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Introduction

"Mediterranean Conundrums": Pluridisciplinary Perspectives for Research in the Social Sciences

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This paper has two purposes. First, it summarises the various papers presented at a Pluridisciplinary Conference on the Mediterranean treating the region from a variety of perspectives, a selection of which are published in this issue of History and Anthropology. Second, it attempts to explore some of the tensions between historians and anthropologists, and political scientists and geographers, in the treatment of the region.

Keywords: Mediterranean; 'Mediterraneanisms'; Informal Economy; Cosmopolitanism; Europeanisation

Introduction

In November 2003, a conference was held at the Freie Universität, Berlin, on the theme "Mediterranean Conundrums[1]—Pluridisciplinary Perspectives for Research in the Social Sciences". This first working conference of the Thematic Network of European Social Science Research Centres on the Mediterranean Basin (REMSH) was organized by the Freie Universität in cooperation with the University of Tübingen and the Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme (MMSH), Aix-en-Provence.[2] The aims of this first seminar were to establish a state-of-the-art of current research on the Mediterranean in the Social Sciences; develop ideas for new research tracks; and elaborate a framework for the comparative analysis of contemporary phenomena in the Mediterranean.

The realization of this state-of-the-art of former and current research on the Mediterranean included the different disciplines represented in the network: anthropology, history, social and political sciences, and geography. Clearly, a complete survey of the current achievements of all these disciplines was impossible; a selection was

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made, by focusing on singular issues. Still, the main objective was to get an overview of the relevance and meaning the Mediterranean has for the different disciplines, and to clarify whether the Mediterranean offers a pertinent framework for the analysis of complex political, social and cultural phenomena. Different definitions of the notion "Mediterranean" have been distinguished and compared, as well as the theoretical elements and methodologies used by the different disciplines. The crystallization of common or contradictory elements among these different approaches made it possible, in a second step, to develop a more pluridisciplinary view on the Mediterranean.

The different disciplines and approaches were brought together in the following manner. First, introductions were given from the perspective of singular disciplines: history, anthropology, geography, political science and sociology. After a synthesis of the different approaches, tensions and agendas between these different disciplines, the Mediterranean was considered from a more thematic-oriented perspective. These thematic approaches included "Globalization", the "Euro-Mediterranean Partnership", "Circulation and Informal Exchanges", "Religion and Politics: Interaction and Confrontation" and "Port Cities and Cosmopolitanism". In order to create a relationship between the different thematic approaches, two more horizontal reflections were undertaken. The first one confronted the more institutional and political approaches, as in the case of "Globalization" and "Euro-Mediterranean Partnership", with those approaches that are more focused on the micro-level, on actors, processes and strategies, as in the case of "Circulation and Informal Exchanges". The second reflection established a horizontal link between the subjects "Cosmopolitanism" and "Religion and Politics" under the assumption of the emergence of multiculturalism in the north as one of the consequences of the end of cosmopolitanism in the south. This special issue of *History and Anthropology* contains a number of reworked papers by the authors after the conference.

In this Introduction, however, we wish to move beyond this. The presenters of the single discipline papers on their distinctive approaches to the Mediterranean abundantly (and refreshingly) drew upon other disciplines for their source material, their cross-fertilization, and even their inspiration and legitimation. Historians drew upon anthropologists and vice-versa; political scientists upon historians and anthropologists; literary specialists upon historians, and so on. We therefore group together a synthesis of the approaches pursued by the various disciplinary contributors along the lines they themselves established: history with anthropology, geography with political science.

Different Disciplinary Perspectives on the Mediterranean

History and Anthropology: Contesting over Deconstruction

Any discussion on historical approaches to the Mediterranean cannot but take into account two seminal works, with an interval of some 52 years between them: Braudel's (1973 [1949]) *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the age of Philip II*, and Horden and Purcell's (2001) *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*.

The conference was fortunate in having the personal participation of Pergrine Horden who contributed a paper that refers to his influential book. Taking a cue from a paper by Herzfeld (2005), Horden suggests in this issue of *History and Anthropology* that as historians we should put "'the Mediterranean' *within* our frame rather than assume it as *the frame itself*" (his emphasis). He argues that "the idea of the Mediterranean as a *region*, of the circum-Mediterranean *lands* as a distinctive collectivity, is a creation of nineteenth-century thought: it did not arise earlier. It is, most obviously, a creation of nineteenth-century geographers who represent, either explicitly or indirectly, the Mediterranean ambitions and designs of northern European powers". Prior to this, "the Mediterranean" referred to the *sea*, not the lands bordering it.

Historiographies are of course inescapably both cultural and political, and the participants to the Research Network were equally interested in the historiographies generated within the region itself. In the specific case of Greek historiography discussed at the conference, Agriantoni pointed out that the reference to the Byzantine and Ottoman frameworks was much more common than the reference to the Mediterranean. Only recently in Greek historiography has the reference to the Mediterranean become more evident, for complex reasons not unrelated to a desire by Greek cultural historians to perhaps "Europeanize" the Greek past by paying more attention to the diverse Latin and "Frankish" presences in the Greek archipelago and mainland.

Horden is concerned with how *Mediterranean* history (*not* history *in* the Mediterranean) should (or could) be written, and identifies four main strategies: the reductivist, the rhapsode, the reflective and the realist. In reductivist, he would include all those works that treat history in, not of, the Mediterranean. He includes Goitein and Braudel as rhapsodic approaches to the Mediterranean, characterized as "a celebration only of discourse about, or imagery of the Mediterranean". Horden's historical concentration would thus apparently lead him to neglect that such celebrations (both academic and local) could have social or even political effects. In this he differs from Herzfeld who is willing to grant such celebrations analytical and practical heuristic values, as vocabularies of justification of identity, and even as the latter's "practical Mediterraneanisms". Indeed Horden identifies Herzfeld's (1987) *Anthropology through the Looking Glass* as a reflexive approach: "someone able to encompass the whole *grubby* political history of 'discourse' about the Mediterranean" (emphasis added). "Grubby" might suggest contempt, a perspective that runs dangerously close to transferring an academic scepticism about the scientific value of the term applied by outsiders as a strategy of symbolic domination over the area, to insensitivity towards the values held by local inhabitants. This includes, for example, their literature and poetry, which celebrates in a "rhapsodic" way "their" own Mediterranean: "their" Mediterranean may also be "ours".

Finally, Horden argues that despite the nineteenth-century creation of the Mediterranean as a geographical and cultural *topos*, nevertheless on some loose, material definition there *was* a Mediterranean before the nineteenth century. *The Corrupting Sea* is an example of reflexive realism: "a synthesis of the material and the mental, the discursive and the down-to-earth". As Horden's contribution derives from his joint book with Purcell and is also heavily influenced by Herzfeld, we wish to further examine both sources. This is clearly not the place for an extended discussion of *The Corrupting*

Sea, but some observations should be made. *The Corrupting Sea* is critical of Braudel in three main areas: his romanticism; the tensions in his framework (in particular, the authors argue, Braudel's coupling of the *longue duree* with geography, and of events with diplomacy and politics is arbitrary and easily contradicted); and *The Mediterranean* is a history emptied of *mentalites*: perceptions, beliefs attitudes and symbols are lacking (Horden & Purcell, 2001: 42). In short, that it is a panorama: a *histoire immobile* (in the words of Le Roy Ladurie), not a *histoire probleme* as they would have liked.

