

**A FRAMEWORK FOR A GEOPOLITICAL COMPARISON
BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST: THE EU MODEL
FOR THE MIDDLE EAST?**

ISMAIL CEM KARADUT

Department of Public Administration, Dumlupinar University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

Background/ Objectives and Goals

As (it is generally referred to) the cradle of civilization, the Middle East still occupies a special and key position to the understanding of global politics, and global politics have gained a new trend in terms of political-territorial units of organization. In other words, in a globalized world emerging as well as established forms of regional integration of states like the EU, the NAFTA, the MERCOSUR etc. play an important role in inter/trans-national politics. However, the Middle East, which is looking for peace and stability, has not been able to appear as a regional economic and political actor in the international fora. This paper is intended to analyze the reasons and other factors that keep the region from being an influential political actor in the world politics from a comparative standpoint, and tries to find the answer to the following question: “Could a regional integration model like in Europe be considered for the Middle East in order to bring about development and peace in the region that has long been fragmented and tormented by economic-political instability, conflicts and civil wars?”

Methods

The paper ‘employs’ the methods of comparative politics. Specifically, J. S. Mill’s “Most Similar Systems Design” (MSD), “Most Different Systems Design” (MDD) and “Diverse Cases” are used to shed a light upon the comparison between the Middle East and Europe.

Expected Results/ Conclusion/ Contribution

This paper tries not to be suffocated in the richness of events, issues, and subject-matters of the Middle East, but gives an abstract framework for analyzing and comparing the EU and a possible Middle Eastern Union which should precede any effort to focus on this problem in detail. That is why relevant methods and some theories of comparative politics as well as the regional integration trend in global politics are reviewed with regard to this geopolitical comparison, focusing on the example of the EU and the possibility of the Middle Eastern Union in context of objective necessities.

KEYWORDS: *Global Politics, Regional Integration, The European Union, The Middle East*

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