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Edited by Maria Kousis, Tom Selwyn, and David Clark

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*Ethnographic Essays  
in Honour of Charles Tilly*



edited by  
**Maria Kousis**  
**Tom Selwyn**  
**David Clark**



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## ⌘ ABBREVIATIONS ⌘

ACNAT	Actions by the Community for Nature Conservation (EU/WWF)
AD	Alternativa Demokratika
AI	Amnesty International
ASG	Arnavutkoy Semt Girisimi (Arnavutkoy Citizens' Initiative)
ADAM	Association d'Anthropologie Méditerranéenne
AXH	AX Holdings
BL2000	Bethlehem 2000
CCHP	Centre for Cultural Heritage Preservation
CHP	Turkish Republican People's Party
CIZ	Citizens' Initiative of Zakynthos
DELTA	Development of Territorial Cultural Systems Project (EU)
DLH	Din L-Art Helwa
EC	European Commission
EGCR	Environmental Group of Citizens in Rethimnon
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIC	Ecological Initiative of Chania
EIS	Environment Impact Statement
ENGO	Environmental Non-Governmental Organisation
EOKA	Ethniki Organosis Kiprion Agoniston (Greek Cypriot Nationalist Movement)
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EURODAC	European Dactyloscopy
EUROMED	Euro-Mediterranean Programme for Cultural Heritage (EU)
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
EUCC	European Union for the Conservation of Coasts

EURONATUR	European Nature Heritage Fund
FAVP	Federacio d'Associacions de Veïns de Palma (Federation of Neighbours' Associations of Palma)
FEERI	Federacion Espanola de Entidades Religiosas Islamicas (Spanish Federation of Islamic Religious Entities)
FOE	Friends of the Earth
FOEE	Friends of the Earth Europe
FOEI	Friends of the Earth International
FRONT	Front Kontra I-Golf Kors
ILO	Immigratio Liaison Officer
IBC	Instituto per I Beni Culturali (Institute for Cultural Heritage)
IDF	Israeli Defence Force
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
LA	Liberacion Andaluza
LF	Lebanese Forces
MA	NMPZ Management Agency
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan (UN)
MEDA	Mesures d'Accompagnement (EU)
MEDASSET	Mediterranean Association to Save Sea Turtles
MEDCAMPUS	Programme of de-centralised university co-operation in Mediterranean region (EU)
MEDNET	Mediterranean Programme of FOE
MED-VOICES	Mediterranean Voices Programme (EU)
MEPA	Malta Environment and Planning Authority
MIGREUROP	Network for rights of migrants in Europe
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMPZ	National Marine Park of Zakynthos
<i>NT</i>	National Trust
NTO	National Tourism Organisation
Orrinotererra	Ecological Intervention for Mountainous Municipality of Makrys Gialos
PA	Planning Authority
PADICO	Palestine Development and Investment Company
PAGANINI	Participatory Governance and Institutional Innovation

PERI	Plan Especial de Reforma Interior
PGOU	Pla General d'Ordenacio Urbana
PNR	Passenger Name Record
PSEC	Palestine Securities and Equities Commission
PSP	Progressive Socialist Party (Druze)
PTIC	Palestine Tourism Investment Company
RAC	Regional Activity Centre (UN)
RAI	Royal Anthropological Institute
RMSU	Regional Management Support Unit
SAGE	Siggiewi Action Group for the Environment
SIS	Schengen Information System
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
SOLIDERE	Société libanaise pour le development et la reconstruction de la centre ville de Beyrouth
SSCN	Society for the Study and Conservation of Nature
SMAP	Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and Energy (EU)
SPA	Specially Protected Area (UN)
STPS	Sea Turtle Protection Society (ARCHELON)
TEMPUS	Trans-European Mobility Programme for University Studies (EU)
UCIDE	Union de Comunidades Islamicas (Union of Islamic Communities in Spain)
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational and Scientific Cultural Organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
URBAN	Urban Community Initiative
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VIS	Visa Information System
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YPEHODE	Ministry of Environment, Urban Planning and Public Works
Zghazwagh ghall-Ambjent	Young Environmentalists

## } PREFACE }

The lineages of this volume go back partly to an international conference held at the University of Crete (Rethymno, 2003) and partly to the larger project that was one of the main sponsors of this conference, 'Mediterranean Voices: Oral History and Cultural Practices in Mediterranean Cities' (Med-Voices for short).

The Rethymno meeting served at least two functions. The first was to honour Charles Tilly for his contribution to the field of Mediterranean studies, in particular history and politics. The second was to encourage the growth of an informal academic network of mainly young scholars of the region. These latter consisted both of Tilly's former students and of participants in the Med-Voices project. The present volume complements another recent publication that flowed from the conference (Tilly, Franzosi and Kousis 2008).