Braudel might well have agreed with Paul Veyne that history is a particular, arbitrary and contingent attempt at aesthetic (rather than "mechanical") representation: "history is an art, like engraving or photography … history is a work of art by its efforts towards objectivity in the same way that an excellent drawing by one who draws … is a work of art to some degree and supposes some talent on the part of its author" (Veyne, 1984: 229). Accordingly, one could argue that Braudel's romanticism is embedded in his geographical determinism. However, Horden and Purcell go further. They suggest that the continuity of perspective from antiquity to Braudel must be seen as part of a literary tradition, which needs to be explained, rather than being held up for its explanatory value (at least from a historian's perspective). This is compelling, but Horden and Purcell would be the first to agree that writing history is not pursued in a vacuum, nor is it independent of current political concerns, including their own work. They note that "for all the frequency with which it is referred to … Mediterranean history is a division of the subject of history as a whole that has yet to achieve full articulacy and recognition" (Horden & Purcell, 2001: 15). And when this has been undertaken, "it is often narrowly conceived—as history *in* rather than *of* the region, piecemeal or abstracted from its locale" (Horden & Purcell, 2001: 15; emphasis added).

Their aim, therefore, is to write a history of, rather than in, the Mediterranean. This is an attractive prospect, but its Foucauldian underpinnings inevitably insinuate that the history of the Mediterranean is terminal, has an end, as indeed the two authors suggest when, once having disassembled the anthropological texts they carefully dissect, they posit that the Mediterranean had an identifiable history in the *pre-modern* period. "[T]he political and ethnic untidiness of the Mediterranean could turn out to be inspiring. Dense fragmentation complemented by a striving towards control of communications may be an apt summary of the Mediterranean *past*" (Horden & Purcell, 2001: 25; emphasis added). Yet why stop in the past, and why value anthropological texts primarily for what they say about the past, imperfect as they are likely to be? As Driessen (2001: 530) observes: "[T]he fault line they perceive between the pre-industrial and the post-industrial Mediterranean rests heavily on an implicit assumption of relative stability in rural communities prior to the second World War, itself a rather daring extrapolation from the twentieth-century ethnographic record to three millennia of Mediterranean history." It is ironic that in their anthropological readings Horden and Purcell proceed in a *reverse* way to the original intention of anthropologists, which is to tell us how the past helped shape *present* social structures, attitudes and mentalities. Instead, they move backwards, carefully (and judiciously, it must be said) reading anthropological texts for what they can indicate about pre-modern social structures and

mentalities. This is particularly concordant with their project to emphasize particularities, rather than generalities: "A definition of the Mediterranean in terms of the unpredictable, the variable and, above all, the local, will indeed be explored throughout this book" (Horden & Purcell, 2001: 13). It is hardly surprising that the tenor of *The Corrupting Sea* is profoundly critical of Braudel, for it is an attempt to identify the least common denominators rather than the latter's highest common factors.

It could be argued that anthropology's structural functionalist tradition handicapped the discipline in its dealings with the past, a fact lamented by Davis (1977) among others. Clearly, the anthropological texts particularly attractive to historians are those that incorporate an historical dimension, and there are some notable examples (e.g., the work of Goody (2001), who tackles some broad themes in the history of the Mediterranean, such as the role of images). However, the agendas of historians and anthropologists will differ at some (variable) point, which is on the horizon of the imagined or constructed pasts as perceived from the vantage-point of the present. If anthropology can be considered (restrictively) as the history of the present, and history as an the anthropology of the past, then there is no reason to exclude anthropological texts not for what they do not tell us about the past, but what they tell us about the present. We shall have more to suggest along these lines when we discuss the contribution of the texts included in this collection. Similarly, Horden and Purcell's admirable critical reflexivity towards the Mediterranean as a unitary object of study risks vitiating what historians are good at (the broad sweep of change across time) by what social theorists or theorists of ideas probably do better (viz. the deconstruction of labels and disciplines as instruments of power), but who often lack the discretion and background knowledge of the former. Clearly, any good history of a region as politically contentious and contested, geographically indeterminate and culturally ambiguous as "the Mediterranean" is correct to start with a critical tracing of the concept itself as a political and cultural category of domination across time (as indeed *The Corrupting Sea* does admirably), in short with historiography. However, the terror of contaminating one's historical account through the viruses of inherited concepts and frameworks (i.e., "their own peculiar brands of cultural history" (Horden & Purcell, 2001: 26)) unless they can be inoculated against all ideological traces, risks pushing one's account towards a type of contingent nominalism. The result is an admirable and stimulatingly iconoclastic example in micro-histories that relies on the working out of the possibilities between risk management, distinctive "logics" of production (diversification, storage and redistribution), topographical fragmentation (which is as much perceptual as physical), and a regime of communications that affects redistribution.

The Corrupting Sea has justly attracted admiration for its broad sweep and its bold attempt at synthesis. Its broadness of vision and sources merits much respect, and we do not wish to detract from what is an impressive piece of scholarship; yet it is not without its problems. For example the distinction between history of, and in, the Mediterranean, may be easier to maintain *a priori*, rather than *post facto*. As Harris (2005) points out, according to *The Corrupting Sea*, human intervention in the history *of* the Mediterranean is admissable, but not in the history *in* the Mediterranean. It is difficult to maintain the

distinction because human actions and interventions would be only countable in this scheme if they were related to productive strategies or interventions on the ecology of the place. Likewise, they tend to downplay economic and productive significance of towns, but at the expense of their political and cultural significance.

Since the 1950s, anthropologists have conducted extensive fieldwork in the Mediterranean area. In 1959, a first conference of anthropologists on the Mediterranean was held leading to the publication of the "Social Anthropology of the Mediterranean" in 1963. After a period of success of the Mediterranean as a concept for analysis, different authors seriously questioned what they call the "Mediterraneanist construct". During the 1990s, the discussion on the category "Mediterranean" progressively lost its force and instead tended to follow geopolitical lines of demarcation into an "anthropology of Europe" and an "anthropology of the Middle East". As Dreissen (2001) points out, the eclipse of the anthropology of the Mediterranean (especially by southern European scholars) in favour of a European anthropology surfaced when Portugal, Spain and Greece joined the European Union. It remains to be seen whether scholars from the recently European Union accessioned countries of Cyprus and Malta will strengthen or re-orient this trend.

This epistemic iconoclasm is associated primarily with Michael Herzfeld and, to a lesser extent, with Pina Cabral (1989) (though for very different reasons, the former starting from a Saidian-influenced epistemology, the latter from a geocultural dissatisfaction). Ever since the publication of Michael Herzfeld's (1987) *Anthropology through the Looking-Glass*, the anthropology of the Mediterranean, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, has been bedevilled by the conundrum as to whether it constitutes a viable analytical category reflecting ontological substance or whether it is primarily a scientifically suspect stereotype and a political instrument in the creation of global hierarchies of value. Yet as Silverman (2001) points out, the early pioneers certainly did not intend to essentialize the Mediterranean. In the words of Pitt-Rivers (2001: 46), the Mediterranean was a useful unity to consider "for the purposes of comparison only", more in terms of differences rather than similarities.

