

THE EUROPEAN UNION'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEMOCRATISATION PROCESS IN EGYPT AND IN LIBYA BEFORE AND DURING THE ARAB SPRING

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to shed light on the European Union's effectiveness in promoting democracy in Egypt and in Libya before and during the Arab Spring. While the EU has long tried to promote core values of democracy in its neighbourhood, it is argued that its initiatives have had limited impact until recently. Although democratisation could have been adequately promoted through the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), several internal and external factors undermined the impact and effectiveness of these frameworks. However, now that in these two states democracy has the potential to be based on strong foundations, the EU has the opportunity to be actively, effectively and substantially involved in the democratisation process. This thesis, on the one hand, points out the factors which made it impossible for the EU to convince Hosni Mubarak and Muammar Qadhafi to proceed with democratic reforms and which rendered the EMP and the ENP ineffective. On the other hand, by presenting the EU's responses to the Arab Spring as well as steps taken towards an effective democracy promotion, the author highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the EU's new approach and draws conclusions on its potentials.

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