Med-Voices was originally a three-year project, partly funded from 2002 until 2005 by the European Commission's EuropeAid programme and thereafter continuing with a more independent life of its own (see below). The project was coordinated from London by Julie Scott, Raoul Bianchi, Tom Selwyn and Jonathan Karkut, with invaluable periodic assistance from Brigitte Voland, in cooperation with a consortium of research units in thirteen Mediterranean cities.<sup>1</sup> The various aspects of the project generated the following distinctive outputs.

First of all, a large website/database ([www.medvoices.org](http://www.medvoices.org)) was constructed to hold the visual and textual data gathered by each of the researchers in the partner cities. The site was structured with reference to seven themes: *spaces, living together, worship, work, objects, play, the person*. The rationale for choosing these as organizing themes was to provide a framework capable of shaping the way the data was to be researched and recorded and to provide an intellectual structure that would allow regional comparative work to take place. Secondly, Med-Voices has produced, and continues to produce, other publications including edited books, journal articles, films, exhibitions with catalogues, and reports (e.g. Radmilli and Selwyn 2005). Thirdly, the project has formed the basis of presentations at university seminars (for the most part in departments of social anthropology and education), conference panels and school sixth form audiences.

Med-Voices has been described in detail in a special edition of the *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* (2005) featuring a collection of essays by some of its participants.<sup>2</sup> As indicated above, the EC encourages those who take part in the projects it funds to design ways of continuing the work after its own grant has come to an end. To this end an association has been set up to look towards opportunities for future work and projects in the region.<sup>3</sup>

The contributors to the present collection of essays present fresh approaches to the study of contentious politics in the region. Mediterranean scholars themselves, they either reflect on concepts and methods related to Tilly's work, or point to alternative ways of looking at the topic through the lenses of ethnographic examinations of a variety of Mediterranean spaces. All views presented here are the authors' and do not represent those of the EC.

There are many people and institutions to thank for helping to make this volume possible. We would like again to thank Julie Scott and Jonathan Karkut (both at London Metropolitan University), Raoul Bianchi (University of East London) and Brigitte Voland for their continuous support in this long endeavour, as well as the University of Crete for its match funding of both conference and project, Rachel Radmilli of the University of Malta for her unflagging encouragement, and Tony Aquilina, Stephanie Borg and the rest of the team at Miranda (Malta). We are also grateful to Michael Herzfeld (Harvard University) and Javier Auyero (University of Texas at Austin) for their encouragement. Most of all we would like to thank all our contributors for their enthusiasm throughout this endeavour as well as Marion Berghahn, Ann Przyzycki, Melissa Spinelli and Jaime Taber at Berghahn Books for their generous support in the publication of this volume. In this connection we are sad to report that one of the contributors, Günhan Danışman, died before the volume was published.

Finally, what follows owes a great deal to the inspiration, encouragement and support of Charles Tilly himself, who died on 29 April 2008. We dedicate the volume to him.

**Rethymno, December 2010**  
**Maria Kousis, Tom Selwyn, David Clark**

#### NOTES

1. Alexandria, Bethlehem, Beirut, Nicosia South, Nicosia North, Istanbul, Chania, Ancona, Valletta, Ciutat de Mallorca, Marseilles, Granada, Las Palmas.
2. A complete list of these may be obtained from [j.karkut@londonmet.ac.uk](mailto:j.karkut@londonmet.ac.uk)
3. Details of the Mediterranean Voices Association and its ongoing work may be obtained from [j.karkut@londonmet.ac.uk](mailto:j.karkut@londonmet.ac.uk) and the Mediterranean Voices Association: [info@medvoices.org](mailto:info@medvoices.org)

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# Introduction

MARIA KOUSIS, TOM SELWYN AND DAVID CLARK

This Introduction has two aims, both shaped by the work of Charles Tilly. The first is to locate the collection of essays within a framework of overlapping spaces. These consist of the Mediterranean region itself, the European Union, the cities from which the ethnographies have come and the streets and neighbourhoods in which the individual persons described here live and work. The second is to suggest how the essays express the dynamics of social structures and processes within these spaces in terms of relationships between politics, capital and identity. What follows is divided into two parts reflecting these two aims.

## Mediterranean Spaces

### *The Mediterranean Region*

Tilly (2008, 2004: 229–232) argued that despite periodic historical and geographical expressions of provincialism, isolationism, nationalism and sub-nationalism, the Mediterranean region has always been one of the world's most cosmopolitan regions. (For us, cosmopolitanism does not necessarily stand in opposition to particularism but rather contains it within itself). Tilly identified three particular features of the region that have historically given rise to its cosmopolitanism. Firstly, it is home to clusters of inter-continental contacts and networks. Mediterranean networks of trade, for example, stretch deep into both Africa and Asia. Secondly, its islands, cities and coasts house a diverse population whose members are both divided and united by their attachments to the three great monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Thirdly, although repetitive attempts have been made by various powers to control the entirety of its borders – for the economic and political benefits that such control would bring – none has succeeded.