In a recent paper, quoted approvingly by Horden in his contribution to this volume, Herzfeld (2005) attempted to clarify his own position. He argues that the value of the Mediterranean as a subject of study lies primarily in its rhetorical and legitimating representation rather than its analytical value.

> (When) the people of the relevant countries are themselves apt to encourage precisely such sweeping essentializing of "their" cultural area … this, as I shall argue … constitutes an important reason for treating the idea of regional unity with the respect due to a research object even if we continue to harbour doubts about its utility as analytical tool. Indeed, *its methodological utility is reduced* to the same degree that this exponentially intensifying self-stereotype interests us as a cultural and political phenomenon. (Herzfeld, 2005: 45–46; emphasis added)

Yet Herzfeld is reassuringly suspicious of any suggestion that the Mediterranean is a mere geographical expression, and demonstrates a healthy reservation towards Bismark's deceptively brutal quip that Europe in 1878 was a similarly vacuous concept, which Horden and Purcell had originally quoted with some approval in their attempt

to deconstruct the Mediterranean. For Herzfeld, the Mediterranean is interesting as a *representation*, not as an analytical object. Indeed, in an argument that recalls an earlier debate in anthropology on the concept of a social structure, he argues, like Leach, that it is primarily a set of ideas in people's heads: "I have never denied that the Mediterranean did not exist; indeed, like facts themselves, such culture-area categories have an existence by virtue of being articulated, and this is the key point to which I address my remarks" (Herzfeld, 2005: 47).

Because Horden and Purcell on the one hand, and Herzfeld on the other, have offered two very distinctively disciplinary iconoclastic approaches to the Mediterranean, it is worthwhile at this point to clarify some similarities and differences between them. Our reading of these authors would suggest that they have, in essence, diametrically *opposed* views along two critical axes that become even more perplexing when conjoined with their main area of agreement. Let us start with the critical common starting point. Both agree that "the Mediterranean" needs to be deconstructed. Whereas the former claim that it is the historical *categories* (towns, major trade routes, etc.—and to a lesser extent, the history of writing about the Mediterranean, including Braudel) that need to be deconstructed to write a proper history of the Mediterranean, Herzfeld believes that it is the *anthropological field* as a cultural area that needs to be deconstructed. In addition, Horden and Purcell and Herzfeld differ along two critical axes: honour and shame as "Mediterranean values", and the "unity" of the Mediterranean. In the concluding pages of *The Corrupting Sea*, Horden and Purcell attempt to *salvage* the concepts of "honour" and "shame", so strongly criticized by Herzfeld, asserting on the basis of their readings that the concepts are "deeply held values right across the region; they have not been foisted on it by anthropological imperialists" (Horden & Purcell, 2001: 523). Yet note that *The Corrupting Sea*'s agenda is to use anthropological texts to discover something unifying about the *pre-modern* Mediterranean, whereas Herzfeld's aim is primarily to demystify *contemporary* epistemic classifications such as "honour" and "shame". Whereas Horden and Purcell use anthropologically identified values such as "honour" and "shame" to *excavate* an image of the Mediterranean *past* independent of (or prior to) the nation-state, Herzfeld (1987: 11) desires to deconstruct what he considers to be a *modern* nation-state and disciplinary-imposed "pervasive archaism" of "honour" and "shame". In line with the purpose of this volume to explore *Mediterranean* conundrums, we are tempted to quip: When is honour not a Mediterranean virtue? The answer (to which both Horden and Purcell and Herzfeld might agree) would have to be: When it is lost!

The second area of difference-opposition lies in their scientific projects and their ultimate destinations. Whereas Horden and Purcell are adamant that they wish to develop a history *of* the Mediterranean and that the Mediterranean has an ontological (but concealed) and temporally bounded reality, Herzfeld is equally insistent that we should *not* practice an anthropology *of* the Mediterranean, but rather *in* the Mediterranean *of* the Mediterranean as a set of representations and legitimation strategies. Herzfeld's (2005: 48) intention is "to ask why the category is so persistent, why it survives, whose interests its maintenance serves, what are the consequences of its continuing importance". He is primarily interested in "what conditions make these utterances

about the Mediterranean persuasive as statements of fact" (Herzfeld, 2005: 50). It is hard to escape the suspicion that, for him, such utterances are the *deus ex machina* (a power that comes in the nick of time to save a difficulty) that "actually create the realities that people perceive" (Herzfeld, 2005: 50); in short, that such utterances are the ghost that animates the contemporary anthropologically constructed machine that purports to be "the Mediterranean". At the local level, Herzfeld (2005: 51) calls these "practical Mediterraneanisms": "programmes of active political engagement with patterns of cultural hierarchy". Such self-stereotypical strategies should be studied as ethnographic phenomena and "as both the instrument and the expression of power in a struggle to determine the global hierarchy of value" (Herzfeld, 2005: 53). One could note that Herzfeld's starting point is the opposite of Pitt-Rivers' (1963: 10) original suggestion: "A social anthropology of the Mediterranean must start with these diversities (within their national frontiers) rather than with the stereotypes of 'national' culture."

Herzfeld acknowledges that Mediterranean people may invoke the idea of a shared Mediterranean identity for a variety of reasons, including exercizing cultural choice and genuinely expanded access to knowledge about culture, but he warns that:

> [T]he idea of a Mediterranean identity may be as much of a trap as its predecessors, nativist demoticism and neoclassical folklorism. For, by conforming to a model of Mediterranean peoples as unreliable, imprecise and spontaneous—all virtues that are highly regarded in the inside spaces of Greek cultural intimacy—they are also providing both an excuse for their own failures in the larger spheres of competition and an excuse for others to despise them. (Herzfeld, 2005: 57)

Herzfeld (2005: 60) does, however, allow that Mediterranean stereotypes "are not always, or automatically, demeaning". He also questions the geographical pervasiveness of the stereotype both for anthropologists conducting fieldwork in the region, and as a local etymology of excuses. An important example is France. He notes that although France also claims a Mediterranean identity, "historical rights to the mainstream of European history are what is more likely to be emphasised". France, he suggests, "belongs to a different category of countries—imperial, northern, universalist, and rationalist, a country that—unlike Portugal, Spain, Greece, and sometimes Italy—does not generate 'ethnic food' in North America but is instead the authoritative source of *haute cuisine*" (Herzfeld, 2005: 60). And he asks somewhat rhetorically: "Is France, which after all has an extensive Mediterranean coast, ever mentioned in the classic anthologies of Mediterranean ethnography? Portugal, with a far weaker geographical claim, appears much more often" (Herzfeld, 2005: 60).

