

Epilogue – Mediterranean Survivals¹

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I. Mediterranean Anthropology – A German Experience

1960-1982 Mediterranean Countryman and Neo-Marxism

The regional focal points of social and cultural anthropological fieldwork are subject to changing material, political or social forces and cultural trends. During the mid and late 1970s, the small discipline of *Völkerkunde* (ethnology) at the University of Hamburg was already taught on the basis of contemporary international social and cultural anthropology. It was in Hamburg that I started to pursue my studies, in 1973. We German anthropologists at that time were in an exceptional situation. Once West Germany had overcome the misery of the post-war period, it soon became possible – even for anthropologists – to visit more or less every corner of the world with the exception of the Warsaw Treaty states. Yet in the East too, unusual opportunities were opening up, especially for Germans. For those of us who, like myself, were young in the 1970s, this freedom was a matter of course. Looking back, we were horrified by the era of colonial anthropology and the Nazis' belligerent attempts to colonise Europe, parts of Asia, and the Mediterranean, and by the Nazis' vicious scientific racism against Jews and everyone who seemed to be more dark-skinned than they themselves thought to be. Shifting the focus of anthropological research back to ourselves, toward European societies, to do 'anthropology at home', came almost naturally to us and contrasted ironically with the growing possibilities of travel. Soon the adventurers and world theorists among us distanced themselves from those who were not quite as keen on arduous adventures but preferred making a good point and thorough self-reflexion. However, all of us were trying to find our way back to 18th century's enlightenment anthropology, which had sought to realistically describe, compare, and criticise European as well as non-European societies. We valued the "Other's" gaze on Europe and the dialogue

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with immigrants and with Indian or Amerindian wisdom. The experiences of African or Oceanian travellers in Europe were also rather *en vogue*. We were frequently oblivious, however, to the fact that seemingly indigenous critics of European civilisation like the “Papalagi” were only European cultural critics in disguise. We were concerned with reciprocal anthropology, beyond racism and exoticism, but the contradiction that with this we were once again creating a separation between the “self and the other”, did not occur to us and that same dichotomy eventually managed to blossom into an unreflected but fashionable subject of German mainstream humanities of the 1990s.

For my part, I have, since the 1970s, always endorsed research into cultural projects and cultural reserves throughout the world, and the cultural-relativist revision of colonial schemes that this entails. I have studied and researched German, Italian, European and Mediterranean cultural practices and social facts. I cannot say which of my experiences gave me the greater “culture shock”: living and working with the lower classes in Germany or engaging with the texts of Mediterranean intellectuals, doing fieldwork in a village in Southern Italy or my painful initiation into university life. My interest in fields to which one would be hard pressed to ascribe the terms “self” or “other” has led me to studies on the social and neurological groundings of world religions and on the mutual interference between modern science and pre-modern cults and magic.² On numerous occasions I sought to contribute toward self-reflection in Western anthropology. The same cultural-relativist intention also underpinned the project of documenting field-research conducted by non-Germans in German-speaking field sites.³

In the midst of the highly-charged political climate of the “Deutscher Herbst”, the “Years of Lead” around 1977, a time of terror and counter-terror, I did my best to avoid politicising. I managed to do so by immersing myself into the study of the anthropology of the Mediterranean, among several other themes, like the phenomenology of religion, and early feminist mythology. What may have started as an “anthropology at home” now amounted to an escapism, which also led to the publication of my first book, combining all the desperate themes cited here. As a relatively new field of regional study, the anthropological study of the Mediterranean was both easily accessible and on the margins of social and cultural anthropological debates. Within a few months I was able to acquire the essentials by reading anthologies on Mediterranean culture and society edited by British structuralist social anthropologists such as John G. Peristiany (1965) and Julian Pitt-Rivers (1963). I soon discovered that, along with some US American

2 In this context, see for example the author’s selected works of *Der Böse Blick* (1979); *Hexen*, with Heidi Staschen et al. (1979); the interdisciplinary journal *Ethnomedizin-Ethnomedicine*, with Joachim Sterly and others (1977-1982); *Macht und Magie in Italien* (2002); *Ritual und Gewalt: Ethnologische Studien an europäischen und mediterranen Gesellschaften* (2008), *Von Vogelmenschen, Piloten und Schamanen*, with Britta Heinrich and others (2011); *Weihnachtsmann* (2012).

3 In this regard, see the author’s selected works of *Europäische Ethnologie* with Heide Nixdorff (1982); *Ethnologie im Dritten Reich*, as editor (1995); *Christians, Jews, and the Other in German Anthropology* (*American Anthropologist*, 1997); *Inspecting Germany*, with Bernd Jürgen Warneken (2002).

researchers, the authors of these anthologies were regular contributors to an academic journal published by, of all places, the Anthropological Institute of the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. – the *Anthropological Quarterly*. The place of publishing, Washington, signalled centrality, but the publisher and the name of the institution implied a tendency toward marginality as compared with ‘bigger’ journals such as *American Anthropologist* and *Current Anthropology*. Its editor Michael Kenny, who later came to be known primarily as an empiricist and theorist of the Mediterranean city, was able to advertise avant-garde special issues and editors in the 1970s editions: “Europe and its Cultures” (1963), “Appearance and Reality: Status and Roles of Women in Mediterranean Societies” (edited by Sydel Silverman 1967), and “Social and Political Processes in the Western Mediterranean” (edited by Jane Schneider 1969).

In the *Anthropological Quarterly*, representatives of a US neo-Marxist anthropology, inspired by Eric Wolf and Sydel Silverman, became curiously paired with culturally conservative empiricists of the Mediterranean like Julian Pitt-Rivers, who seemed to have their origins primarily in the British colonial experience. Conrad Arensberg (1963), a pioneer of anthropological studies of Europe, and later president of the American Anthropological Association, set the standard by bringing together the data collected through anthropological fieldwork in Europe with world-historical analyses. In my own reading plan, such texts were mixed with approaches to romanticise rural Mediterranean life that, for some factions of social anthropology (Pitt-River’s *Mediterranean Countryman*) and in literary mythology (Robert Ranke Graves, Carlo Levi, Naguib Mahfouz) appeared to be at the origin of European cultures. At the same time, the political economy of peasant dependency had a significant part to play. I soon became acquainted with the French historical-anthropological tradition (Lepenies 2016), which had been cast anew by Fernand Braudel in his titanic volumes on *The Mediterranean World in the Era of Philip II* (1949) – published in English in a revised version in 1972 and 1973. Braudel was still actively participating in academic discussion at that time. Research carried out in Sicily by the German ethnosociologist Wilhelm Emil Mühlmann and his team from Heidelberg (Mühlmann and Llaryora 1973) was published in those same years. But as it did not make an appearance on the international stage this German version of an anthropology of the Mediterranean did not readily come to my attention. Mühlmann was conspicuously concerned with power, betrayal, violence and corruption, in this being somewhat closer to the US neo-Marxists than to Pitt-Rivers’ version of the *Mediterranean countryman* (1963).

Paradoxically, reading Mühlmann proved a necessary prerequisite for the reception of Foucault’s critique of power, whose permeation of the field of research in the humanities and social sciences in the 1980s, especially in Germany, could only be called total. I was not initially aware of the fact that Wilhelm Emil Mühlmann had frequently been compromised at the time of my studies and before, owing to his part in formulating the racial anthropology of the Third Reich (Michel 1995). In the 1970s and 1980s, some of Mühlmann’s former students or research assistants (e.g. Fritz Kramer, Georg Elwert, Hans Peter Duerr, Ulla Johansen and Christian Giordano) gained significant

influence over the renewal of German research in the fields of cultural and social anthropology. They tended to be leftists or social-liberals, and, in a strident turn against their conservative right-wing mentor, engaged in postcolonial critique. I, for the time being, decided to disregard these tensions, following instead Fritz Kramer's advice to stick to the British and Americans – and to *Anthropological Quarterly*.