The opening essay of the collection, by Yiakoumaki, looks at the region as a whole whilst the majority of the remaining essays complement the work of the social historians and political sociologists that has appeared elsewhere (e.g. Tilly 2008) by offering a 'Braudelien tour' of particular places and spaces within the Mediterranean.

### *The European Union*

Not surprisingly, the EU is the major player in the trade of goods and services to and from the Mediterranean partner countries. It is also the largest direct foreign investor, the region's main provider of financial assistance and funding, its main source of tourism and the first destination of migrants (European Commission 2005: 1). During a historical period in which Europe itself has witnessed substantial economic growth, extension of largely Western European social democratic political systems, the collapse of state socialism and consequent migration from south to north, there has also been a flourishing of multilateral Mediterranean partnerships between Europe and the non-European Mediterranean partner countries. Thus, in 1995, the EU and twelve southern and eastern Mediterranean countries<sup>1</sup> launched the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership<sup>2</sup> under the Barcelona Declaration requiring 'a strengthening of democracy and respect for human rights, sustainable and balanced economic and social development, measures to combat poverty and promotion of greater understanding between cultures'. More recent Euro-Mediterranean association agreements between the governments of Israel, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Egypt, Algeria, Lebanon and the Palestine National Authority have concerned the three main areas included in the Barcelona Declaration: political dialogue, establishment of a free trade area and economic, financial, social and cultural cooperation. Critics have argued that attention has been paid mostly to those instruments related to the establishment of free trade areas, structural adjustments and security, and less to issues of economic and social rights (e.g. Martin, Byrne and Schade-Poulsen 2004).

The second essay of the collection, by Samatas, offers us a view (from the Mediterranean) of the European Union as a whole, the policies and agencies of which clearly play an important (if not principal) role in the majority of the rest of our essays. All of them refer in one way or another to the influence of the EU in fields that include policies concerned with urban renewal, regional economy, the environment, sociocultural frameworks and 'security'.

### *States*

Although all the essays, except the first two, focus on cities and neighbourhoods, all also contain references to states and state policies. In particular,

Boissevain and Gatt examine state-level environmental political processes in Malta whilst the other essay with a specific focus on the politics of the environment, namely that by Kousis and Psarikidou, concentrates on two islands but also speaks of policies of the Greek state. Moreover Haugbolle's examination of the gentrification of Beirut clearly points readers towards broader aspects of the politics and economics of the Lebanese state.

### *Cities, Neighbourhoods and Individuals*

Tilly argued that:

Cities constitute our best laboratories for investigation of historical contingency – the way that social action in a given time and place constrains what will happen next there and in adjacent places, what will happen after that and so on through long strings of path-dependent processes. (1996: 715)

In Tilly's (1998) view one of the major problems in contemporary social science and history is the relationship between biography experience on the very small scale and larger social processes (involving, for example, trade, commercialization, capital accumulation, state formation and transformation). By linking such large processes with local life and considering the effects of time and space seriously, the field of urban studies (including urban history) is able to shed considerable light on all sorts of questions, including those of urban inequality, xenophobia and stable democracy (Tilly 1996: 715). Cities are spaces in which imaginative urban anthropology and the use of such conventional ethnographic tools as interviews, conversations and participant observation, may bring together theory, policy and personal experience (Tilly 1967). In this respect urban anthropology – particularly urban political ethnography – is a promising avenue of study (Tilly 2006).

The majority of the essays that follow offer politically oriented ethnographies within and across Mediterranean cities. Ten of the twelve present contributions are based on fieldwork and ethnographic research carried out under the aegis of the Med-Voices project (see preface to this volume). Some contributions (including those by Sansour Dabdoub and Zoughbi-Janineh, Clark, Danişman and Üstün, Morell and Franquesa, Haugbolle, and Selwyn) deal with conflicts related to urban planning and urban gentrification. Others focus more precisely on ethno-religious questions (Muslim/non-Muslim, Jewish/Christian, Jewish/Muslim, Palestinian/Israeli, Spanish/Arab) in the region's cities.

In summary, all the essays presented here deal with contentious politics (to use Tilly's best-known expression) and contested spaces in the Mediter-

ranean at levels ranging from the overlapping regions of the Mediterranean and EU themselves to communities and neighbourhoods in Granada, Bologna, Malta, Istanbul, Beirut, Bethlehem, Ciutat de Mallorca and Chania as well as the two Greek islands of Zakynthos and Crete.

## Politics, Capital and Identity

We may now approach our collection from another angle. Here the intention is to show that what the chapters have in common is a concern with a set of politico-economic and cultural dynamics that stem from the relationship between politics, capital and identity. We will begin by tracing how this concern flows directly from Tilly's own work.

