

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8. List of Abbreviations

AC	Advisory Council
ACP	African Caribbean and Pacific
ALF	Anna Lindh Foundation
AL	Arab League
ALESCO	Arab League Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
AoC	Alliance of Civilization
ASEF	Asia-Europe Foundation
BoG	Board of Governors
CfP	Call for Proposal
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CoE	Council of Europe
DG EAC	Directorate General for Education and Culture
DG DEVCO	Directorate General for Development and Cooperation
DG RELEX	Directorate General for External Relations
EAD	Euro-Arab Dialogue
EDC	European Defense Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EEAS	European External Action Service
EMP	European-Mediterranean Partnership
ENP	European Neighborhood Policy
EPC	European Political Cooperation
EU	European Union
EU-LAC	European Union Latin American Caribbean
EUROMED	European-Mediterranean
HoN	Head of Network
HoU	Head of Unit
IR	International Relations
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
SOM	Senior Officials Meeting
SNDP	Strategic Network Development Scheme
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

ANNEX

COVER LETTER⁷⁴

Dear Mr. / Ms. ...!

I'm a student at the University of Vienna, Austria. At the moment I'm writing my master thesis in Political Science in the field of European cultural policy. My supervisor is Ms. Karin Liebhart, professor at the Political Science department, University of Vienna.

The interest within my thesis lies on the institutional structures of the European Union's cultural diplomacy initiatives. I therewith analyze the Anna Lindh Foundation as a specific foreign cultural policy model that emerged as an intergovernmental initiative in supporting cultural cooperation and network-building in the Euro-Mediterranean region but now works as an independent institution.

By analyzing the Anna Lindh Foundation I want to look closer at the idea of establishing regional foundations working on intercultural exchange of civil societies. What is the benefit of establishing these intergovernmental foundations such as the Asia-Europe Foundation and the prospective EU-LatinAmerican Caribben Foundation, what might be challenges and its structural dynamics, also in the light of the recently installed European External Action Service?

The professional perspectives and experiences of experts who are acquainted and directly involved with the Anna Lindh Foundation and with external cultural policy initiatives of the European Union lie at the core of my analysis. That is why I'm planning to conduct several interviews between December 2010 and February 2011 with persons who are working in this field of study.

As you followed the work of the ALF as ... I would like to ask if you would be interested to answer some research-related questions for my thesis?

I attached an abstract of my research project to follow my academic focus. But if you have any other questions please don't hesitate to contact me!

Thanks a lot for your help & kind regards,
Katharina Obenhuber

⁷⁴Both the draft cover letter as the questionnaires were adapted according to the interviewee's professional background.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaire for expert interviews with persons directly involved with the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF)

Before the interview

General information

Interview#:
Name:
Affiliated institution:
Location:
Time/Duration:

Checklist

- ☐ Check surrounding and functioning of my technical device (noise, recording device, microphone)
 - ☐ Acknowledgment
 - ☐ Give short outline of my research interest and my academic background
 - ☐ Give Information about the procedure of the interview
(Duration – use of technical device – anonymity)
-

Warm-up questions

What are your responsibilities at the Anna Lindh Foundation?

How long have you been working at the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF)? Have you been following its mission since its establishment in 2005?

Questions regarding the genesis of the ALF and its structural characteristics

Out of which international context did the ALF evolve?

Which actors were involved? (Was there a state that served as a driving force to establish such a foundation for intercultural dialogue?)

What role did state actors and non-state actors play during the process of the formation and implementation of the foundation?

What role do these actors play now?

How would you describe the structural characteristics of the ALF?

What do you think are the main objectives of the Foundation, what is its mission?

Questions regarding the current work of the ALF (Objectives)
--

What are your responsibilities at the ALF?

In what kind of projects were you involved?

How does the co-operation process work?

Who determines the program, which actors/parties have a right to say?

How does the funding structure work?

How do you experience the co-operation between the foundation and local communities especially here in Egypt?

What are the chances of such a foundation?

What might be its disadvantages and its challenges?

Questions regarding European Union's cultural diplomacy

Following literature on cultural policy initiatives of the European Union in its external relations one regularly comes across terms such as *cultural diplomacy* or *soft power*? What do you think of these terms?

Does such a cultural diplomacy exist in a European context?

Could the ALF be seen in such a context?

How would you assess the value of the Foundation in relation to cultural diplomacy-attempts of the European Union?

How would you describe the relation of the ALF to other national cultural institutes?

Questions regarding the European Union's External Action Service (EEAS)

What do you think of the European Union's External Action Service which should be installed during the next couple of months?

