

Name of the student:	Nadia Al-Kabariti
Title of the thesis:	EU External Cultural Policies: A Case Study of Jordan
Reviewer:	Dr Matthew Broad, Leiden University

### 1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review):

This thesis studied the evolution of EU ‘cultural policies’ vis-à-vis Jordan. This was a potentially timely and fascinating topic, and the introduction did a fair job of outlining the relevance of culture for the EU. That said, a better thesis would have included reference to at least some of the relevant titles on the subject, of which there are many. The case selection was also rather underwhelming. This sought to understand ‘the distinct approaches to cultural policies and initiatives’, but there was no sense of whose policy was being distinguished and why such a distinction might exist and why we ought to highlight them (France and Germany, along with Britain, were mentioned, but their reasoning not clear). Similarly, Jordan was described as a ‘compelling case [...] due to its significant role in the Middle East’, but at this early stage we got little about why its ‘significant role’ was of theoretical or academic significance – was the assumption that Jordan’s position demanded a unique set of diplomatic tools, or that the EU’s overtures towards Amman somehow varied from the rest of MENA because of this perceived significance? Unfortunately, these points weren’t hammered home in the later methodology chapter, which for some reason seemed to be fused with the literature review.

More generally, I was left wondering why ‘cultural policy’ was being used rather than ‘cultural diplomacy’, which surely surmises better what was being got at here – namely, the idea that an actor like the EU can choose to deploy cultural tools and resources to further its diplomatic goals, be they political and/or economic. This is not simply a conceptual point; talking about cultural diplomacy might have allowed the student to engage with more pertinent titles by the likes of Higgott, Carta, Triandafyllidou, Schunz etc. And it might have helped focus both the conceptual framework and the literature review - this and later sections listed lots of concepts such as soft power, normative power etc., all of which were relevant at some level but appeared to be treated here in a perfunctory manner – in all I felt the author wasn’t quite in control of the concepts being brought in and how they were being used in or adding to the study, even if it was all well written.

### 2. ANALYSIS

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources):

The chosen method was qualitative case study and, seemingly, a historical study of EU cultural diplomacy vis-à-vis Jordan. But it also mentioned document analysis – we got vague reference to a whole range of possible sources (p. 11) but no clear guidance of which specific ones, why, and how this documentary analysis was carried out. As stated earlier, the thesis purported a desire to ‘study how EU cultural policy has developed and changed in Jordan as it is a way to know what governments do with these policies over time and why they choose to do it’ – a better approach might have been to first identify a shift before then exploring reasons for it; if this wanted to examine evolution/change over time then fine, but we needed a better argument that provided here for why this was necessary.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives):

Chapter 2 outlined the background to EU cultural policy, before chapter 3 mapped out the role of culture in EU-Jordanian relations. The former was intriguing but ultimately rather descriptive, without much of an argument or end conclusion to the information presented. And again, this confused 'policy' as a specific principles or course of action by the EU and cultural diplomacy as a process whereby the EU uses existing components – its educational programs like Erasmus+, for instance – to promote its interests globally. Given the question, we probably did not need to know about Monnet and the 'European consciousness'. By chapter 3 this became a chronology of building events and seemed to be saying lots about what had been read in the literature rather than engaging with the earlier-promised documentary analysis. In the event, Jordan sort of got lost within a morass of detail - it returned come p. 32 before various projects were mentioned in chapter 4, but again was narrative, with facts being brought in from reading without being included into any sort of analytical argument and no obvious analytical comparison between British, German and French policy choices. This was a great shame, as the student was clearly knowledgeable about, and interested in, the broader subject - in all, this might have been on safer ground, say, comparing with US to understand what the EU can and does do, with Jordan as a way of tracing as much.

#### 4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

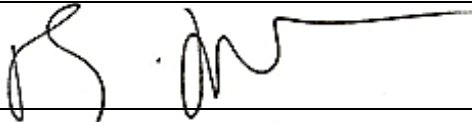
(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

Writing was very good for the most part, bar one or two typos. Scholarly apparatus were all need.

#### 5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

(strong and weak point of the dissertation, other issues)

There was great potential in looking at the broad topic of EU cultural policy and its applicability to Jordan more specifically. There was, moreover, engagement with some notable names such as Nye. But this was ultimately rather confused as a thesis - the literature review did not establish any firm rationale for the question; the methodology was underdeveloped; the conceptual approach was somewhat confused; and the findings narrative.

<b>Grade (A-F):</b>	D - satisfactory
Date:	Signature:
8.7.24	

#### GRADE CONVERSION MA EPS

Percentile	Prague	Krakow	Leiden	Barcelona
A (91-100)	91-100 %	4,51-5,00	8.0-10	9-10
B (81-90)	81-90 %	4,21-4,50	7.5-7.9	8-8,9

C (71-80)	71-80 %	3,71-4,20	7-7.4	7-7,9
D (61-70)	61-70 %	3,21-3,7	6.5-6.9	6-6,9
E (51-60)	51-60 %	3,00-3,20	6-6.4	5-5,9

Assessment criteria:

Excellent (A): 'Outstanding performance with only minor errors';

Very good (B): 'Above the average standard but with some errors';

Good (C): 'Generally sound work but with a number of notable errors';

Satisfactory (D): 'Fair but with significant shortcomings';

Sufficient (E): 'Performance meets the minimum criteria';

Fail: 'Some/considerable more work required before the credit can be awarded'.