We are uncertain whether France is the exception that proves Herzfeld's rule. If there is some neglect of France, one has to ask by whom—certainly the French *ethnologues* had their own agendas influenced by their own national concerns. If there has been some neglect of France by Anglophone anthropologists, this shows that they may well have been subject to the same stereotypes Herzfeld criticizes. In short, by excluding southern France from Mediterranean anthropological comparison, anthropologists may well have been reproducing dominant power structures through the perpetuation of stereotypes (or, one could say, they could have equally been resisting it). This could

include French anthropologists, too, for one should not exclude the possibility that they may have been influenced by the weight of state-crafted traditions and ideologies. Herzfeld's sensitivity in intuiting the ideologies employed by the state would surely recognize that such values such as "universalism" and "rationalism" could well have been developed by the French nation-state as a means to overcome local particularisms in its project of imposing cultural homogeneity.

We can view "practical Mediterraneanism" as one discourse of popular legitimation, *among many*, of (often negative) difference by reference to some residual and resistant cultural features residing stubbornly in geography and people, that employs a particular vocabulary cluster and also draws sustenance from a scientific classification or scholarly discourse. If we accept this definition as a temporary working one, then one would expect to find it wherever there has been some imposition of external power resisted (and sometimes courted) at the margins, including rural France. Leaving aside the perhaps *sui generis* case of Corsica—often a repository of France's "Mediterraneanism" both at the level of customs (such as "banditry" and "feuding") from the perspective of administrators and the local perspective so extensively studied by Wilson (1988)—one could still explore the tensions in the integration between centre and periphery for some examples of "practical Mediterraneanisms".

To understand the complexity of France's Mediterranean "vocation", one would have to examine the dual processes of national modernization and overseas colonization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see Rabinow, 1989). Ethnology in France was mainly concerned with national integration of "backward" and centrally resistant regional customs and social structures (Albera & Blok, 2001), and thus did not initially contribute to the development of a Mediterranean anthropology. However, from the perspective of the administrators, reformers and commentators, the linkage between the French periphery and the colonies was a ready one. As Eugen Weber (1976) points out, French culture became truly national only in the last years of the nineteenth century. Weber has been criticized for positing an unchanging archaism of Mediterranean French rural economy, and for the effectivity he assigns to agents of change such as the railway. Yet his general picture of state-capital-induced change seems convincing when he suggests that this process of acculturation—"the civilization of the French by urban France, the disintegration of local cultures by modernity and their absorption into the dominant civilization of Paris and the schools" (Weber, 1976: 486)—was akin to colonization. And his observation that throughout the nineteenth century certain parts of France were sometimes unfavourably compared to the overseas colonies cannot be gainsaid if we accept his sources. In the early twentieth century when the socialist mayor of Narbonne accused the barons of the north of invading the Midi as in the olden days of the Albigeois, *Le Figaro* warned its readers: "[M]ake no mistake, this is a country to be reconquered, as in the days of Simon de Montfort" (quoted in Weber, 1976: 487). Local historical conflicts were thus played out on a national scale in the press without, it appears, as much as a self-conscious blush, apparently forgetting Renan's wise dictum that a nation must remember to forget its differences. Here, by contrast, *Le Figaro* was remembering *to remember* them. In some cases, rural Frenchmen looked at the colonized peoples with

envy. In 1862, the *Revue du Limousin* complained: "They are building railway lines in Africa. If only they would treat us like Arabs!" (quoted in Weber, 1976: 489). What began as an plea for inclusion transcending national boundaries in 1862 is now sometimes heard as a complaint against national rejection in the south.

We give this example to suggest that the lines of marginality englobing some and excluding others shift, as do frontiers to which they are of course related, and there is no reason to presume that such shifts may not occur now and in the future. And as they shift, so too does the vocabulary and imagery of stereotypes. We suggest that France (which, according to Herzfeld (2005: 60), "belongs to a different category of countries") achieved that position through its own processes of incorporation and exclusion of its own subjects and others, and is at present undergoing further changes as it struggles to incorporate its large North African population through the employment of other strategies of incorporation including "practical Mediterraneanisms" even on the level of official discourses and representations.

Herzfeld has been perhaps the most influential anthropologist on the problems of viewing the Mediterranean as a culture area, but he might have done almost too good a job at it. For, by working outwards from his relentless laying bare of the rhetorics of the Greek example as the "margin" of Europe to talk about other margins within the Mediterranean, the specific peculiarity of the Greek case may colour our perceptions of other "peripheral" areas. It may well be that having worked intensively in Greece influenced him to see the Mediterranean through a "Greek prism" rather than viewing other societies in their own terms, by which is meant a critical evaluation of how the genesis of national (and national-scientific) ideologies influenced the construction of stereotypes of justification and counter-justification of cultural specificity. Let us be more specific. Working from a Greek perspective can give one certain advantageous insights that can also, at the same time, inevitably compromise a disembedded comparitivism. It gives the researcher the confidence to deconstruct national stereotypes because Greece was until recently the most culturally centralized state in Europe, and because of the often extraordinary lengths to which the authorities went to culturally homogenize the society and sanitize elements of pollution. Such efforts would naturally attract the bemused and sceptical attention of a sensitive anthropologist, but it may perhaps lead to a too self-seductive conclusion that such a project can be transposed *in toto sensu* to other societies, as Herzfeld sometimes seems to suggest. This is not to deny that they can often yield interesting results, as indeed Herzfeld has shown with his comparative work on Italy and Greece, but these insights may be elliptical to more basic concerns such as how nationalist ideologies and different patterns, histories and cultures of creating a nation-state interacted with local particularisms *within a wider geopolitical framework*. In short, pursuing the Mediterraneanist deconstruction strategy could lull one both into a sense of false security (because it suggests that the same research strategy can be followed elsewhere), and actively deceive one by concealing the *sui-generis* nature of the Greek case to construct a fully comparative research project of the external classification to Mediterranean societies and local reactions to this. Marginality and peripherality in the Mediterranean have different histories and have used different "materials", so to speak, to construct different edifices for the cultures

and societies concerned. And the analysis of discourses and counter-justifications of marginality are of quite a different order than an analysis of the structures and forces that have actually created that marginality. (*En passant*, it is ironic that anthropological dissatisfaction with culture areas does not appear to be shared by Cultural Studies, which has been attracting students who would normally have formed part of anthropology's natural clientele.)

It remains to note that in certain respects both anthropologists and historians agree that the Mediterranean is "an essentially contested concept" (Gallie, 1956). Where they differ is *on how* it is contested; in short they may well equivocate over how that concept is contested. This suggests that we are in the presence of a conundrum of a conundrum. For historians such as Horden and Purcell (2001: 523), "the region is only loosely unified, distinguishable from its neighbours to degrees that vary with time, geographical direction and topic. Its boundaries are not of the sort to be drawn easily on a map. Its continuities are best thought of as communities of form or pattern, within which all is mutability." Albera and Blok (2001) suggest problem-solving comparisons, not that dissimilar from *histoire probleme*:

> The remarkable results of the works of Goody and Geertz (gender marking by Moroccans) show the heuristic value of an ambitious and daring mode of comparison. There can be a cross-fertilization between broad comparisons and more "controlled" ones. There is room for different forms of problem-oriented comparison, which may lead to a better understanding of both similarities and differences. This is the gist of the notion of "fields of ethnological study" suggested by De Josselin de Jong and Wolf for the Indonesian Archipelago and the Mediterranean area, respectively.