### *On the Citizen*

One of Tilly's starting points in the analysis of the contemporary world is the citizen him/herself. Tilly's citizen is one who lives in a world shaped by such geopolitical forces as globalization and (in the European and Mediterranean regions) the influence of the EU. He/she routinely interacts with new institutions at levels ranging from the local to the supranational and inhabits an increasingly fluid world in which the nature of citizenship and identity are undergoing fundamental transformations. Our essays follow Tilly in placing citizens at centre stage. The question is: what does this stage look like? Tilly's own approach to this question starts with critically reflecting on the nature of the politico-economic regimes in which citizens of the contemporary world live and work. He suggests (2004: 45–54) that regimes may be measured and compared with reference to three fundamental characteristics: *coercion*, *capital* and *commitment*. He uses these terms to apply respectively to the degree of coercive power a regime deploys against its citizens, the financial and legal structures associated with ownership and control over resources, and the various foundations upon which sociocultural and/or politico-economic solidarities rest (these being normally expressed in ethnic, religious, kinship, or other cultural ways, as well as in political and economic terms).

For present purposes we use a slightly amended version of this formulation and identify three of our own points of reference as *politics*, *capital* and *expressions/representations of identity*. We use these terms to apply respectively to political activities and discourse, the place of capital and the cultural/symbolic processes shaping the formation of identities. Using cases from different parts of the Mediterranean, the book thus seeks to examine the worlds of citizens caught up in the complex interrelations and in-

terconnections between politics, capital and cultural processes in territorial fields that include region (and the world beyond), state and city/neighbourhood.

For the sake of clarity, we may take another passage from Tilly (with Hanagan) (1999: 5) to illustrate how our proposed framework fits. These authors argue that within the EU there are ‘multiple political allegiances marked by fragmented sovereignty as a result of which cross-cutting jurisdictions are beginning to emerge’. Indeed, one of the questions that runs throughout our volume concerns the manner in which globalization and new regional alliances are influencing relationships between states, neighbourhoods and their citizens. As already noted above, whilst the boundaries and functions of states are being reconfigured, citizens increasingly interact with institutions and agencies from expanding geopolitical and economic parameters at local, regional, national and supranational levels.

### *Mediterranean and Euro-Med Citizens*

The first three chapters are concerned with the two large and overlapping regions of Europe and the Mediterranean, within which all the chapters of the volume are located. Both Yiakoumaki and Samatas address issues that have to do with the nature of the regions themselves. Yiakoumaki’s chapter examines the various meanings attached to concepts of Mediterraneanness and the symbolic importance of the region to EU strategic and policy-related rhetoric. The author is sceptical about notions that ascribe any sort of essentialist ‘unity’ to the Mediterranean as a region. Cultural connections between cities and states within the Mediterranean that EC-funded programmes such as Med-Voices are encouraged to celebrate – by way, for example, of the promotion of artistic productions that make a virtue of regionalism – are, she suggests, mainly window dressing for the bending of the Mediterranean to the political and economic interests of Europe. In this context the ‘past’ (associated with the idea of the Braudelian Mediterranean as an essentially unified region) may appear as a convenient source for ‘legitimizing the politics of the future’. The Barcelona Process, adopted following the 1995 conference in Barcelona between representatives of EU and North African countries and to which we have already alluded above, was launched under the banner of a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. This was a partnership designed to establish ‘economic and financial partnerships’ between north and south, a Mediterranean ‘free-trade area’ and a ‘common area of peace and partnership in social, cultural and human affairs’. Yiakoumaki observes that such measures as these (in which the essential unity of the Mediterranean served as a powerful ideological tool) grew directly out of the global economic recession of the early 1980s and the

consequent need for the EU to develop the markets of the south, opening them up to foreign investment in order to revitalize its own economy.

In chapter 2, Samatas introduces us to a Europe that is driven by various 'security' agendas and as a result is increasingly becoming a 'fortress.' Focusing on the post-9/11 EU security agenda and the reinforcement of the Schengen Information System (SIS), he examines the various surveillance measures adopted by EU countries to restrict the entry of non-EU citizens into EU states and the impact this has on human rights and civil liberties. Whilst much of the discussion focuses on measures taken within EU states, the chapter also broaches the issue of buffer states that collaborate with EU countries in patrolling borders and seaways, especially along the North African coast, in order to further control and restrict illegal immigration into the EU. In this manner, the process of reconfiguring state and citizenship within Europe has implications for neighbouring states as well.

In her chapter, Kallimopoulou relates ethnomusicological representations of the 'Mediterranean' to broader Mediterranean discourses constructed in European academia and the commercial music market, linking them to dominant ideological paradigms of modernity such as that of nationalism. Her research is based on the Medi-Terra Music Festival in Crete, specifically organized in conjunction with the Med-Voices project, that brought together music and groups from the various regions of the Mediterranean – from Andalusia to the Balkans and Turkey to the Middle East. Members of many of the groups emphasized their own mixed cultural backgrounds and performed music that not only assigned a positive value to ideas of musical and cultural fusion but also placed their work within wider 'world music' traditions. The music and dance of the Palestinian group, however, stressed more local cultural affiliations whilst simultaneously attracting involvement and participation from the festival's cosmopolitan summer audience.