In 1979, I received my doctorate with a study on the practices and cognitive functions of the “evil eye” inspired in equal measure by the history of ideas and dynamic psychology, by self-reflective anthropology, and by classical social anthropology (Hauschild 1979). The book was based on global comparisons and on a pluralistic theoretical approach, with regional emphases on the data material used in the Mediterranean of anthropologists, and in the Germany of historical *Volkskunde* (folklore studies). Contemporaneously, the comparative cultural exhibition “Hexen” (witches) at the Hamburg Museum für Völkerkunde (Ethnological Museum), which I had curated together with feminist historian Heidi Staschen, was received surprisingly well by the public.

The anthropology of the Mediterranean region, which I assimilated over the course of many a quiet afternoon in the library of the Ethnological Museum at Hamburg (now MARKK, Museum am Rothenbaum. Kulturen und Künste der Welt), was based on a smattering of divergent premises, namely that the social structures of Mediterranean countries resemble one another and that agro-towns and small-scale economies, along with latifundia, are to be found more or less everywhere. Asymmetrical relationships of dependency, clientelism, mafia and the authority of religious brotherhoods insulate local networks against interventions from above and at the same time determine the grip national and global political powers have on the ground. In spite of my deep scepticism of the folksiness preached by the fascist and communist movements of the 20th century, this “self-centred rural obstinacy” (*ländlicher Eigensinn*), as the German folklore scholar and culturologist Utz Jeggle once called it, rather appealed to me.

In terms of ideological critique, there are a few things about the Mediterranean anthropology of the 1960s and 1970s worth noting. Obviously, the idea of the “Mediterranean countryman” and a supposed unity of the Mediterranean region as a whole was reinforced by the experiences of the older generation as colonialists, world war veterans, dissidents or exiles in the Mediterranean region. In 1960, Michael Kenny, who would later become editor of the *Anthropological Quarterly*, described Spain as a case of “pyramidal clientelism”, a social-anthropological abstraction in which the mass-murdering Franco regime that had ruled from 1939 to 1977 was conspicuously absent (Kenny 1960). It was not until 1977 that David Gilmore put this harmonising picture of Franco's fascism to rights with an essay on patronage and class society in Spain.

Problems such as these left little impression on me, however, numb as I had become to ideological critique. Why? Before I had begun my studies at the university, I had traversed the school of leftist apologetics for ‘popular’ and ‘autonomous’ grassroots structures. Together with the acquisition of concepts of liberation and autonomy, I had been overcome by the cult of communist leadership and, as a young soldier of the revolution, I had endured the torments of Stalinist brainwashing (“criticism and

self-criticism”), which was widespread in German Maoist youth sects at the time. I was, hence, already on familiar terms with the piercing scrutiny and occasional violent attack on “reactionary ideologies” and I had to learn to understand them as tactical manoeuvres of power-hungry functionaries, most of whom themselves paid homage to some brand or other of the idolatry of the popular and left-wing fascism. Once freed from such “criticism”, I was to be mobilized only by empiricism, realism and the attempt towards an impartial exploration of life worlds.

I conducted field work for the first time in my life at a migrant-run Centro Italiano di Amburgo in Hamburg. The time I spent there, coupled with my readings on the Mediterranean, soon taught me just how shabby, faded and dubious the great political and religious traditions of socialism, liberalism, democracy or of the world religions tended to appear against the reality of basic living conditions in the South and especially from the point of view of migrants from the South. All things ‘great’ were commented on the basis of an idiosyncratic mixture of cynicism, short-term material interest, patronage, friendship and familialism. It seemed that the children and grandchildren of ‘Mediterranean countrymen and -women’ equally processed their experiences of industrialisation, war and migration by drawing primarily on the social and cultural reserves of subaltern ideology, family systems, patronal politics popular religion and regional identity. My findings, however, were not merely based on empiricism, they also drew on literary and cinematic images of subversion and cheerful cynicism, of crumbling patronal male power and of female resistance (Pier Paolo Pasolini, Lina Wertmüller). The worlds of Giovanni Guareschi’s *Don Camillo Monsignore ... ma non troppo* and Naguib Mahfouz’s *Cairo Trilogy* portray a milder version of the above-described, however still unbearable for certain younger inhabitants of these provincialisms moving many among them to migrate. At the same time, such indigenous discourses and literatures were to become the object of blatant intercultural idyllic misunderstandings as seen from further afield, such as from the USA, or from Central and Northern Europe. Nonetheless, they were and are realities of life in weak states, realities that can spontaneously captivate both travellers and migrants returning to the Mediterranean up to this very day as a fractured but vital experience of longing, disgust, contempt, and enjoyment of life, offering to foreigners a momentary but compelling sense of emotional inclusion and of literary and popular sophistication.

What was to be my personal contribution to this fragile and complex Mediterranean corpus of comparative cultural knowledges? I had a premonition that in the process of globalisation and devolution, religion would stay, and, more than that, again come to be of importance. Moreover, having barely escaped the Stalinist sects, I was piqued by the left’s hypocritical critique of religion. I was often warned at the time not to devote myself to something as unimportant and in decline as ‘religion’ – whatever that was. It was with both relish and alarm that I soon realised, however, that my premonition was right. As of the 1970s, and in ever new and surprising states of aggregation, religions served as (frequently self-destructive) emergency anchors against an all-consuming capitalism and a cynicism that joyously ushered in globalisation. In



Figure 1 Face to Face: Street Life on Sugar Street (Cairo, Egypt) and Piazza Matteotti (Brescia, Northern Italy), with protagonists from Mahfouz's and Guareschi's books.

retrospect, it is thus not surprising to me that Euro-Mediterranean studies could come to be dominated by a strange coalition of Catholic and neo-Marxist US Americans, as well as some rather obscure British and French scholars who emerged as dissidents from colonial anthropology. Nor is it any surprise that the marginal catholic-scientific *Quarterly*, whose faded 1960s volumes looked to me like contemporary German school magazines, could become the flagship of this colourful scientific movement.

Published in 1977, John Davis' *People of the Mediterranean* provided an overview, and struck at the heart of this Mediterranean anthropology, at least as far as fieldwork and the empirical were concerned. The point of the book was social anthropological: the "Mediterranean countryman", along with his "little community", was caught up in the crisis of state formation and the proliferation of industrial economies. The "hydrocarbon society" (Davis 1987 on tribal and post-industrial structures in Libya) examined the ways in which global realities such as mass migration, war, changing gender relations and industrial labour transformed the patronal systems of the old world into the clientelism of modern party elites and dictatorships. And it seemed, at the time, that just behind the closed door to the future, experiments with socialist functionary rule were also looming. A new generation of more socially utopian – or at least socio-politically-minded – social and cultural anthropologists (John Davis, Eric Wolf, Sydel Silverman, Jeremy Boissevain, Anton Blok, Jane and Peter Schneider, Ina-Maria Greverus, Christian Giordano, Ulla Johansen) assumed the mantle of the conservative-minded old guard (Fernand Braudel, John G. Peristiany, Conrad Arensberg, Wilhelm Mühlmann, Julian Pitt-Rivers). A still-younger generation including myself, however, took up the rear in the hope of further radicalising the programme of cultural relativ-

ism already inherent in the founding figures. In this the rehabilitation of religion was to play a major role. The grandfather's generation was rediscovered by the grandchildren, especially Pitt-Rivers, who, though continuing to publish undeterred, according to the generation immediately following him had long since passed his prime. John Davis, who I had been able to lure to Berlin on the occasion of a conference on the *Anthropology of Europe* (Nixdorff and Hauschild 1982) – summed it up to me rather wittily: “Thomas” he said “it’s so odd, people like Anton Blok, Jeremy Boissevain and myself, were exclusively interested in wickedness...” by which he meant clientelistic power and exploitation, he went on “... but you, the younger ones, all you want to know about is holiness!”. Brokering the divide, the Dutch around Jeremy Boissevain (1977, 1984) offered network-analytical models of asymmetrical micro-power on cults of saints, elevated to Eric Wolf’s concept of tributary society (Wolf 1982). According to the latter, fundamental solidarity, mysticism and the primordial exercise of violence are mixed with tendencies to form social castes, which seek, in turn, to segregate ostensibly inferior strata of society, be this moral or ‘racial’ inferiority – the dubious German, Mühlmann, would have called it “the rationality of overlay” (*Überlagerungsrationaliät*).