Such forays have been attempted by, for example, Abullafia (2003), with some felicitous results suggesting the solution

> lies in avoiding the definition of the Mediterranean area as an object of study. Instead, we consider it as a field of study. We are not referring to an object to be defined, but to a wider and significant context to be identified. As a field of ethnological study, the Mediterranean area can then be conceived as a unit of analysis in terms of which we have to phrase our questions and in terms of which we have to answer them. Those who criticise the category of the "Mediterranean" assume that units should always be homogeneous and that comparison is only useful when there are similarities. We argue instead that units like the Mediterranean can have both similarities and differences which make comparison productive. (Albera et al., 2001: Section 6)

Following Derrida, they suggest that the Mediterranean should be seen as a field of "differance", as a "texture of differences continuously reshaped" (Abullafia, 2003: 24). The Mediterranean may have a paradigmatic value since it exemplifies the blurring of distinctions between "us" and "them".

Geography and Political Science: A Sui Generis Geographical Expression and/or a Sui Generis Political (Science) Failure?

Although it could be argued that Geography is logically prior to the disciplines discussed at the Conference (History, Anthropology and Political Science), we have grouped Geography and Political Science together. We do so because both disciplines

share a common problematic: Is the Mediterranean a *sui generis* geographical expression, and what are the implications for disciplines like political science that deals with a larger scale than anthropology, and to a lesser extent, history? Conceptualizing the Mediterranean as a geographical entity only emerged in the nineteenth century—again clearly linked to geopolitical concerns. Mediterranean people tended to view it as more localized, undoubtedly reflecting its thalasso-political fragmentation and divisions. The Arabs referred to it as the sea of the Romans/Greeks (*Bahr el Rum*), and the Byzantines did not refer to the sea in its totality. The academic tendency to treat the Mediterranean as a totality began with Carl Ritter (1779–1859), and Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904) and Alfred Phillipson's (1864–1955) *Das Mittelmeergebiet* (1922). Ratzel's work had a strong element of environmental determinism and German geographical thinking went on to influence French thought, such as Braudel.

Mention should be made of the two unique German geographical institutes that have a research tradition on the Mediterranean area: the *Institut für Länderkunde* of Leipzig and the University of Mainz. Important issues for their respective approaches of the Mediterranean were/are specific units, the Men-Nature-relations-sensibility and the so-called "sun belt". Although the Mediterranean has held a strong pull on historical imagination in German society, this was not reflected as a research priority; Philippson's work on Greece and Turkey being somewhat of an exception. A rather unfortunate chapter of German geographies on the Mediterranean is the former movement of geopolitics around Karl Haushofer. Besides being discredited by its closeness to Nazi ideology and being used for Hitler's policy of expansion, it has to be characterized as a practical rather than a scientific approach. In the 1960s, "area studies" emerged with work on "Africa" or the "Middle East", but no research centre was established on the "Mediterranean" (cf. paper presented by Freund at the conference, but not in this volume). This has changed slightly since the 1990s, when studies have been conducted on the diversity of the Mediterranean, on Mediterranean society, and on its geography, environment and development.

In anglophone countries, despite the fascination of the region, few really significant syntheses exist in the literature, and relatively few "star" geographers have worked there, in contrast to anthropology or history. Indeed, most inspirational insights into the geography, cultural landscape and environmental history of the Mediterranean have come from non-geographers like Braudel, Matvejevitch, Grenon and Batisse, and Horden and Purcell, to name but a few. Apart from geographers' attempts to define and delimit the Mediterranean region, the issue of homogeneity and unity of the Mediterranean is also a debated question. The counter-view is that the essence of the Mediterranean is its diversity and contrasts, based on relations of complementarity, conflict, dependency and other functional (dis)connections. The notion of "Mediterraneanism" is reflected in relation to the many variables and interrelationships that make up the complex character of the region. These Mediterraneanist syntheses are both objectively (or at least systematically) defined and subjective (King, paper delivered to the conference, but not included here). Numerous geographical studies have been undertaken in the last two decades on issues like cultural unity and diversity of the Mediterranean, the role of the family, honour and shame traditions, patronage

systems, and Mediterranean flora like the olive or the pistachio (King et al., 1997, 2001).

Similarly, political scientists have only recently begun treating the Mediterranean as a *sui generis* issue. Researchers who worked on the region did so under the heading of "Area Studies", more specifically "Southern Europe", the "Arab World", "Middle East" or "North Africa". Kienle points out that critiques of essentialism apply to most entities such as "Europe", the "West", the "Maghreb", the "Middle East", the "Levant", the "Arab world", the "Muslim world" or the "Mediterranean". He notes that "if, for example, the 'Orient' is not ontologically or at least fundamentally different from the rest of the world, the definition of its borders does not make much sense. Its borders are not determined by the natural order of things but by the minds and agents who draw them." He recognizes the difficulties in defining the Orient in terms of Islam, Arabic or Semitic languages, or as the territory of the successor states of the former Ottoman Empire, and concludes "the definition of our field of inquiry based on its (supposed) internal homogeneity may cause more problems than it solves".

Kienle highlights the shortcomings of many political science studies on the Middle East and the Maghreb: little attention is paid to the "politics from below", the lack of methodological and theoretical rigour, and the lack of valuable comparative studies within the "region" and beyond. These shortcomings result in part from the fact that many studies concentrate mostly on the organization of power, on politics from above and are too state-centric, partly from the manner of research (and the different tensions in the accounts constructed) and partly from the specific difficulties of data collection. He calls for more rigour in theoretical and methodological debates, and more intensive treatment of politics from below, following the example of Singerman, Harders or Heydemann. With specific reference to the Middle East, Kienle cautions against teleological assumptions imported from other areas. For example, the transformation of political regimes should not *ipso facto* be identified with their democratization, and political scientists should envisage alternative interpretations for processes that superficially resemble democratization or comprise some elements normally associated with it. Kienle notes the absence of comparative political studies in the Mediterranean—or more precisely the tendency of comparativism to follow essentialist lines—few compare southern European politics with north African politics, although he notes exceptions, such as John Waterbury. Finally he highlights the slippery slope of essentialism:

> Methodological selectivity is certainly a corollary of essentialism and its survival. Such comparisons between non-Arab and Arab contexts are more frequent in the case of Muslim religious practices, and in particular in the case of Islamist groups and movements—a fact that merely points to the replacement of essentialism at an Arab by essentialism at a Muslim scale.

In conclusion, historians, anthropologists and political scientists had different requirements for their approaches to the Mediterranean. Historians suggested cleansing treatments from romanticism to establish a new realism in historical research (Horden), and to focus on the specific local and regional interests (Agriantoni).

