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The South in Postwar Europe: Italy, Greece, Spain, and Portugal

The East-West conflict has dominated the historiography of post-1945 Europe. As Europe was split in half as a result of the super power conflict between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, Western Europe appeared - in the public mind - as a homogeneous space "naturally" united by common historical, religious, and cultural roots and by increasingly similar democratic and market-based politico-economic systems. The European integration process - promoting scholarly attempts to study Europe as a whole and to find evidence for (West-) European commonalities - further discouraged academic attempts to treat Southern Europe as a distinctive object of research. In the current European sovereign debt crisis, in which Southern European countries are in need of financial aid from Northern European countries to refinance their public debts and are in turn required to consolidate their public finances through tax increases and reductions of public expenses, a North-South divide seems to replace the hitherto dominant spatial imagination of Europe. Scholars have hence started taking a stronger interest in tracing the historical roots of Northern and Southern Europe's divergent developments. The conference "The South in Post-War Europe: Italy, Greece, Spain, and Portugal" - held at the German Historical Institute in Rome in June 2013 - therefore brought together experts from various fields to discuss whether Southern Europe is a useful concept for studying contemporary European history.

The idea of a Southern Europe was born in the Enlightenment, in which intellectuals from Northern European countries depicted the South as "backward" and "uncivilized" and compared it to the "progressive" and "refined" North, as MARTIN BAUMEISTER (Rome) and ROBERTO SALA (Basel), the organizers of the conference, explained in their introductory remarks. Ever since the 18th century, Northern Europeans have used the concept of the South, which often had a negative connotation, as a means to legitimate hierarchies of power within

Europe. "Northern Europe" was used as a standard from which to judge Southern Europe. In light of the uses the concept has been put to, is it viable to use Southern Europe as an analytical tool in historical research? Are Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece politically, economically, socially, and culturally similar to each other but different from the rest of Europe? Is there a Southern European macro-region? If so, is the idea of Europe a myth and are the attempts to find markers of a common European identity futile?

The first section discussed processes of mental mapping in postwar Europe. PATRICIA HERTEL (Basel) investigated how European history could be analyzed by taking the perspective of the peripheries. In order to write European history from a decentralized point of view, it was necessary to reconstruct when, how, and why these spatial discourses emerged. In her paper, she outlined three sets of discourses of "Southern difference": the discourse on the South as "backward" as compared to the "modern" North; the attempts by post-imperial Portugal to re-conceive of itself as a Mediterranean instead of an Atlantic power, stressing commonalities with neighboring Spain and Italy and no longer considering itself a Northern power (as it had vis-à-vis its former southern colonies); the marginalization of Southern Europe in political and historiographical discourses as a consequence of the East-West conflict and the new concept of the "Global South."

In his paper, WOLFGANG KNÖBL (Göttingen) analyzed how the cases of Southern European nations complicated the assumptions of modernization theory. The fact that authoritarian regimes existed in economically advanced Southern European countries challenged the assumption of the interdependence of political and economic development, that is democracy and capitalism. Regional conflicts in Italy and Spain also raised doubts about modernization theorists' belief in coherent nation-states as the basis of their analytical framework. Soci-

ologists dealt with these problems in two ways. They spoke of "partial modernization," meaning that only certain parts of a society would modernize while others would cling to traditional ways of life, or they considered all institutions developing in the age of modernity as "modern". The first solution was highly Anglo-centric, as all American and English developments were considered as the proper standard of measurement for what was "modern." The second solution posed the danger of making modernization theory meaningless, if everything was considered "modern" one way or the other. Whether there was a Southern European path to modernization therefore was an open question.

GISELA WELZ (Frankfurt am Main) examined how cultural anthropologists have invented and subsequently employed the concept of a Mediterranean periphery since the 1960s. Ethnographers depicted Southern European villages as traditional and pre-modern and compared them to rural communities in Sub-Saharan Africa or on Pacific islands. They sought to find evidence for a common culture that combined Mediterranean countries and set them apart from Northern Europe. The alleged lack of modernity lay at the bottom of the process of "inventing" the Mediterranean. In the 1980s, with Greece's, Spain's, and Portugal's EU membership, the concept of a Mediterranean decreased in importance, as the southern countries were increasingly "Europeanized." As Southern European nations such as Cyprus sought EU membership and re-imagined themselves along the lines defined by Europe's core, they were discursively colonized by Northern Europeans. In this perspective, Europeanization appeared as a process by which hierarchies of power were established by Northern "core" countries over the "Southern" periphery.