That was ‘my’ *Méditerranée* as I set off for field research in southern Italy in 1982. Italy, it seemed to me, was a quasi failed-state. Serving as “NATO’s aircraft carrier”, it was an imperial construct based on old nationalisms in which cults of saints, insulates of feudal culture, papal obscurantism, magic, and both tribal as well as egalitarian networks had all securely lodged themselves. I hoped to discover why these had succeeded, and what the social meaning of religion was in this context. For the neo-Marxist, they were all “lagging superstructures”, draining vitality from Mediterranean ‘communities’, while preserving them, at the same time, against any idea of progress or state modernity. Their demise seemed imminent, and yet, the old ways held a tight grip on people and refused to let go.

1982-1999 Discourse Analysis and The Voice of the Space

Thus, rather well prepared by my standards, I set off in 1982 for years of sustained fieldwork in Basilicata, the poorest region in Italy at the time. My research focussed on reserves of ideology and self-care (popular medicine), locally autonomous rural social structures, dependency relations and opportunities for resilience. Those on the ground shared my enthusiasm for documenting their frequently-absurd living conditions, which had deteriorated still further since the great earthquake of 23 November 1980. I deliberately chose an area in which the Italian anthropologist Ernesto de Martino, who by that time had already passed away, had previously conducted research in the 1950s and 1960s (De Martino 1959, 2015). To this day, I have great respect for re-studies since, unlike many of my colleagues, I believe in the accumulation of knowledge. De Martino’s work contrasted the Mediterranean anthropology of British, American and French influence, and I was impressed by his concept of a “progressive folklore”, which constituted a third way between East and West, and between conservatism and pro-

gressive or socialist rationalism. From then on, and almost until her death in 2017, one of De Martino's most congenial of colleagues, Clara Gallini, would occasionally host me in Rome, eyeing me suspiciously and providing me with constructive criticism and a roof over my head.

After returning to Germany, I set to work on the academic world with the results of my research. It soon became clear, however, that the complex kaleidoscope constituting my theoretical approach was already succumbing to devaluation and obsolescence. In the mid-1980s, the British-American anthropologist Michael Herzfeld (1987) had subjected root-seeking "primordial" Mediterranean anthropology to careful discourse analysis. "If this region is ancestral to us, it is removed from us through mythic time; if merely exotic, then its distance is one of cultural space. In either case it is 'not us', even though we claim it as 'our own'" (Herzfeld 1987:7). As a romantic but critical German Italophile, this was all too clear to me. Indeed, Thomas Mann had already defined "Germany" as a cultural current emanating from Protestantism, which could only be said to hold true in opposition to "Rome", and which in the absence of "Rome", could not exist as such. The sentence immediately following Herzfeld's above quotation, however, seems just as exciting and, at the same time, exaggerated to me now as it did back then. It must have been 1988 when I read it for the first time: "In a discipline constantly trying to escape its own ethnocentrism, the ethnography of the Mediterranean trapped in this sort of logic can hardly be anything else than embarrassing" (ibid.). Embarrassing indeed! It seems to me, this sentiment of embarrassment is at the root of currently prevailing attempts to substitute morality for realism – the same realism that was overlooked by many of Herzfeld's disciples, but which was to remain at the core of Herzfeld's own research after the critical phase had abated (Herzfeld 2018). And this, really, is no wonder as he too did not know the way out of the trap he had described.

What I had practiced as historical and individual psychological reflection of a researcher in the field, was to become for Herzfeld a critical sociology of all discourse. He combined the analysis of anthropological speech acts with the documentation of local complications (cultural intimacy) and attempted to sketch the ways in which colonial claims to power are inscribed in both indigenous politics and the academic discipline itself. Herzfeld's *Critical Ethnography in the Margins of Europe* (1987) examined the mentalities of Mediterranean nations that were reorienting themselves in the face of significant change, as well as the colonial, social-reformist, touristic, and projective construction of the other as embodied in the figure of the fieldworker. Of that which had previously been attributed to either a primordial Mediterranean culture, or to late capitalism's oppression of agrarian societies in specifically Mediterranean forms, there remained little more than a cluster of diversely-orientated states, caught up in the onslaught of global economies and geo-strategies.

In short, the Mediterranean no longer existed as a cultural or social speciality. Indeed, over the course of the 1990s, the major centres of Mediterranean anthropological research either dissolved, or, at best, were significantly reduced in reach. First and foremost, the EuroMed in Amsterdam, which had been inaugurated with aplomb shortly

before, went simply to pieces (Van Ginkel, Strating and Verrips 2002). So too John Davis' charismatic Mediterranean social anthropology, which was lost to a general British sociology, its creator retreating into the role of director of All Souls in Oxford – that glorious college from which the response to Herzfeld's initiative – the deconstruction of deconstruction – was to begin some ten years later. While the importance of the centre at Columbia University around Eric Wolf also began to wane, certain US American Mediterraneanists such as Wolf himself, Conrad Arensburg and Sydel Silverman came to occupy iconic status in the discipline as a whole. Even the small but mighty *Anthropological Quarterly* turned a new leaf and broadened its horizons. Curiously enough, it was during this same period of the 1990s that the Mediterranean became increasingly important for Western policy-making; from the Israel-Palestine conflict to incipient fundamentalisms in the Middle East and North Africa, to the war in the former Yugoslavia and the ongoing public debt problems in Italy, Spain and Greece. Indeed, the debt in Italy continues to loom as a possible beginning of the end for the entire system of what is today known as the 'G8 Countries' of the 'First World' economy.

The paradigms of postcolonialism and discourse analysis served to damage the idealism as well as the realism of Mediterranean research and turned the regional field as such into something seemingly deceptive and unimportant. During my time as a professor of social and cultural anthropology in Tübingen and later as anthropologist and sociologist serving in the same role at the University of Halle (1992–2016), I repeatedly tried to “free up” third-party funding at the major German research agencies for research on the Mediterranean and on the processes of migration and integration relating to it – alas to no avail. At the same time, the Tübingen research group, which I had created together with students at the end of the 1990s, and which was funded by personalized grants, achieved some first results in researching similarities and differences between popular cults and religious movements in the Mediterranean region (Hauschild, Zillinger, Kottmann 2007). This brought us in line with the work of the major remaining research centre in Aix-en-Provence, the Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme (Albera 2008; Albera and Couroucli 2009). In terms of obtaining third-party funding in Germany, however, my problem with the deconstruction of the 1980s kept catching up with me. During a follow-up discussion to one of my rejections, I was told by the relevant official at a very prestigious semi-governmental funding institution that my applications were “simply not postmodern enough”. Say what you will about the administrators of science, as far as general socio-political trends and the gossip of the academic's coffee-room are concerned, they're always on the cutting edge.

There was nothing in my childhood or adolescence in divided Berlin, nor in the data I had collected in Southern Italy, nor even in the networks and structures of German universities I had observed that would have compelled me to imagine a world of limitless growth and of global euphoria such as to completely flatten every high and every low on the earth's surface – be it through consumerism or socialism (*The World is Flat*, Friedman 2005). If everything was discourse or the “politics of...” (Hauschild 2008:10–18), why did cults of saints, Moroccan or Greek, deviate in such strikingly

similar ways from the dogmatic precepts of both Islam and Christianity? Why did they march out of societies, in phases of decline, only to march in again after so much social change had occurred (Boissevain 1977, 1984)? Why do Egyptian and Neapolitan popular black magic endure and overlap in the protection of family and home (Hauschild, Zillinger, and Kottmann 2007; Hauschild 2008:109–115), why did the pomp of the Libyan revolutionary leaders and that of the Italian fascists go hand in hand with fashion-trends at the Vatican? These were just a few of my fancies, or areas of expertise in the global business of constructing a reciprocal and critical anthropology of religion. I couldn't simply abandon my knowledge of ghosts, amulets, priestly robes and priestly fraud, obscurantism and political populism, asymmetrical networks and the weak state; nor did I want to. I was engaged in a sort of cautious defence, against both the euphoria and paranoia of globalisation, under the aegis of which one could but giggle about rural autonomies and patronage, the concepts of honour and shame, and the "Mediterranean countryman".