Anthropologists were unhappy with the excessive focus on deconstruction and augured that an anthropology of the Mediterranean could concentrate on the region as a *field of study* around, *inter alia*, the Derridean concept of "*differance*" in the direction of a "critical ethnocentrism" (Albera, to be published in a subsequent issue of *History and Anthropology*). Geographers insisted on the need for a new empiricism (King and Freund, not in this volume); and political scientists, accustomed as they are to the problems of applying contingent values and political categories to the untidiness of actual societies, called for more fieldwork and empirical observation on the Mediterranean region allied with a more rigorous theoretical analysis and courageous comparativism (Kienle). A common desire was to realize more fieldwork and empirical studies on Mediterranean societies moving beyond essentialisms was expressed. In the next section, we examine thematic approaches to the region. Here the emphasis was on specific cases. Four specific problematics were explored:

● How has globalization affected the Mediterranean? The discussion moves from the historical treatment of the Middle East and North Africa to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.
● What new patterns can be discerned in the massive movements of people within and across the region?
● How have religious beliefs and affiliations been affected by globalization?
● Can the concept of "cosmopolitanism" be applied to Mediterranean port cities?

A common thread running through these approaches to specific *problematiques* was the necessity for political reflexivity—that is, for researchers to be aware that disciplinary approaches to current phenomena in, and forces affecting, the Mediterranean have been embedded in certain geopolitical and cultural discourses of domination and hierarchies of value. Furthermore, decisions on the part of scholars to study the Mediterranean in the context of globalization as one space, region or area are themselves politically influenced decisions affected by complex factors such as the researcher's background, his or her global politics and sentiments of local solidarity, and not least the political agendas established by research-sponsoring supranational political entities such as the European Union, or even nation-states. This does not necessarily *ipso facto* nullify the value or validity of such studies, but it imposes an obligation for self-reflectivity and an awareness of that research's contingency and its provisional nature.

Thematic Approaches to the Mediterranean and Globalization

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

Springborg (in a paper presented at the conference, to be published elsewhere) highlighted the paradox of North Africa and the Middle East in relation to globalization. Situated next to Europe, having interacted more intensively and over a longer period with the West than any other developing region, and having been at the cutting edge of Third World development from the nineteenth century through the first half of the twentieth

century, the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries are now "deglobalizing". The region is in a downward spiral as deteriorating economies, unable to provide jobs for the record numbers of youths seeking them, stimulate challenges to governments, which typically react by becoming yet more frightened, inflexible and incapable of reforming either polities or economies. Intra-regional conflicts, of which the most debilitating for the region's growth pits Israel against the Palestinians, combined with extra-regional interventions intended to secure the Middle East and North Africa (MNA)'s most important resource—oil—ensure that most MNA countries are not left alone to solve their pressing problems. Formerly the region that seemed to be leading much of the rest of the Third World in what was then described as the race to "Westernize"—the MNA—has now sunk to sub-Saharan levels of economic performance while exceeding all other global regions in amounts of violent political conflict and expenses associated therewith. This alarming insight underlined the political responsibility of European academics and institutes to work on the consequences of globalization in the Mediterranean, with special regard to two issues: demography and the role of oil. Springborg suggests promoting an education for development: in order to avoid an "internal clash of civilizations" provoked by migration in Europe, one should invest in the standardization of curricula and in cross-cultural programmes on "the other".

European responses to the region were explored by Joffe (in a paper not published here). According to him, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) was primarily a European response to the European fear of migration from the southern Mediterranean. The problem with the EMP is that it is a bureaucratic policy and its outcomes have been disappointing, even for its supposed beneficiaries in the Southern Mediterranean. Since American policy towards the region changed after 11 September, the European Union has been obliged to rethink its policy too. The economic component that was the central part of the EMP has decreased in importance, to be substituted by political and cultural ones. Despite the problems with the implementation of the EMP, there is no real alternative to it. Concerning the political dimension of European Union-Mediterranean relations, Youngs analyses the extent to which European approaches to security have evolved in particular since the attacks of September 11. The efforts to promote democratic reform in the Middle East reveal both the strengths and weaknesses of European approaches to human rights and rule of law issues. It was argued that traditional security approaches to the Middle East co-exist within the EMP with more forward-looking initiatives aimed at enabling cultural dialogue and political reform to take place.

Since the mid-1990s, the EMP has been treated from numerous perspectives, but primarily in terms of security policy. New research tracks could cover migration issues, development issues, positive conditionality, the future of the EMP in the context of the "new proximity policy" of the European Union and the "Wider Europe" concept, enlargement (especially with the recent accession of Cyprus, Malta and eventually Turkey) as well as civil society issues. The question of a European dialogue with moderate Islamicists as agents of social change, their role as negotiation and eventual cooperation partners may have to be contemplated. Analysis of the EMP could also deepen investigation of the links between "high politics" and "politics from below",

between politics and culture, including studies on sentiments, attitudes, values, on the internal aspects of migration, on the relationship of Islam and democracy, following, for instance, the example of Noyon (2003). One should keep in mind, however, that from the perspective of southern Mediterranean countries, social development, not democratization, is the priority.

Circulation and Informal Exchange

It is surprising that the history and anthropology of the informal economy in the Mediterranean has not received the attention it deserved. Certainly historians have long noted that trade and piracy coexisted, and that private enterprise or authority-licensed (and religiously sanctioned) hostage taking was prevalent in the pre-modern Mediterranean. Anthropologists have studied animal theft on both shores, illegal exports of primary products, and the role of the informal economy in establishing both relations of solidarity and in reinforcing power structures like the Mafia, as well as the transformation of local social and class structures. The history of the informal or grey economy is probably as old as the history of politically imposed centralization. Informal trade was linked to the emergence of nationalism in Greece, criss-crossed the Balkans, linked numerous islands and their mainlands, even with distant economies, and was subversive of colonial orders attempting to impose "rationality" on their unruly subjects. Yet the distinction between the formal and informal economy is of limited value when applied to pre-modern economies. The linkages, ramifications, and the social forms of the informal economy in the contemporary Mediterranean in the context of globalization and new massive population movements is of a totally different order and requires new research techniques as well as new theoretical paradigms.

Peraldi suggests a "new bazaar economy" and transnational trade is emerging in postmodern Euro-Mediterranean harbour cities. Globalization processes affect Mediterranean cities like Marseilles, Naples or Istanbul and north European cities like Anvers, Brussels or Essen. The complex components of this economic trend consist of marketplaces, commercial networks and commercial instrumentation of migrant minorities and transients: Moroccans in Italy and Belgium, Turks and Lebanese in Germany, Algerians and Sephardic Jews in France, Kurds and Armenians in Istanbul, and so on. Although these businesses do not use banks to obtain capital, launch personal ventures, mobilize contacts and networks rather than access hierarchically organized skills, they cannot be described merely as an "informal economy". These business are formal in the sense that they are integrated in the tax regimes, but the places and the sectors they operate in, the way they set up their affairs would, in terms of conventional norms, be judged obsolete, inefficient and unprofitable. Rather this is capitalism without firms, without money capital, without states, and it is organized through local, social and personal arrangements.

Peraldi cautions against seeing such trends merely as a result of internationalization or even globalization, and instead posits a more complex intertwining of local political and social factors with externally generated ones. In the particular case of Algerian youths he deals with, it is partly the result of the specific failures of the Algerian state to

satisfy the demands of the youth, of the violence and of the loosening of traditional authoritarian bonds of the family. These individuals are "condemned either to continual roving or to destitution". We are thus in the presence of what he calls a sort of "globalization at the bottom"

> neither intended nor welcomed by institutions or nation-states. These movements are always the consequence of suffering people who are no longer willing to put up with deprivation. Because of this and of the conditions in which they take place, we cannot perceive here anything that might be taken to be rational career choices.