Taken together, these three chapters lead the reader to a position from which the Mediterranean appears as a region with a deeply ambivalent character. On the one hand it is presented rhetorically as a cultural cosmopolis (à la Tilly and much of the aims of the Med-Voices project described in the preface) in which, as in the Medi-Terra Festival, cultural styles are promoted that appear to blend and fuse. On the other hand (and having in mind, for example, the difficulties of people from the south of the region scaling the walls of the 'fortress' north) it appears as a geopolitical space divided into unequal parts within which categories of membership are distinguished from each other by markedly different access to human rights – including the right to travel easily throughout the region – and socioeconomic opportunities.

### *State, Capital and Resistance*

The next three chapters are devoted to the relationships between political action and capital. Chapter 4, by Boissevain and Gatt, is concerned with the changing relationships between financial capital, the (Maltese) state and its citizens as the latter have exercised increasing political potency in their struggles against certain types of development projects over the past forty years. The authors observe that the networks of NGOs and the capitalist networks associated with the developments that the former oppose have in common the fact that they both are transnational. The chapter illustrates well how international capital and an internationally affiliated, but largely locally developed, civil society come face to face on the political stage of the Maltese state – and how the state itself is reconfigured in the process.

In chapter 5, Kousis and Psarikidou offer an exploratory and descriptive account of the ways in which environmental professional organizations and community activists have responded to *Caretta caretta* biodiversity concerns based on the EU Habitats Directive. More in Zakynthos and less in Crete, local small and medium-sized tourism enterprises and landowners have resisted the environmental protection legislation imported from Brussels that would curtail the economic (tourism) opportunities in the densest nesting beach of *Caretta caretta* in the Mediterranean. The essay does not focus so much on the conflict between the tourism-dependent local communities and the nonlocal actors who have been attempting to implement the directive in the islands of Zakynthos and Crete, as on the initiatives and resistance on the part of the environmental activists promoting sustainable development-oriented aims and practices through scientific and management initiatives.

Haugbolle, in his account in chapter 6 of neighbourhood distinctiveness in post-civil war Beirut, is also concerned with the state, although this time from the perspective of the Lebanese street. Here, partnerships between central government and private developers, coming together under the umbrella of the Solidere<sup>3</sup> company and driven by the late prime minister and main shareholder of the company, have initiated a wholesale redevelopment of downtown Beirut. Haugbolle reports that this redevelopment was ‘presented by the company as a necessary *tabula rasa* on which to write a new and better chapter of Lebanese history’ – one that sought to reconstitute the ‘golden age’ of the 1950s and 1960s, in which all sections of society, regardless of religious background, ethnicity or race, mingled together in the streets, markets, shops and cafés, worked harmoniously together and lived in ethnically mixed neighbourhoods. However, ‘the initial process of clearing the area of any war remnants implied the destruction of whole neighbourhoods, including the old Ottoman *aswak* (markets)’. The Beirut

of Solidere may have been presented as embodying the current aspirations for ‘unity in diversity’, but its critics have argued that the physical removal of much of the evidence of cultural diversity has done nothing of the kind.

Just beyond the city centre the realities of segregated and divided civic life can be seen in the posters, flags and graffiti all over the surfaces of the residential neighbourhoods. Logos and symbols associated with the different sectarian parties and identities mark out territorial boundaries and act as constant reminders of neighbourhood allegiances in the northern Maronite or southern Shiite suburbs. In the poorer neighbourhoods nearest the downtown area, many houses are still ruins, whilst shrines and monuments to dead fighters and dead leaders are further reminders of recent conflict. The state-sponsored message of harmonious coexistence clashes with the messages from the streets of the persistence of ethnic conflict and rivalries. Downtown Beirut asserts not so much Lebanese multiculturalism but the actual and symbolic power of international development capital. Haugbolle’s chapter is a convincing examination of the relationship between cultural pluralism and international capital as articulated within the framework of political processes at state and neighbourhood levels.

### *Capital and Neighbourhood Governance*

Although the scale and context are in many ways quite different, there are several continuities between the development processes described by Haugbolle for Beirut and by Sansour Dabdoub and Zoughbi-Janineh for Bethlehem. The authors of the seventh chapter trace the attempts by Bethlehem 2000, a para-state conservation association set up by the Palestinian National Authority in the mid 1990s to prepare for the millennium, to restore Star Street to something like its former prominence as one of the central arteries of the city. They describe how the combined processes of Israeli occupation (with the various checkpoints, barriers, road closures and diversions, and daily and nightly incursions by the occupying forces that define it), many former residents’ outward migration from the city of Bethlehem (mainly as a result of the occupation) and a tourism industry that overwhelmingly stresses short bus trips from Jerusalem to the Church of the Nativity by tourists staying in Israel, had combined to empty the street of the traders whose small artisanal workshops and retail shops made up a historically significant part of the commercial life of the city.