As the great centres of Mediterranean anthropology dwindled, I clung to the *Maison Méditerranéenne en Sciences Humaines* in Aix-en-Provence (MMSH), which in turn seemed to be sustained by some secret belief in the Mediterranean as a cultural space. Together with Dionigi Albera and many others, I could tinker away at a cautious return to the concept of rural reserves and certain pan-Mediterranean commonalities. During a research visit to the MMSH in the summer of 2000, I discovered a brand-new titanic work on the history and anthropology of the Mediterranean among the new acquisitions in the library, written by the British historians Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell: *The Corrupting Sea. A Study in Mediterranean History* (2000). My background had prepared me well enough to recognise immediately in this book the revision of Herzfeld's now 15-year-old paradigm of a discourse-analytical and globalisation-theoretical levelling of the Mediterranean region. As of the winter semester in 2000/2001, I geared my courses on the Mediterranean at the Tübingen Institute toward this enormous volume and tried to specifically train a new revisionist generation of social anthropological Mediterraneanists.

What had happened? Historians had taken over the helm. The contemporary historiographical cross-section depicted a more stable Mediterranean than that which appeared under the actualistic and selective magnifying glass of anthropologists, who, in turn, were often able to give their case histories more depth of focus than the historical archives and archaeological finds could provide. At the same time, however, the region itself had begun to speak. Thus spoke the Mediterranean: after modernity had eroded and depopulated rural areas, transformed coastal stretches into global tourist paradises and adapted cities to the metropolitan mainstream – now, after the end of the Cold War, in an age of new frontiers, new recessions, new economies, and of growing consequences of climate change – the very relief of the Mediterranean region suddenly became visible again.

As early as 1966, Eric Wolf had predicted that the end of the Cold War would lead to the reorganisation of all subordinate power constellations, especially at the level

of network formations. This process of disintegration and reconstruction became unmistakable in the Mediterranean region as of the Kosovo war in 1999, at the latest. It was the year Eric Wolf died, after publishing his last book – *Envisioning Power: Ideologies of Dominance and Crisis* (1999) – on the eternal return of region-specific military cultures, war-like regimes, radical movements and authoritarian power. After the Kosovo war, even the Israel-Palestine conflict, astonishing though it sounds, seemed a standard Mediterranean case; it expressed the dynamics of evolution, devolution and revolution proper to Mediterranean niches, or, as Horden and Purcell preferred to put it – microecologies. The disintegration of statal elites and the return of tribalistic networks was now occurring on a new scale; in the city, in the countryside, and in all areas of the Mediterranean, albeit with diverging preconditions and results. This brought the similarities between a failed state such as Syria and a European global power such as Italy back into focus: systems of balance between warlords and their ‘religions’ on the one side and fragile regional party patronages and local cults on the other. As always, this tangle of Mediterranean politics of identitarian demarcations on the one hand, and purely power-tactical regroupings of networks on the other, was permeated by predominantly male alliances, civil society groups, political pressure groups and religious currents, old and new. Soon enough, their conflicts began to reshape the motives for war in classic conflict areas such as Israel-Palestine or Eastern Turkey. They led to civil war and mass exodus in Algeria, Morocco and Syria, and even to extreme tension in the Basque country, Catalonia and northern Italy.

The background to this contemporary Mediterranean politics is constituted, as it was in antiquity, by erosion, drought, migration, exodus and natural catastrophes. On the central stage – destined, it seems, to be digital from henceforth – the activities of burlesque-clientelesque political clowns and criminals play out like so many ancient political tragedies and farces. The global financial crisis of 2008/9 had numerous immediate precursors in the Mediterranean region, such as the real estate bubbles precipitated by mass tourism in Sardinia, southern Spain, Egypt and Turkey. Suddenly, the immovable brick and mortar of social and economic structures that seemingly had become totally liquid came to the fore again. Savers, real estate heirs, *nouveau riches* and armed entrepreneurs entered the crisis mode and gathered together ever more closely in their families and clan-like structures, thereby strengthening the reinvention of traditional structures of patrilineal kinship. At the same time, mafia violence moved from evasion and extortion to extraversion on the world market, where it has since acted as an unassailable force, significantly inhibiting developments of numerous ilk. Organised crime exists throughout the globe, of course, but there is no comparison for the historical depth, scale, *longue durée*, accumulation, distribution and expansive dynamics on display in the Mediterranean. In a state of crisis, contemporary Mediterranean societies rarely revert to overt forms of slavery and colonial forced labour. But the past bears ample witness to their long-standing presence, a continuity that is quintessentially African-European, that is, Mediterranean. Today, *en lieu* of classical slavery, we see court cases with hundreds of defendants, large-scale prisons, the ware-

housing of refugees, and the mass exploitation of the defenceless through prostitution, farm labour and work as “domestic help”; all of which bear a striking resemblance to the patterns of slavery. Blame is always sought by those who follow the imperatives and temptations of the richer niches in the region. The European agencies see their salvation in the demarcation between North and South, in vain. They have created an agency specifically for this purpose, Frontex, with all of its scandals and failures. One day, we will perhaps look back on the handling of refugees in the Mediterranean in the years following 2000 as the first state crime committed by a state that did not yet exist as such: the European Union.

Any attempt to map the region macroscopically has always been determined by similarities on the one hand, and an accumulation of parallel contradictions on the other, as well as the states of aggregation of the geographical, the economic, the social and the cultural resulting from the latter. There is a great deal about the region that can easily escape the anthropologists’ microscopic experience. The discourse-analytical debunking of the colonial longing for the “unity of the Mediterranean” and for the “Mediterranean countryman” itself came under criticism for such shortcomings (Harris 2005). The very concepts of honour and shame, themselves the recent victims of a discourse-analytical butchering, suddenly returned in campaigns against forced marriage, human trafficking, honour killing, female circumcision and mafia-esque *omertà*. The 2010 Arabellion was successfully predicted by French historian and anthropologist Emmanuel Todd (2011), availing of his intricate demographic and statistical anthropology of kinship systems in the Mediterranean and elsewhere. In his student years, Todd was influenced by Fernand Braudel and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie. Since then, he has sailed consistently further from the discursive turn in anthropology. However, he was significantly mistaken in his assumptions about the Arabellion’s further course, which bore more in common with the worst cynicisms of colonial researchers on Mediterranean protest movements than with Todd’s anti-racist idealism. We suddenly had a chance to assess the real penetrative force – as well as the potential weakness – of globalisation, or its dark side in the form of the stabilization of authoritarian regimes in failed states. Only a power with significantly greater financial, military and technological clout than that of the contemporary ‘Western world’ could, perhaps, one day integrate and ‘flatten’ the Mediterranean region. Only such a power could make of it a pure large-scale, tourist paradise, for example; or a pure source of energy (oil, natural gas, warm water, heat, tropical fruits, oils, and nuts); a battlefield of new desert wars; or a region managed, more sustainably than before, by “Mediterranean countrywomen and -men”.



Figure 2 Niches: Plains, valleys, mountainous and karst structures in Southern Italy and Lebanon

II. The Special Issue *Rethinking the Mediterranean*

2000-2020 The Return of the Historian, Rethinking Mediterranean Connectivities

It was at All Souls College in Oxford, an elite institution for young scholars, that medical historian Peregrine Horden and the ancient historian Nicholas Purcell began collaborating. Their work was somewhat guided by John Davis, I presume: anthropologist, fellow, “warden” of All Souls, and author of the above-mentioned *People of the Mediterranean* (1977). Horden and Purcell’s book *The Corrupting Sea* (2000) combines British social anthropology, from Sir James Frazer to John Davis, with French historiographical and ethnological Mediterranean studies of the 19th and 20th centuries (Charles Fourier, Auguste Comte, Fernand Braudel). The authors’ ‘cultural intimacy’ with social and cultural anthropological literature of every description is quite substantial, indeed for anthropologists it is borderline frightening. Between the deconstruction of common clichés and the reconstruction of reality, Horden and Purcell sidestep Herzfeld’s theses and focus on facts regarding the “fragmentation of land plus connectivity by sea” (2000:396), by which they mean: To fly over the Mediterranean or look at relief maps of its landscapes, is to see that there are densely staggered alternations between highs and lows, which are bound or connected by coastlines. The Mediterranean is a collection of coastlines to which densely staggered pockets of “hinterland” are attached. The interaction of those comparatively small-scale structures connected