Do you see Culture as a part of the EEAS? If so, how?

How do or should the EU institutions approach the task of cultural policy/diplomacy?

What role could the Foundation play for the EEAS?

Do you see any possibility or a need to extend such a program to another geographical region?

Questionnaire for European Cultural Policy Experts and Experts involved with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP)

Before the interview

General information

Interview#:
Name:
Affiliated institution:
Location:
Date:
Time/Duration:

Checklist

- ☐ Check surrounding and functioning of my technical device (noise, recorder,...)
 - ☐ Acknowledgment
 - ☐ Give short outline of research interest and my academic background
The main interest in my research lies in the structures of the
 - ☐ Give interviewee information about the procedure of the interview
(Duration – use of technical devices – anonymity)
-

Warm-up questions

How long have you been working in the field of European cultural policy/ in the context of the EMP?

What are your responsibilities at the ...?

When and how did you first hear about the ALF?

Questions regarding the genesis of the ALF and its structural characteristics

How did you follow the genesis and the work of the ALF?

Out of which international context did the ALF evolve?

Do you know which actors were involved? What role did state actors and non-state actors play during the process of the formation and implementation of the foundation?

What role do these actors play now?

How would you describe the structural characteristics of the ALF?

What do you think are the main objectives of the Foundation, what is its mission?

What are the chances of such a foundation with regard to the cultural policy objectives of the European Union?

What might be its disadvantages and its challenges?

Questions regarding European Union's cultural diplomacy

Following literature on cultural policy initiatives of the European Union one regularly comes across terms such as *cultural diplomacy* and *soft power*? What do you think of these terms?

Does such a cultural diplomacy exist in a European context?

Could the ALF be seen in such a context?

How would you assess the value of the Foundation in relation to cultural diplomacy-attempts of the European Union?

Questions regarding the European Union's External Action Service (EEAS)

What do you think of the European Union's External Action Service which should be installed during the next couple of months?

Do you see culture as a part of the EEAS? If so, how?

How do or should the EU community institutions approach the task of a European cultural diplomacy?

What role could the Foundation play for the European External Action service?

Do you see any possibility or a need to extend such a program to another geographical region?

LEBENS LAUF

Anna Katharina Obenhuber, B.A.

Geburtsdatum / Geburtsort: 21.06.1986 / Ried im Innkreis
Staatsbürgerschaft: Österreich

AUSBILDUNG

02/2006-01/2012: Diplomstudium Politikwissenschaft, Universität Wien

10/2005-04/2011: Bachelorstudium Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft,
Universität Wien

08-12/2009: Auslandssemester an der Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign
Service, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. Teilnahme
am Undergraduate Program: *Culture & Politics*

WEITERBILDUNGEN

03/10: Seminarwoche am Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, Berlin

02-09/07: Besuch einzelner Seminarwochen zum Thema Kulturmanagement und
Kulturvermittlung am Institut für Kulturkonzepte Wien

BERUFSERFAHRUNG

09-12/2011: Praktikum *Cultural Policy, Cultural Dialogue, and Cultural
Diversity Division*, Europarat Straßburg

1/2008-6/2011: Mitarbeit *Literarisches Quartier*, Alte Schmiede Wien

07-10/2008: Praktikum *Österreichisches Kulturforum*, New York

11-2007-12/2007: Praktikum *IG Kultur Österreich* Wien

FREMDSPRACHENKENNTNISSE

Deutsch Muttersprache
Englisch Flüssig in Wort und Schrift
Französisch Grundkenntnisse

The thesis follows a recent development in the cultural policies of the European Union (EU) – a stronger focus on the involvement of culture in its external relations. Cultural policy in that sense should not anymore take place only within the EU but should also involve an increased awareness of cultural relations with partner countries and regions. Especially in the light of a globalized cultural market, global mobility and its accompanying xenophobic tendencies, cultural policy on a EU level received a reevaluation. This reorientation was put forward in two official EU documents: These were the *European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World*, published by the European Commission in May 2007, and in November 2008 the *European Council's Conclusion on the Promotion of Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue in the External Relations of the Union and its Member States*.

The documents triggered a wide debate among a diversity of European cultural policy stakeholders who then introduced and revised terms and concepts at the intersection of culture and diplomacy. My research ties in with these concepts but also with raised questions of how does or should the EU approach the task of a cultural diplomacy within a more global perspective; coordinate the diverse players and interact with foreign publics? And most important how can we analyze and characterize the underlining structures and principles of this new effort academically?