For five years, and with considerable success, the architects and planners of Bethlehem 2000 worked to persuade some of the traders back to Star Street on the grounds that starting in 2000 the city would adopt a new tourism system whereby visitors would be dropped off at one end of the street and then walk down to the Church of the Nativity at the other end.

Good commercial opportunities, they argued, would flow from such an arrangement. Just before the millennium, however, the largest development company in Palestine – one of the few companies quoted on the Palestinian stock exchange – built a bus station near the church and made an agreement with the municipality that all tourist coaches were required to park there – and to pay the council for doing so. At a stroke the plans for Star Street fell apart. With few, if any, tourists walking along it, the traders packed up once more, and the opportunities for the planned restoration to contribute to the economic recovery of Bethlehem as a whole were lost.

In chapter 8 Morell and Franquesa look at the case of the Old City of Ciutat de Mallorca, focusing on the extent to which three particular neighbourhoods in the area have been, and are being, transformed on the basis of calculations by both municipal authorities and private investors about how to extract greater capital value through increased gentrification and commercialization. Their analysis points to the relative autonomy of the political sphere (in the sense that political processes are routinely distant from the experiences, needs and wishes of those who live and work in the neighbourhoods in question), the effects of globalization on the restructuring of urban space and the ways these impact on the generally upward political mobility of local leaders. The evidence shows that political brokers have exploited not only the built environment of the city, but its inhabitants as well.

Chapter 9 develops the theme of neighbourhood resistance in the face of the combined forces of the state and private capital. Danişman and Üstün address issues of the construction of a third bridge over the Bosphorus associated with overambitious transport plans out of keeping with local needs in Istanbul. Organized local community claims face a constant struggle, with occasional victories and reprieves, aiming to gain the long-term resolution (which would involve reconfiguration of the democratic and financial basis of the organization of the state) that is implicitly argued for by Boissevain and Gatt in the Maltese case. In the Istanbul and Mallorca cases it is clear that processes of commodification of neighbourhood spaces and the social relationships therein are given added impetus and indeed facilitated by the manner in which town planning at the local level is directed and encouraged by supranational and national directives and funding strategies.

### *Identities, Imaginations and Representations*

The final three chapters in the volume are particularly concerned with questions of transforming identities. Thus the tenth chapter, by Rosón Lorente and Dietz, examines ethnicized inter-religious conflict in the El Albayzin

quarter of Granada. On the one hand there are new converts to Islam, incoming Muslim migrants and Spanish Islamophiles. On the other hand there are longer-term residents who wish to maintain a more Catholic and Christian approach to the province. The tension between these two categories of people regularly comes ritually and ceremonially to the fore on the occasion of the anniversary of the 're-conquest' of Spain. The different camps, in opposition to one another, mark what is for one a 'glorious reconquest' of Spain under the Christian monarchy and, for the other, the loss of the 'golden period of Andalusia' in which three faiths (Islam, Christianity and Judaism) lived in harmony and prosperity.

Such ceremonies and counter-ceremonies must be understood not only in terms of divergent views of the past, but also in terms of divergent views of the present and in particular about where Andalusia should be positioning itself in relation to the rest of Spain. The distinctiveness of Andalusia could be imagined in terms of a harmonious relationship between different ethnic or religious groups, then and now. But such distinctiveness could be forgone in favour of closer identification with a more unitary and indeed more Catholic view of Spain. The ethnic and cultural antagonisms in Granada are clearly related to a politico-economic regional regime, framed in large measure by the EU itself, that exacerbates economic inequalities between the north and south banks of the sea (Bianchi 2005) and gives rise to the migratory movements upon which the political conservatives in the Albayzin Neighbourhood Association hang their localism and racism. Where does Mediterranean pluralism and EU openness go in this context? We will return to this issue and its implications later on.

Chapter 11, by Clark, examines the interplay between politics and expressions of identity within the context of Jewish cultural heritage in Italy. The politics of heritage plays out both at the national level and at the very local level. Indeed, whilst enabling legislation at the national level has devolved responsibility for maintaining Jewish material culture to the local level, much depends on how different political agenda and interest groups come together to formulate a joint course of action. In the case of Bologna, city centre regeneration issues, municipal cultural policies and regional heritage strategies favoured the establishment of a Jewish museum at the very moment that the city was preparing to become one of the European Cities of Culture in the year 2000. Yet, individual and Jewish communal initiatives also played a part in the decision to situate the museum in the old ghetto area of Bologna, thereby giving expression and symbolically reaffirming a Jewish presence in Bologna, a presence that had withstood the test of time despite many vicissitudes along the way.