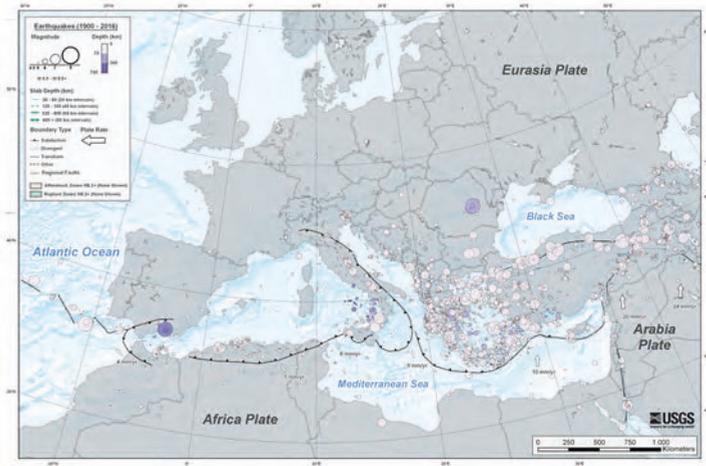


Figure 3 The Mediterranean as a Zone of Fractures, Volcanisms, and Earthquakes

by the Sea, again, is relatively limited in the end by much more extensive mountainous regions (Taurus, Alps, Atlas, Sinai, Alpujarra), deserts (Sahara, Arabian Peninsula, Syrian Desert) and other seas (Black Sea, Red Sea, Atlantic Ocean). Whether state systems will make greater or lesser use of the inner-Mediterranean maritime and terrestrial connecting lines between niches, whether they overcome the differences in altitude or deserts, expand inside the Mediterranean world or connect it to other major regions, will ultimately depend on their level of technological advancement, financial power, population size, and the degree of bureaucratic centralisation. The greater the success of imperial concentration, the less significant is the experience of the Mediterranean itself for its inhabitants. Should connectivity once again be reversed, however, the region will disintegrate into greater and smaller sub-regions and seas, and this *Mittelmeer*, *Méditerranée* (“middle sea”) will tend toward inexistence. The cross-section of these processes, the “medi”-terranean region, the mean, is a transitional field between continents and thus a field of intermediate trajectories. It becomes relevant in certain phases of human and physical-geographical development and irrelevant in others.

The Mediterranean combination of landscapes is characterised by problems that no resident of the region can truly escape – catastrophic erosion, drought, flooding, volcanoes and earthquakes. It is a densely staggered and, by global standards, particularly extensive and active zone of seismic unrest. Stages of moderate connectivity, accompanied by a certain retreat into niche structures lead to a politics of mediation, networking and imperial control. These can sustain similarities across different economies and political systems. Equally, they can mediate between very different social and economic levels: introversion of niches or extraversion through trade or war; through the formation of networks of colonies; through selective superimposition, disintegration, and rapprochement; through the sudden growth and decline of settlements; and through mediations and superimpositions through war, trade, patronage and colonisation.

Peregrine Horden's contribution to the first part of this special issue, focuses on “connectivity”, referring to the fragile lines of connection that are exposed to multiple fates, and that repeatedly group together to form a “kaleidoscope of microecologies”. This terminology shifts the focus of his descriptions from “conquests” and discoveries, to the impersonal of a particular property, which can itself be developed by social systems. Horden's careful approach to describing the evolution of “connectivity” reminds me of Charles Darwin's working method. Faced with an immensity of material, from bird skins and spiked beetles to stuffed fish, Darwin worked for decades to first establish genetic links between specific biological entities. He went on to establish groups of entities, and finally to propose tentative sequences and lines of connection. For continental anthropologists, this is a complicated theme, especially in the case of Germany. The experience of the racial anthropology of the Nazis as well as of the crude historical materialism of the former GDR (German Democratic Republic) has taught us to tread with care when it comes to evolutionary perspectives in history and sociology. In the revision and re-evaluation of evolutionary thinking in German science since 1990, a major role was played by the fact that Darwin's thinking – in contrast to the ideas of his German followers in the first hundred years of evolutionary theory – starts from very small-scale network models, and from notes on ramifications, as well as from deceptive parallel formations. Such small-scale differentiations serve to create a bulwark against hasty conclusions, and to centre the coincidental and unpredictable nature of the evolution of life as the subject of evolutionary thinking. Amidst his complex scribbling of branches of origin, the founder of evolutionary theory, almost fearful in the knowledge of his discovery, once noted “I think” (Bredekamp 2019).

Networks and the growth and decline of microecologies, for Horden always remain provisional: his evolutionary terminology of niche or microecology has nothing to do with evolutionist constructions or with the origin fantasies of colonial theorists. Horden calls it “quantum mechanics Mediterranean style”, emphasizing that “nonhuman

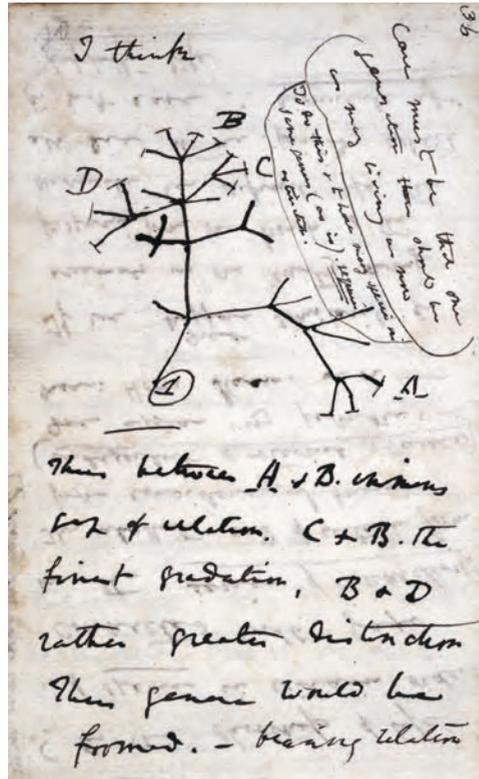


Figure 4 Charles Darwin: I think

agency without intentionality” can, but need not, give rise to “connective empires”. He renders events as though through time-lapse photography, with the expansion and compression of authoritarian and decentralised models of interconnectedness in the Mediterranean. From the Phoenicians and the Greeks (initially decentralised) to the Romans (centralised from the beginning), up to the present of restrained domination by the European Union and the French-inspired Mediterranean Union with the parallel disintegration of some more or less reliable nation-states. Libya is the most recent example in a chain stretching back from Syria, Lebanon, Algeria, and Spain to the Balkans. In the case of Libya, regression went so far as to reach the stage of the spread of a neo-tribe: the Islamic State.

Horден goes on to examine corals and thus early forms of archaeologically verifiable networking in terms of fishing, trade and luxury goods in the Mediterranean. He examines the production, spread and consumption of the natural reserves that came to constitute human artefacts, drawing conclusions on interior unity and exterior connections within the region. The issue here – I am bound by my vocation to point it out – is prestige. One finds shell formations, corals, kauri, common metals, and glass artefacts that are of no immediate practical use – all of which point the way to a paradigmatic anthropological study of decentralised, tribal and intertribal networking in a distinct maritime environment. Here, I have in mind the “kula ring” of New Guinea’s offshore archipelagos as studied by Bronislaw Malinowski and many other anthropologists. The archipelago too could be considered a sort of small median space of networked niches. The “kula” – ornamental objects devoid of practical value – serve a number of purposes. They strengthen the reputation in the society of origin; they test alternative social structures (from the matrilineal system of the Trobriand-Massim studied by Malinowski to the patrilineal systems of the other islands); they provide security in a space marked by catastrophic tsunamis; and they preserve a common history of settlement that is re-embodied in the “ring”. The archaeological reconstruction of ancient trade in coral testifies to deep interconnection within the Mediterranean as well as of the Mediterranean itself with the Indian Ocean. If the recurring relative and intermediate measure of the Mediterranean is the extraversion and introversion of niches, the theoretical approach in question thus transcends its boundaries: exchange, networking, colonies, war, and empire.