Peraldi notes that this marks a further evolution in post-colonial societies:

> Post-colonial societies were to some extent "diasporic" in that they comprised social continuities and permeabilities between the home territory and society and the host societies, but they are now breaking apart and generating movements without real anchor points and groupings, without any "public sphere", not even a diasporic one. (see Appadurai, 1996)

He concludes that we must widen our analytical and methodological framework beyond the nation-state, which

> is no longer the relevant one for description and evaluation of the cultural dynamics, relational commitments and social and professional careers in which these populations organize their lives. In the strict sense they live between several worlds, but their universe is both more restricted than the territorial frame of the nation-states because it is urban, metropolitan—they frequent towns and networks of towns … and also broader in that it allows for continuity and permeability between worlds separated by political and cultural frontiers.

Peraldi's insights have potentially important implications for the study of "practical Mediterraneanisms". How do such transient individuals who move from one Mediterranean society to another, modern mutants in a global city which, so far, has not offered them any political or social opportunities other than that of "going nomad" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1984), rationalize their experiences and perceptions of cultural differences in the Mediterranean? And how do the authorities view and respond to such individuals?

Some answers to the last question emerge from Palidda who passionately criticizes European (particularly Italian) official policies on "illegal migrants". Palidda is particularly interested in the *regulation* and the (administratively abetted) *perpetuation* of the "illegality" of six to eight million migrant workers in Italy. He locates this in the functional requirements of Italy's informal economy (30 per cent of the GNP). He cautions that social scientists should not be misled by the taxonomies adopted by the administration and the police. They should be particularly sceptical of the administrative categorization of migrants as "refugees", "illegal migrants", "legal migrants" or "tourists" because it is through such taxonomies that the reproduction of marginality is eased and legitimized. To begin with, the distinction between legal and illegal migrants is often blurred in practice due to the various "amnesties" issued and the uncertainty of lengthy and often byzantine administrative procedures. Nor does "legality" necessarily result in social integration or equality. After September 11, migrants from Muslim countries are

increasingly considered "rogues", or suspects affiliated to Islamic terrorism, particularly subject to police harassment. Palidda shows the interconnection between offshore, unregulated European/American enterprises in Third World countries, migration and the organization of labour gangs in northern Italy where they are engaged by the very same people who have sympathies with, and links to, new racist political movements such as the *Lega Nord*.

Religion and Politics: Interaction, Confrontation, Tension

In a wide-ranging paper on the evolution of scholarly approaches to Islam and their political underpinnings, Ferjani traces how in France the classical Islamology of great Orientalist scholars such as Louis Massignon, Henri Laoust, Louis Gardet, Jacques Berque and Maxime Rodinson has given way to American-led sociopolitical and anthropological perspectives dominated by "essentialist" ideas on the Middle East—in particular the writings of Bernard Lewis (although not without some considerable resistance by Saidians). Such essentialist approaches are not unrelated to the growth of Cultural Studies at American universities, and changes in foreign policy to which they bear a dialectical relationship. Ferjani characterizes the Lewis approach to Islam as a "uniquely comprehensive, all-encompassing, and indeed totalitarian religion which connects and incorporates the spiritual and the worldly, the political and the religious, public and private". He establishes an affinity between this approach to Islam and Huntingdon's clash of civilization theory that assigns a primordial and distinguishing role to religion, essential for identity formation. He then points to the paradoxical *political implications* of such scholarly discourses on the very people being essentialized:

> The influence of this view of Islam was such that the work of Lewis became a point of reference for many researchers in Muslim countries who, suspicious of the dominant discourse in their own country, rediscovered Islam under the pressure of the growing Islamist debate and through the literature in fashion in Western countries. It has taken time for them to realise that, in doing so, they have fuelled the very political Islam that they believed themselves to be challenging.

He echoes Todd's (2002: 49) ironic observation that Huntington's "theory" is "nothing but a reversal of the view of the Ayatollah Khomeyni who believed, just as much as did the fine American strategist, in the conflict of civilisations". Ferjani concludes by reminding us that the separation of religion and politics in the West was not inherent to Christianity, but the result of a long and socially disruptive process.

   The relationship between globalization, religion and secularization is addressed by Cesari who points out that "globalization serves as neither a complete dis-aggregation of existing social systems nor a complete integration of social systems into one new form, homogenous and coherent". She focuses on the similarities between Islam and other major religions as they interact with globalization processes. Whether religions take on a private or public face in the modern world depends on whether one examines what she calls "religious function" or "religious performance". Cesari identifies three components of globalization: differentiation (e.g., new forms of ethnic creation), relativization (which leads to reflexivity and potentially, increasing intolerance) and

socialization. She notes two major differences between contemporary Islamic revival and its earlier examples. The first is that we are dealing with a global environment, and the second is that it is polycentric, heterogeneous and multifaceted. She identifies three major Muslim responses to social and political globalized problems: fundamentalist, traditionalist and modernist. She characterises the first as "puritanical and revolutionary" refusing guidance from the Ulama and in favour of *ijtihad* (independent interpretation) such as Wahhabism. Traditionalism relies on Islamic scholarly teaching and preaching; and modernists endorse Westernization and modernization without secularization. In practice, there are likely to be melanges and mixtures. Cesari suggests the development of value surveys in Europe and the Mediterranean since most of the conflicts after the Second World War have been value conflicts, and not primarily economic ones. This is not likely to be particularly attractive to anthropologists.

More anthropologically consensual was the conference call not to treat Islam as an exception and to favour comparativism. Scheffler (not published here) proposed a trialogue of religions from a more universalist perspective, and a reconsideration of the relationship between space, religion, politics and violence. Büttner proposed a comparative study on Christian, Muslim and Jewish Fundamentalism around the Mediterranean, following the rigorous work of Marty and Applebee (1991–2004), and integrating an analysis of the totalitarian elements of fundamentalisms. This would avoid the essentialism of Lewis or Huntington, as well as the absolute relativism of Burgat, and instead follow a third way in line with Todd and Roy renouncing the dualist oppositions of "Islam versus Modernity" or "Islam versus Secularism". These views were in line with Ferjani's contribution. Some participating scholars (e.g., Krämer) expressed scepticism with the emphasis on globalization, and suggested that the national framework is still a valuable and underestimated category for analysis. Finally, although it was agreed that research on transnational Islamist networks (such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas or Al Qaida) should be developed further, attention should be focused on two wider comparative issues: "angry, marginalized youth" and Islamists as the representatives of the conservative middle classes.

Port-Cities: Cultural Nationalism through Cosmopolitanism?

Port cities are a provocative subject for pluridisciplinary analysis across time. Here is one emblem of "Mediterranean identity", or so many would have us believe. They link up anthropology, history and cultural studies (in particular literature). They are subjects of memories and fantasies both literary and popular historical. They have the advantage of offering sources for historians, and can provide test cases for the relative importance of the role of hinterlands and the coast. They were major avenues of contact and mixing, and they are still major points of entry and contact between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean (e.g., Alicante, Marseilles, Trapani)—a contemporary one (Marseilles) is the subject of Peraldi's contribution.