Following the positions and suggestions of experts engaged in the field of European cultural policy, the EU's main role should be that of a facilitator of international cultural exchange, but it should not serve as its executive entity. Tracing this idea, I argue that in certain geographical contexts cultural diplomacy as part of EU's external relations already follows such an independent *arm's length* approach. The arm's length structure of cultural diplomacy is strongly linked to the British Council. The British cultural representation abroad is financially supported by the government but their programmers work in an independent institution that is not part of the governmental Foreign Service institutions. Similarly, European cultural diplomacy in the Mediterranean region was initiated within the intergovernmental setting of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and is strongly supported by the EU but the actual work is executed by an external cultural institution, the *Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures* based in Alexandria, Egypt.

The Foundation herewith serves as an evaluation of already existing structures of a cultural diplomacy practiced by the EU which received a new interest in view of discussions regarding the involvement of cultural agendas in the recently installed EU External Action Service.

In order to address these questions that set the EU's international position and its cooperation with third countries theoretically into perspective I will introduce regime theory. Regime theory – a theory of International Relations – deals with the formation and the effectiveness of more or less institutionalized forms of cooperation, called regimes. I assume that the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership provides the institutional framework of issue-specific regimes, one of which is the Euro-Mediterranean cultural regime which has at its core the Anna Lindh Foundation.

Die vorliegende Arbeit nimmt aktuelle Entwicklungen der Kulturpolitik der Europäischen Union auf – ein stärkerer Fokus auf die Einbeziehung von Kultur in den externen Beziehungen. Europäische Kulturpolitik soll sich nicht mehr nur an ein innereuropäisches Publikum richten, sondern Bestandteil einer zunehmend engeren Kooperation mit Partnerländern und –regionen sein. Besonders in Anbetracht eines globalisierten Kulturmarktes, neuer Migrationsströme und deren begleitenden xenophoben Tendenzen, hat Europäische Kulturpolitik in den letzten Jahren eine Neuorientierung erfahren. Zwei Publikationen der EU waren dafür wegbereitend: die Mitteilung der Europäischen Kommission im Mai 2007 einer *Europäische Agenda für Kultur in einer globalisierten Welt* sowie eineinhalb Jahre später, im November 2008, die Schlussfolgerungen des Rates der Europäischen Union zur *Förderung der kulturellen Vielfalt und des interkulturellen Dialogs in den Außenbeziehungen der Union und ihrer Mitgliedstaaten*.

Die offiziellen Stellungnahmen der EU gaben den Anstoß für eine breite konzeptuelle Debatte. Folgt man den Positionen und Vorschlägen der beteiligten ExpertInnen im Feld der Europäischen Kulturpolitik, so sollte die EU vornehmlich die Rolle eines Vermittlers und Unterstützers von internationalem Kulturaustausch einnehmen, aber nicht als das ausführende Organ agieren. Die vorliegende Arbeit knüpft an diese aufgeworfenen Überlegungen an und nimmt an, dass die EU in bestimmten geographischen Kontexten bereits solch einem Anspruch einer unabhängigen kulturellen Diplomatie folgt. So wird in der Euro-Mediterranen Partnerschaft eine kulturelle Diplomatie finanziell von der EU unterstützt, die eigentliche Arbeit aber findet in der externen *Anna Lindh Stiftung für den Dialog der Kulturen im Mittelmeer* mit Sitz in Alexandria (Ägypten) statt.

Die umfassende strukturelle Analyse der Stiftung soll damit als Evaluierung bereits bestehender Strukturen einer europäischen kulturellen Diplomatie dienen. Eine Evaluierung, die in den Monaten nach der Ratifizierung des Vertrages an Lissabon rund um die Diskussionen des neuen Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienstes und der geforderten Einbeziehung von kulturellen und sozialen Agenden, an Aktualität gewonnen hat.

Um die Fragen in Bezug auf die internationale Positionierung der EU und ihrer kulturellen Kooperation mit Drittstaaten in eine theoretische Perspektive zu bringen, beziehe ich mich auf eine Theorie der Internationalen Beziehungen. Regimetheorie beschäftigt sich mit der Entstehung und der Effektivität von mehr oder weniger institutionalisierten Formen internationaler Kooperation, die als Regime bezeichnet werden können. Ebenfalls stellt die Euro-Mediterrane Partnerschaft den Rahmen für die Entstehung von problemzentrierten Regimen, unter anderem für das Euro-Mediterrane Kulturregime dar, das den Ausgangspunkt für eine umfassende institutionelle Analyse der Anna Lindh Stiftung darstellt.