When visiting the Oracle of Delphi, dumbfounded clients were often subjected to the grand sermon on the colonisation of the Mediterranean before they would receive any answer to their local concerns and problems. Grinnos, King of Thera/Santorin – an island, which we shall later see in a rather different context – “came to Delphi in search of an oracle. Though he had made no enquiry as to exodus, he was told to build a city in Libya” (Giebel 2001:31; translated from German). He did not follow the oracle’s command and his Mediterranean niche was punished with seven years of drought. Cyrenaica’s eventful history and its colonisation by residents of Thera, would also be in consistently close relation with the sanctuary in Delphi. Viewed through the lens of Mediterranean anthropology, the oracle of Delphi’s oft-cited motto ‘Know thyself. . .

Be aware of your own limitations... Know what you are capable of doing' no longer appears as psychological or philosophical counsel for individuals, or as a colonial-ideological feint, but rather as the quintessence of best practice in terms of extraversion, introversion and catastrophe in Mediterranean niches.

The Romans, extraverted centralists par excellence, also portrayed their assaults on their neighbours as expressing a kind of exogamy, as the "rape of Sabine women". To me, this bears a striking similarity to the symbolic transformations of colonial racism with its sexual phobia of the suppressed other. In both cases, intimate life enters into cahoots with public enterprise. One must ask what role is played in the growth and decline of these egocentric settlements by an expansionism that seeks prestige and that at least wants to pacify the wider environment? Horden and Purcell carefully distinguish between the history *of* the Mediterranean and history *in* the Mediterranean, but where are the fragile and contradictory motives for history that initially unfolds between niches and coasts? One need only read *Aladdin and the Magic Lamp* or the *Odyssey* to find the first clues.

"The Mediterranean is back", Horden quotes a group of researchers from 2020 as saying, to which he adds: "from the point of view of connectivity, it has never gone away". From the point of view of niches, I would add, it will always be there, as long as the current aggregate of geotectonics persists. "Microecologies resist mapping. They are fluid, mutable creations" (Horden and Purcell 2000:53), which is not to say they do not exist. The image of a unified and unchanging Mediterranean, which guided early research, can also be understood as an attempt to delude ourselves about the visible fragility of historically or anthropologically explored niches and transregional relations. Similarly, as tourists, we continue to consume the Mediterranean every time we seek consolation in the transience of the breezes flowing through villages or over the monumental remains of antiquity, which have been preserved through painstaking re-enacting and re-stauration. The intermediary social space of the *Méditerranée* transpires continuously – somewhere between conservation, decay, modernisation and re-enactment. Used cautiously in the style of Darwin's "I think", the concept of the Mediterranean region remains useful; even if it has been – and continues to be – misused colonially and idyllically. Even if we are constantly doomed to fall more steeply into the trap of deconstruction and reconstruction described by Herzfeld, productive thinking about connectivity and niche-formation is fundamentally helpful. It furnishes us with knowledge.

The present special issue offers two sections, one on connectivity, and the other on the fate of the concept of the rural hinterlands. Our first section on *Rethinking Mediterranean Connectivity* offers contributions by anthropologists, as well as the already summarized overview from historian Peregrine Horden (London). Judith Scheele (Marseille) writes about Saharan niches and dynamics, Martin Zillinger (Cologne) about the connections of Mediterranean forms of sanctification of space, and Gerhild Perl (Bern) about encounters with networks, fates and vertical structures of contempt and racism on the axis that connects and separates Central Europe, Southern Spain, Morocco and Sub-Saharan Africa.

The title of **Judith Scheele's** contribution references Freud's "Civilization and its Discontents" and thus the inevitability, opacity and asynchronicity of Mediterranean pressures and impulses. Following Braudel, she understands the Sahara as the "second face" of the Mediterranean, as a kind of negative to our colourful maritime images. It is thus niches, rather than connectivity, that are automatically brought to the fore. It is in the niches and the oases that Scheele has conducted her fieldwork. The Sahara focuses our attention on "extraversion", an expression offered by the historian of North Africa, James McDougall, as a counterpart to the "introversion" or "involution" of the Mediterranean niches. Oases have survived for millennia, but "...local resources on their own were rarely sufficient to feed the local population", that is, they could not do it alone.

The urge to turn outward is, in this instance, provocatively denominated "extraversion"; a term that is conspicuously taken from psychological research. Against this, the intensive uses of the niche as described by Scheele are interesting; of soil, of real estate, from the cultivation of various crops and dried fruits to residual practices of hunting. The "aspiration of urbanity" sees salt and fruit migrating in the opposite direction of consumer goods or even Islamic scholarship. "Wilful rurality", on the other hand, turns the oasis into a hiding place and the site of archetypal inversions. This is not far off Ernest Gellner's insistence on Ibn Khaldun's dialectic of tribe and state, and from there is a path, whether we like it or not, that inexorably leads to Mühlmann's theory of the superimposition of social strata (*Überschichtung*).

Martin Zillinger's study of itinerant Moroccan Sufi networks depicts the act of extraversion through the cultural intimacy of a niche experience, with the concept of extraversion here retreating, more clearly still, into its social-psychological origins. The focus, however, now seems to be on purely "ideal" and personal motifs. Hamid, a Sufi leader and trance practitioner with whom Zillinger has now been working for 15 years, is driven forth by a "mission" of sorts. From provincial Meknes he travels to Cairo and then onto Paris, where he temporarily settles to pursue his ritual work. In a state of dissociation, Hamid confers with alien spirits through exorcism and ecstatic bodywork, rendering accessible practical life goals that would otherwise have seemed unattainable in the everyday of the niche. Extraversion here moves toward ecstasy, anticipating the movements of physical exit, and toward exorcism that necessarily has to follow a superimposition. This connection between withdrawal, purification, spiritual journey and physical wandering, which equally characterises Asian shamanism, allows Hamid to occupy Islamic "territories of grace" (Pitt-Rivers 1992, Horden and Purcell 2000:403ff., Zillinger 2016, Da Col and Shryock 2017). He incorporates them and is possessed by their spirits. The results of Zillinger's research can be coupled with Evans-Pritchard's (1949) historical-anthropological study of the Senusiyya order of Cyrenaica. The order emigrated in 1843 from Saudi-Arabia and Egypt, where it had been suspected of heresy, to Libya, where it came to be the mediator between the complex niche structures of the Cyrenaica until today. Hamid, on the other hand, turns toward Cairo to treat the spiritually ill. Frightened by the Arabellion, he leaves the city and continues

to wander as a Sufi pilgrim. His is the business of segmentation, purification, connectivity and mediation. This, in technical-practical as well as religious contexts, is equally the business of other religious and ethnic minorities in the Mediterranean, first and foremost of the Jews and Roma. The impetus of extraversion takes Hamid all the way to Paris, where one could well imagine an encounter with Marcel Mauss and Julian Pitt-Rivers – the great theorists of space, exchange and spirituality in the tradition of the Durkheim school. But also Durkheim's greatest rival, Arnold Van Gennep, would have been positively disposed to an interview with Hamid, for his wanderings, like his ritualistics, open up fields of advanced processual analysis. Thanks to scientific-literary fiction, it is now possible for a German anthropologist to bring together both, the paradigmatic sociologist and the paradigmatic folklore scholar of the French tradition, under the auspices of Hamid's travels.

Gerhild Perl's essay also deals with complex motives for migration, which can range from pure distress to clearly outlined aspirations. Her essay in cultural studies evaluates the author's encounters in the Strait of Gibraltar with migrants from Cameroon, Nigeria, Morocco, and elsewhere, all of whom have diverging statuses within the borders of the EU. Their border crossings – which in the case of the Moroccans also involves travelling to Morocco and then back to the EU – often reflect bitter material as well as interpersonal experiences, together with failing extraversions, which ultimately reveal a triad of contempt: the EU, that is, Spain at the summit, “below” which is Morocco, and “beneath” that: black Africa. One Nigerian informant, Joseph, has some of the ugliest memories of Morocco to reveal. Moroccans are often privy to the same racist violence and depreciation in Andalusia as black Africans to the south of the sea: “black is not free in Morocco”. Gradations of colonial superimpositions equally live on in Spanish society. The reasons for this become clear when we consider that people live not only their own lives but also those of their ancestors, along with those ancestors' hopes, their arrogance, their cynicisms and their traumata (Todd 2019). The private lives on each of these steps on the racist ladder intersect with public, often unspoken, celebrations of identity through disgust and contempt. Is this why exorcisms play such a significant role in the tangle of Mediterranean magic, cults and high religions?