Horden and Purcell make some important points about port cities. They define ports widely as "places of redistribution" and consequently not necessarily on the sea. Second, they are "gateways of connectivity" and not necessarily important settlements; they are

"simply nodes of density in the matrix of connectivity" (Horden & Purcell, 2001: 393). Third, they are intrinsically mutable. Finally, "there is a mismatch between the geography of redistribution and the geography of commercial exchange" (Horden & Purcell, 2001: 393). Their concern is primarily with Mediterranean colonization from the ancient to the early modern world, with *emporia*. In these settlements, they note two features. First that economic opportunity was closely managed, and they quote Bresson (1993: 226): "*le contrôle, et non la licence, ait été la règle*". Second, this melange of communities and origins was far from socially harmonious. They quote Michel Gras (1993: 106) in "a *mot* which deserves to become canonical": "*qui dit emporion dit … confrontation ethnique et culturelle, réussi seulement dans un but économique*".

This is the nub of the question: What exactly do we mean by "cosmopolitanism"? As Driessen notes in his contribution in this issue, cosmopolitanism is a protean term referring to "a rather elusive set of historical, social and cultural phenomena". Clearly the eastern Mediterranean cities until the early to mid-twentieth century such as Izmir, Alexandria and Constantinople were cosmopolitan in that they were pluralist, contained diverse ethnic groups, had a thriving cultural life and possessed elites that espoused European intellectual culture. Sifneos' definition of cosmopolitanism in Odessa and Alexandria could apply to many other cities: "a distinctive cultural world-view and a set of publicly-oriented practices that drew inspiration from western European progressive Enlightenment". She notes that it was inextricably linked with an increasing internationalization of trade in the early industrial period and also accompanied by a wider civic-oriented philanthropy by (in her case) Greek elites for regional or local development, often outside national borders. These elites contributed to the development of urban infrastructures and the embellishment of towns through giving them a common "European" culture. So far, so good. Yet the premises that underlie the term "cosmopolitanism" in the contemporary era contain a different set of social assumptions. As Driessen notes in this issue, ethnic plurality and coexistence in early twentieth-century port cities should not be equated with contemporary cosmopolitanism that celebrates diversity (even if it may be more celebrated ideologically by administrative and political elites). The cosmopolitanism of port cities was embedded in, and a product of, the Ottoman *millet* system, which was based on an unequal access to capital and its intersection with western European mercantile capitalism.

There is a consequent question of interest to anthropologists and historians: Was this cosmopolitanism inherent to (i.e., a property of) the "genius" of the people or the structure of the place? From contemporary accounts by historians, intellectuals and literary historians, there appears to be a slippage towards the former, though for different reasons and with different emphases. We would argue that although communities took advantage of the opportunities, these opportunities were created by wider international and mercantile forces, often emanating from outside the region. We thus have to ask why port cities are embellished with a certain element of romanticism. Literary elaboration may be one key, and one must not forget that this melange of cultures did provide the raw material for both Mediterranean and foreign authors.

Interestingly, Polycandrioti in her paper shows that although based on the cosmopolitanism of port cities, Greek literature of the early twentieth century strove

primarily to discover a *national* identity. She notes two (sometimes opposing) trends: the rurally anchored folkloric novellas and urban modernism. The former generally opposes Europeanism as a detraction from Greek cultural identity, the latter is largely sympathetic to it as long as linkages can be drawn from classical antiquity as the *Greek* source of European identity. Clearly, the novel is intimately linked to the city (even if oppositionary), and the major Greek city until 1922 was not Athens, but "cosmopolitan" Istanbul, Smyrna and Alexandria where the majority of Greek nationals (the so-called "*heterochtones*") lived.

The issue of romanticism, however, becomes more complex when examining popular memories and their use by historians. Loss and exile was one reason: most of the non-nationals from these cities became refugees, forced out by revanchist nationalisms, from Turkey, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Algeria, echoing expulsions some four centuries earlier of Muslims and Jews in the western Mediterranean in the process of the creation of culturally (i.e., religiously) homogenous nation-states. This involved not just loss of property, but of place and identity, towards the road and exile (*xenitia*). Hirschon's (1989) Asia Minor refugees in Pireaus felt superior to mainland Greeks, even if they had been poor originally (as most were), because they genuinely felt that they had left a much richer city for a poorer one as Athens was then a glorified village. However, distance and exile as well as discrimination can breed both resentment and compensatory mechanisms such as rhapsodic airs to a richer but lost patrimony. Claims to cosmopolitanism thus vary depending on location, particular histories, local alignments and wider agendas. Historians and anthropologists must therefore exercize caution when navigating the past by reference to popular accounts and collective memories. Driessen is surely right to question the persuasiveness of claims by historians (e.g., Eldem et al., 1999: 214) that many of the citizens of Mediterranean port cities felt more affinity with each other than they did with the inhabitants of non-port cities in either the Christian or Islamic worlds—suggesting a type of proto-cosmopolitanism. Similarly, in the treatment of contemporary Turkish intellectuals, the Ottoman *millet* system, which permitted an unequal but relatively religiously tolerant multi-ethnicity, has become romanticized as a sign of Turkey's "multicultural" and proto-European qualifications—a form of neo-Attaturkism through glorification of past traditions.

Cosmopolitanism might thus create more confusion than it clarifies, although the confusion may well be illuminating. In the contemporary Mediterranean, we have to be sensitive to the possibility that cosmopolitanism *qua* modernity speaks "European", just as modernity at an earlier period in north Africa spoke French. This is not to deny the distinctive cultural features of port cities, but our analyses must be rigorously socially and economically embedded, and politically sensitive. Within the Mediterranean world, cultural nationalisms may well be assisted through scholarly passive complicity in not subjecting popular accounts of past cosmopolitanisms to disinterested scrutiny. The identification of cosmopolitanism as a symbol of modernity may well be an ideology (and feature) of educated and European political and cultural elites (including academics) nurtured by transnational institutions radiating from and sustained by, for example, Brussels, ratified by the middle classes as an aspect of their symbolic power,

and not necessarily shared by a great majority of European and Mediterranean populations. The popular, but scholarly abetted, elaboration of discourses of past cosmopolitanisms in the Mediterranean raises interesting questions of symbolic domination by the West. Through elaboration of claims to an early modernity, people in the Mediterranean may be expressing, reacting and inadvertently reproducing a historical domination that ties them to Western cultural categories.

Acknowledgement

Notes

[1] "Conundrum" in the sense of difficult problem, challenge, puzzle or riddle. In literary terms, a conundrum is a "riddle whose answer involves a pun" (Cuddon, 1992: 192). The scientific committee defined "conundrum" in the context of this conference as an accumulation of questionings that overlap in this unique and specific space that is the Mediterranean. Yet we are aware that the conundrum of the Mediterranean may actually lie in the formulation of the conundrum itself.

[2] Scientific and Organisation Committee: Friedemann Büttner, Isabel Schäfer (FUB), Thomas Hauschild (University of Tübingen) and Dionigi Albera (MMSH).

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