Similarly in Ferrara, the decision to lend support to the establishment of a Jewish museum and to publicize a Jewish heritage trail in the city coin-

cided with the designation of Ferrara as a world heritage site in 1995. Such support would not have been possible without the active involvement of a leading political broker who could straddle several social worlds, being actively involved in Jewish communal organization as well as municipal and regional heritage campaigns. Nevertheless, such ventures, in Bologna and Ferrara alike, also require the active support of local Jewish communities and activists, not all of whom, by any means, speak with one voice. Hence this chapter also examines the role of controversy and resistance and incorporates Foucault's notions of power as being diffuse and an integral part of all social interactions (Foucault 1980).

The twelfth chapter follows several of the thematic threads traced by Clark. Vardaki describes and analyses a multicultural festival in Crete, the first of its kind to take place on the island, and explores the interplay between cultural production and consumption. She examines local government's and local migrant groups' various motives for establishing the festival and explores the manner in which the festival was received by the media, local residents and those who took part in it. Based on the above, her analysis aims to understand and conceptualize transborder identities in light of the experiential dimensions of identity as well as the discursive role of place. She offers evidence of how the festival demonstrated that in Chania, immigrants can become part of the town's contemporary cultural scene. For the new immigrants themselves, home is no longer perceived as a fixed place.

The final chapter of the volume examines the case of a building in Bethlehem commonly known as Rachel's Tomb, a small shrine that the available records suggest has been the focus of Jewish/Muslim cooperation in a largely Christian municipal milieu throughout most of its history. Selwyn describes how the tomb has recently been surrounded by high concrete walls (part of the wider Israeli project of wall building in the Palestinian/Israeli borderlands), how the tomb has been administratively removed from Bethlehem and placed under the jurisdiction of the municipality of Jerusalem, how the neighbourhood around the tomb (11 per cent of municipal Bethlehem) has been economically and physically destroyed and how a large part of its Bethlehemite population has been 'cleansed' from the area.

The argument is advanced that here we have a particularly vivid example of the politics of identity at work. In the case of Rachel's Tomb this has to do with the way that Jewish identity in the region is rhetorically articulated by 'settlers' and their followers in order to argue for the inevitability of 'separation' between Israelis and Palestinians, and the impossibility of continuing the tradition of sharing a building between members of more than one faith. Selwyn also observes that the politics of religious separation in this

case rely on a very particular interpretation of the biblical story of Rachel. This clearly fits well with wider economic and political interests that take us straight back to the images of a 'fortress' and the concrete and metaphorical walls that stand between Israeli and Palestinian, Jew and Arab, north and south of the Mediterranean and, in a larger sense, between 'us' and 'them'.

## Conclusion

All of the chapters in this book deal with the manner in which particular Mediterranean spaces (at regional, state and neighbourhood levels) are being reconfigured in the light of struggles over rights, resources and identities. Political processes driven from the 'top' (of state and municipal political hierarchies, for example) and processes of resistance from the 'bottom' (in the shape of environmental movements, popular artistic and decorative events and expressions, for example) are described in such a way as to challenge any simple assumption about the nature and constitution of political power in the region. Our authors have approached their field sites from the viewpoint of an intellectual tradition generated by Charles Tilly and others – a tradition that we might term in shorthand the political economy of cultural geography. From this viewpoint the contested reworking and renegotiation of Mediterranean spaces and political landscapes becomes a matter not only of the activities and rhetorical/bureaucratic announcements of state or EU authorities, but also of the increasingly potent agency of a variety of other actors and institutions. These include environmental activists in Malta, cultural entrepreneurs in Crete, producers of posters and graffiti in Beirut, and globally affiliated cross-border social and political interest groups mobilizing in the streets and communities of Ciutat de Mallorca, Bethlehem, Ferrara and Istanbul, and from there across the region and beyond.

## NOTES

1. [http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external\\_relations/euromed/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/euromed/index.htm).
2. [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/euromed/bd.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/bd.htm).
3. Acronym for Société Libanaise pour le développement et la reconstruction de la centre ville de Beyrouth.

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## Part 1



# Recovering the Mediterranean?



## ⌘ Chapter 1 ⌘

# On Bureaucratic Essentialism

## *Constructing the Mediterranean in European Union Institutions*

VASSILIKI YIAKOUMAKI

### Introduction

The reemergence of the concept of the ‘Mediterranean’ in anthropological research reawakens memories of the essentialism of the ‘culture area’ but also raises questions pertaining to the legitimacy of this concept in contemporary research. This seeming return warrants examination in the broad politico-economic and historical context of European Union institutions and politics, a main locus of production of the Mediterranean discourse today. Drawing on research experience in an EU-funded programme on the Mediterranean, in this chapter I provide not an ethnographic analysis of material from the field, but rather an account of historical and geopolitical conditions allowing for the emergence of the ‘Mediterraneanism’ in question during the last couple of decades. In other words, I provide an account of the conditions generating the political necessity for adopting the ‘Mediterranean’ as a working concept. This is a crucial task for understanding what happens when seemingly essentialist concepts are redeployed and become institutionally binding, and for producing awareness of the historical/political contexts in which anthropological projects emerge today.