State rules, justice and grand political gestures, it seems, are decisive in triggering and, indeed, in tackling racism. Anthropology too, given its habitual proximity with the state, has a certain voice in the chorus of policies against or in favour of segregation. This is particularly true of areas with halfway-credible democracies, such as the EU. One might well raise doubts about Perl's purely modern and colonial genesis of racism. Nonetheless, the essay, like no other in this volume, shows the relevance of Mediterranean anthropology as an ethnography of introversion and extraversion, as field research in situations of convergent connectivity and the execution or non-execution of political and religious stereotypes in concrete face-to-face situations or in niches.

Niches drive and facilitate retreat, whereas connectivity can favour or destroy local development. In the latter case, such devolution may leave grave damage in its wake; in certain cases the destruction of an entire biotope that eventually will provide yet

another starting point for niche formation. As long as postmodern industries and military technologies do not render entire regions completely uninhabitable, this will continue unabated. The social gestures involved will always be the same: mutual aid and asymmetrical exchange; personal guarantees and cynicism; and the corruption and subversion of any external power that seeks to interfere. In classical mafias, it is easy to see such cycles in the form of development of individual “families” or male gangs. The seemingly limitless expansion of illegal sources of money leads to extraversion, but when collapse inevitably comes, the last remaining soldiers revert to extortion. They violently threaten and “protect” their closest neighbours – their own lateral relatives if needs be – thus proceeding with primary accumulation until the next cycle of expansion. Violence was identified by Eric Wolf (1982) as the very core of the “tributary mode of production”. Perpetrators enact physical violence in their immediate physical environs, mobilizing and exploiting their own “home base”.

2021 The Longue Durée of Provincial Life

The second part of the special issue focuses on a topic that had been written off during the deconstruction of Mediterranean research. The “Mediterranean countryman”, the dream of an unchanging, fundamentally rural reality, ultimately the dream of the “Primitive Man”, was repeatedly referred to as the “bias” of Mediterranean research in the late 1980s. This was followed by a wave of urban studies in the area and even a certain neglect of rural studies. In my own fieldwork, I too was continuously confronted with the discursive trap of idyllic ruralism. As a guest in the tiny whitewashed houses or cave dwellings of Ripacandida, in the Basilicata region of Italy, I was confronted with remnants of the material culture of antiquity paired with fridges and TV-sets. This accentuated the simplicity and grace, in both gesture and expression, of the inhabitants of these homes. Their intentional rurality coupled with their dialect and their fundamentalism meant that more than once I felt as though I had descended into the past. It was a past that took me briefly to the time of the Counter-Reformation before letting me fall back still further, as far as the Basilicata of the Byzantines and Romans. Such journeys, however, tended to end in a rude awakening when I would realise, for example, that the head of the household had spent 30 years in Switzerland or Australia, working quite competently in industry; or that the housewife joyously consumed North American or Brazilian soap operas, which provided valuable social-therapeutic analyses. The second part of the special issue, *Rethinking Mediterranean Ruralities*, brings together contributions by Dionigi Albera (Aix-en-Provence), Sevi Bayraktar (Los Angeles), Christoph Lange (Cologne) and Konstantinos Kalantzis (London) on entanglements of just this kind.

In his introductory essay on Mediterranean rurality, **Dionigi Albera** discusses the subtle differences between Braudel’s “rather autonomous form(s) of rural civilisation” as the hinterland of urban centres, then proceeding to examine Horden and Purcell’s account of the self-fashioning of remote niches as “calculated eccentricity”. For Albera,

it is clearly not a question of reviving the endless debates over “the urban”. He pleads for a pragmatic approach to the “fuzzy sets” of the urban and the rural. State and local management of niche micro-ecologies can conflict, overlap or become mutually subversive. It is for precisely this reason that all democratic systems have found ways of representing sparsely-populated parts of the country. They do so through senators, councillors, governors, and as autonomous regions or landscapes with special statuses. As far as the Mediterranean goes, the point, of course, is that Mediterranean micro-ecologies and connectivities amass very densely, and in infinite fragmentation. The Medi-Terranean is a collection of intermediate zones, trajectories and niches. Albera’s suggestion to view the patchwork of landscapes as a Linnaean system of fine-grained relationships among plants reminds me of the image I sought for Horden and Purcell’s differentiated dialectic between connectivity and niche, namely Darwin’s “I Think” (see figure 4).

Where do we find the resilience of the rural? Can the “hinterland” be seen as a sort of “reserve” of urban life, as its mirror? In an attempt to better understand and explain postmodern environmental movements on Turkey’s Black Sea coast, **Sevi Bayraktar** probes the among anthropologists almost forgotten field of research into rural costumes and musical folklore. In Turkey, during protests against grotesque, large-scale and supposedly “green” projects of the national government, protest culture is sometimes infused with the “horon dance”, often performed in traditional garb. It is easy to recognise the Greek “choros” in the term “horon”. Contrary to the conceptions of Western educated bourgeoisie, this ancient Greek word does not correlate to “choires” dedicated to singing, but rather to an ensemble of ritual or theatrical dances. The *horon* is close to the *sirtaki*, but also to the trance rituals of the Sufi Nakshbandi sect, widespread in remote mountain regions of Turkey. Performed in the absence of a centralized choreography, the dance transpires in lines and circles into which by-standers can easily integrate. Choreographically, the dance could be said to depict extraversion and introversion: It opens advancing lines that introvert into circles before opening out once again. The bodies circulate – as Bayraktar succinctly puts it – between social situations. This can be “deployed” politically in the environmental movement, where it can, perhaps, draw popular strata into protest – or does it rather serve as a means for the latter to force their way into the protests of the better connected? The *horon* suffuses the movement with a driving, autopoietic form that promises egalitarianism and solidarity. At the same time, the dance is less litigable than the words preferred by the intellectuals: “At the end of the day, we say whatever we want to say, but police have no reason to arrest us!” This is likely what Italian anthropologist Ernesto De Martino was referring to with “progressive folklore” (Cannarsa 1992) beyond romanticisation and modernisation.

Christoph Lange’s contribution, focussing on elections in the Nile Delta, is determined by the same aggregates of romanticisation and critique that underlie the dis-course-analytical “trap” described by Herzfeld. Contemporary Egypt continues to be home to certain Arab “tribes”, e.g. sedentary Bedouins that cultivate “strategic trib-



Figure 5 Jean-Antoine Watteau, “The Embarkation for Cythera”: Extraversion or Introversion?

alism” and exist as a social category on its own within the wider post-agrarian society. Christoph Lange observed the mobilisation of this broken and yet virulent tradition in a situation of “tactical modernism”: the organisation of election campaigns effected by tribalist leaders rallying a base of Bedouin voters around their patrons while, at the same time, tethering this Bedouin clientele to the power complex in Cairo. As with current Cossack leaders in Russia or certain representatives of Native Americans, the history of Bedouin candidates is long and varied. In this history both extraversion from the niche to the centre, as well as withdrawal to the very point of going into hiding, have been equally important. As can be seen in mafia networks or in Catholic brotherhoods and militias of the Balkans, the latent threat of violence constitutes a cornerstone of power that is repeatedly negotiated between the hinterland and the central stage of national political life. Goffman’s backstage, the pre-political space, can also be realised territorially. Again, the Mediterranean region does not appear as a bearer of total cultural specificity (one need only think of the electoral system of the USA by way of comparison), but as an intermediary world between regions where – globalised and totalised – every voice is a voice in conjunction with the rest of the world, in all its tributary and tribal balances.

The final contribution for this rich volume takes us back to one of the archetypal objects of European and North American longing: the Greek islands. For me it brings

to mind Jean-Antoine Watteau's painting "Embarkation for Cythera" in the Louvre's version of 1717.

Watteau's painting seems to be based on the imagination of a journey to the island of Aphrodite, said to have been born in the seafoam of the island of Cythera in the Peloponnese. This may well be read as a hint at the origin of extraversion in local exogamy, a confluence of the intimate and the publicly-performed motifs of desire and demarcation (Lévi-Strauss 1969). On the other hand, as Norbert Elias observes in his essay on Watteau and the baroque cult of Cythera (Elias 2000:22–24), art historians have noted with irritation that the joyful group of lovers and fertility-enhancing Cupid spirits actually seems to be saying goodbye to Venus-Aphrodite, present as a statue on the right of the painting. Is this extraversion, and coming back home again, putting an end to adventures in other parts of the Mediterranean or is it the end of an introverted local cult leading to the embarkation-migration-flight of the young?

The island Therasia can be understood an appendage of sorts to the volcanic island of Santorini. Whereas Santorini enjoys considerable attention from the tourism industry, Therasia remains unknown and silent. It is left over from the "Thera" of antiquity, bearing the ancient Greek name of the volcanic complex today known as Santorini. Therasia is a linguistic and geographic remnant of a place already mentioned above: From here, or from Santorini, King Grinna started his voyage to Delphi, where the oracle forced him or at least his successor to start the colonization of the Cyrenaica. Therasia is no more extraverted today, but remains silent today, and this silence is the starting point for **Konstantinos Kalantzis'** ethnography. The silence is both deplored and praised by the islanders as a defining feature of their identity. The failure of this local niche today invites colonisation from the outside, or vain local project making, or both. Ultimately, the proposed "measures" balance one another out. Providing an in-depth analysis of postcard motifs, as well as the indigenous disputes surrounding them, Konstantinos Kalantzis combines his analysis with parallels from many other areas of tourism research. For Kalantzis, and for the Therasiots alike, what remains is the struggle that characterises life in every Mediterranean niche, the struggle to stay or to leave, extraversion or introversion. Kalantzis' ethnography provides fantastic examples of Mediterranean cynicism. It was Herzfeld's experiments on Greek tropes, self-doubt and hymns of praise, as well as their reflections in anthropological realism and exoticism that have taught us to see this dialectic of cynicism.

Conclusion

What I have learned from the texts included here is that Mediterranean anthropological or ethnographic research continues to make sense again. In the present special issue, the newly emerged conceptualisation of extraversion and introversion, especially inter-

esting for its interdisciplinary genealogy, brings fruitful perspectives of intraregional comparison into view. The Mediterranean is once again visible. This is primarily due to the increasingly urgent crises and risks with which the people of the Mediterranean region must today contend. It is these crises that currently constitute the external framework for research and no longer the new nation states that once emerged so confidently during the post-war and the Cold War years, whose policies appear to be reflected in Herzfeld's books. In the end, a strategy of scholarly disenchantment has prevailed, one which Peregrine Horden and Dionigi Albera still maintain in this volume, and which can encompass both discourse-critical and geostrategically robust forms of knowledge. We need prudent description of parallel cases and ruptures, crises and contradictions, patiently added up to systemic and complex overall representations in all their imperfection. It is only in this way that the crisis triggered by the onslaught of postmodern deconstruction can be productively integrated and transformed into a narrow line of continuity, which in historical scholarship has long since been reinstated as the norm of Mediterranean research (Abulafia 2011).

The *Méditerranée* provides us with no evidence for the hypostasis of broad identity similarities, neither in genetic material, nor in linguistic history, nor even in the 'culture' of Mediterranean societies. However, there exists densely gradated socio-empirical data on the eternal recurrence of fault lines and emblematic conflict situations in this space of transition between Asia, Europe and Africa. "Culture is the wealth of problems, and we find an age all the more enlightened the more riddles it has uncovered", the German cultural philosopher Egon Friedell once wrote (2009[1927]:131). There is no need to argue at length with climatologists, geologists and geographers as to whether or not there is such a thing as the Mediterranean region. The dense layering of social and political problems between hinterlands and coasts, between niches and connectivities profile this space again and again in ever new, and yet always recognisable, ways. We find connectively and typologically related forms of knowing and acting out in relation to this space marked by catastrophes, impassibility, niche building and waterways as they appear in a vast wealth of archaeological and art-historical materials, as well as in all early forms of written tradition, other than Chinese. They are complemented by vast amounts of testimony of every ilk, from ethnographic and sociological, to economic and so forth, some of them displaying argumentation of the greatest sophistication. They are witnessing elite formation and elitist primitivism, tactical tribalism and tactical modernity in rural and urban niches, as well as extraversion and introversion at all levels of social and cultural life.

The impetus to formulate premises and methods of historical research and fieldwork in anthropology and archaeology has been variously shaped by the primitivisms of highly developed and connective elites, by the defensive disposition of remote niches against outside invaders, and by the rise and fall of empires. As Michael Herzfeld rightly strengthened again and again, these premises and methods form part of the processes we study as well as of our own practices as anthropologists. Just how we will be able to develop out of the discursive trap that results from this will most certainly depend

on the reciprocity of anthropological work, and on the integration of indigenous anthropological sciences and forms of knowledge. This is the problem of all forms of knowledge that seek to incorporate niches with the help of connectivity and of all world-views cultivated in niches that seek to test their validity beyond the boundaries of their microecology. The cultivation of a watchful, critical self accompanies this extraversion and introversion of knowledge, both in the “popular” and in the “academic” sphere.

Climate change has brought us a crisis, which is essentially a crisis of space itself, against which no niche can provide a full escape and which can no longer be avoided along any line of global connection. To survive in such a situation we need access to every form of knowledge that has been handed down and that can still be empirically collected. In the face of this outlook it strikes me that this volume is not lacking in good ideas and interesting data, nor in certain syntopies of materials and critical designs, as I have sought to show. But for the future I would advise more continuity and coordination of research. What if all the individual topics here presented – electoral behaviour, dances, the gossip about strangers, travellers and locals, cynical introspection and local obstinacy, local and regional forms of idealisation, exoticisation and contempt, indigenous critique, entrepreneurship, mysticism, technologies, bodywork, and, above all, the extraversion of migrations and flights, environmental crises and colonial regimes – what if all these topics were to be researched in one place? What if we could immediately study all these and more topics with fieldwork occurring in a consecutive, systematically structured series of places? It would then be possible to balance out such problems as arise from the imponderabilities of approaches to research fields and from the contrasts between the idiosyncrasies of research personalities. The historical depth, diversity and reflexivity of Mediterranean material attracts idiosyncratic minds, which one is also tempted – perhaps not entirely unjustifiably – to locate in the contexts of Mediterranean life. The situation is not made any easier by the very limited number of Mediterraneanists in the social and cultural anthropological disciplines of the ‘Western world’, which were and mostly still are dominated by research on the ‘indigenous peoples’ of Africa, the Americas, and Asia (in Germany formerly *Völkerkunde* or “ethnology”) as well as by research on the ‘traditions and customs’ of the researchers’ own societies (former German *Volkskunde*, i.e. folklore studies).

The social and cultural anthropology of the Mediterranean is a fragile undertaking in a fragile field. Structural and systemic elements of the interpretation of social and cultural life have receded over the last decades in favour of processual and discourse-analytical motifs. This is also related to an increasing compulsion to isolate questions in the process of funding, i.e. to a misunderstanding of otherwise sensible attempts to orientate theory. Within historiography, it is, perhaps, a little easier if one plans to work through the data from a particular historical situation, provisionally refraining from theorising beyond the systemic moment. For social and cultural anthropology, the future may give renewed importance to striving for more continuity and coherence of comparative theory formation and data collection in particular fields. In the course of revising exaggerated models of scientific criticism, historiography has shown an-

thropology how the return of the Mediterranean in research and theory building can work (Horden and Purcell 2000; Abulafia 2000; Borutta and Lemmes 2013). But it could also become a guiding science for us in broader questions of structural, systemic and processual analysis. After all, as soon as we commit our field material we collected to paper, or digital archives, it too turns to be history, nothing but history.

References

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