The concept of the Mediterranean has generated much debate among anthropologists in the context of reflecting on the ‘culture area’. In this chapter I discuss the Mediterranean in the context of its deployment as a term in the discourse of policy makers in political/bureaucratic institutions of the European Union (EU) from the mid 1990s onwards, with an eye to the impact it can have, as such, on anthropological inquiry and ethnographic research. I draw on experience gained in the research programme *Mediterranean Voices*, funded by the European Commission, for which I

have conducted extensive research – an experience that I share with other contributors to this volume. Therefore I wish to pinpoint the reemergence of the Mediterranean not solely because the use of the concept in official political discourse today evokes the culture area, thus making it an intriguing issue for anthropological reflection, but also because anthropological research is currently being generated and funded as a result, thereby creating an opportunity for its emergence in political institutions today.

More specifically, I am not concerned here with discussing ethnographic material from our research project mentioned above, or with methodological issues that have emerged in the process. That is, I am not concerned with the particular ethnography per se as an anthropologically valuable endeavour. Rather, I discuss the moment of ‘turning back to the Mediterranean’<sup>1</sup> from the point of view of institutions, that is, of official actors promoting a certain definition of the Mediterranean as culture area. I consider it politically important to view our overall project as product of specific politics and socioeconomic circumstances at a significant historical moment in Europe. In other words, I am concerned with policy-making institutions, in this case with EU administrative institutions, as loci of production of a certain notion of ‘cultural unity’.

Why ought one to become concerned with this administrative bureaucracy in order to talk about anthropology? In conducting research for the Mediterranean Voices project (our partner-project was located in the city of Chania, in Crete, Greece) and having to remain somehow faithful to the idea of a ‘Mediterranean culture’, I often had the feeling of an intellectual *déjà vu* in regard to speaking of the Mediterranean. Hence I became curious about the emergence of such a discourse in EU policy-making institutions, as well as about why it is emerging particularly in this present historical moment, i.e. the last couple of decades. Specifically, the use of the term connotes a certain cultural unity of the Mediterranean region, whilst also being compatible with a Mediterranean nostalgia known in existing literary traditions. Anthropologists have developed a knee-jerk reaction to the idea of a Mediterranean anthropology, as they are critical of the essentialism of the culture area and the geopolitics surrounding the construction of this culture area – one may recall the Mediterranean ethnographies of the 1960s and 1970s, and the subsequent critical debates on Mediterraneanism.<sup>2</sup> Undoubtedly, it is a concept identified with academic parochialism. Is the present moment therefore the return of a cultural essentialism? A bureaucratic essentialism?

In order to provide an answer, one needs to trace a certain genealogy of the term Mediterranean within the policy-making institutions that generate the research in question. The value of such a venture is conducive to understanding research as a product of specific historical and political

circumstances. The process towards such an understanding makes an ethnographer more aware politically, and by this I mean more aware of his/her role in research funded by political/administrative institutions as well as the potential his/her ethnography holds for engaging in the realities of the societies he/she is working in. As anthropologists we are aware that 'area' terms such as the 'Middle East', 'Latin America', 'South-east Asia' or 'the Balkans' are not neutral but are shaped by power relations in given political circumstances, and that they may essentialize and imply sweeping assumptions about cultures with geographical proximity. However, they are not to be discarded as such but to be utilized with awareness of their history and their political underpinnings.

In what follows, I offer an account of the 'return' of the Mediterranean by placing the re-emergence of the concept in a broader politico-economic and historical context. Therefore this chapter addresses issues of historical and political contextualization of anthropological research, rather than of anthropological interpretation in the strict sense of the word. In this process, I draw on the 'Mediterranean Voices: Oral History and Cultural Practice in Mediterranean Cities' programme, both as an example of how the above return is realized in the discourse of policy makers, and as an example of contemporary research funded by political/administrative institutions.

### **Speaking of the 'Mediterranean' (Once More...)**

By 'return' or 're'-emergence, I am referring to the articulation of a discourse of a 'Mediterranean' (or also 'Euro-Mediterranean') culture, or cultural 'heritage', which emerged in the mid 1990s in EU institutions. I draw my examples based on a three-year research experience on the European Commission programme 'Mediterranean Voices: Oral History and Cultural Practice in Mediterranean Cities', a recently completed project of EU-funded research on (and in) the Mediterranean. With this I wish to suggest, primarily, that this moment is not a revival of the agenda of Mediterraneanism as anthropologists know it, but it is mainly about political and economic agendas pertaining to European integration processes during the last couple of decades.

Since the mid 1990s a number of research programmes have been funded by the EU under the broader programme Euromed Heritage (I and II), focusing on what has been called the 'Euro-Mediterranean' cultures and heritage as part of EU policy on the Mediterranean region, which I elaborate below. Mediterranean Voices, an ethnographic research project on Mediterranean 'urban heritage', is one such example. The project comprised thirteen part-