GUIDO FRANZINETTI (Alessandria) traced changes of conceptualizations of European regions over the course of time. In the 19th century, Southern Europe played little role as a concept, as Europe was rather set apart from the Southeast that was ruled by Turkey. After the Second World War, Greece, as a result of the "percentages agreement," became part of "the West" and thus was imagined as forming a common cultural space with the other Southern states, which formed part of the Western Alliance and made up its "southern flank." Yet, no real conception of Southern Europe emerged, as it was only due to political and military reasons that Turkey, Greece, and Italy were grouped together as NATO's "southern flank." The end of the Cold War and the introduction of the Maastricht criteria made the economic differences between Southern and Northern Europe more visible. The most convincing conceptualizations of Southern Europe

thus emerged among economists and sociologists who compared Southern and Northern economies and welfare regimes. However, Franzinetti claimed that no truly encompassing conceptualization of Southern Europe has emerged to date.

In his comment, BERNHARD STRUCK (St. Andrews) inquired about the role of actors in the process of creating a Southern European space and the purposes that were being pursued when constructing mental maps dividing Europe into a North and a South. He wondered whether the admission of Spain, Portugal, and Greece into the European Community was intended - by tying them to European free market regulations - as a means to prevent left-wing governments in these countries to pursue truly socialist policies.

The second section scrutinized the fluid borders of Southern Europe and discussed the question whether Southern Europe is a useful analytical concept. MARTIN RHODES (Denver) reviewed the debates among social scientists about the existence of a Southern Europe. He first discussed the analysis of Southern Europe in historical-developmental terms according to which a Southern Europe was identifiable by late industrialization, low literacy rates, an interventionist yet administratively weak state, prolonged periods of dictatorships, and large-spread clientilism as well as chronic budget deficits. Copying the consumption patterns of the more affluent Northern societies, without having the productive economic base for it, Southern Europeans ran into high levels of private and public debt. Rhodes then examined concepts of Southern Europe as used in world-systems analysis, according to which the region formed part of the capitalist semi-periphery, in variety of capitalism approaches, according to which Southern Europe had a peculiar productive system, and in comparative approaches to welfare regimes, which held that the region had a particular redistributive system. Finally, Rhodes integrated the approaches to analyze the long-term problems of Southern Europe in view of the current financial and economic crisis. He came to the conclusion that the concept of Southern Europe was useful, particularly in light of the current public debt crisis of Southern European states.

MARIE-JANINE CALIC (Munich) outlined how Southeast Europe could be conceptualized in relation to Southwest Europe. Both regions could be integrated into a common Mediterranean space, they could be compared to identify their differences, or transnational processes of cultural transfers and economic interconnectedness between Southeast and Southwest Europe could be an-

alyzed. While both regions shared many characteristics such as late industrialization and close family ties, they also developed along different paths, as Southwest Europe changed from an industrial to a service-sector based economy more rapidly and since it was integrated into the European Union. In the end, however, Calic expressed doubts about whether Southeast Europe was a useful category of analysis, since it was an invention of Northwesterners who compared it unfavorably to their own region they considered the standard of measurement and thus "orientalized" the Balkans as a site of tribal conflict and backwardness.

MANUEL BORUTTA (Bochum) analyzed the multiple ways in which the Midi was connected to Algeria both before and after the decolonization of North Africa in terms of trade, migration, agriculture, politics, and representation. Borutta examined first how the Midi was marginalized in the 19th century - often being depicted as a backward region that had more in common with Africa and the Orient than with Europe and the Occident. He then proceeded to show that the Midi became a central region of France after the colonization and integration of Algeria into France. It literally moved into the center of France, as cartographic representations of France now also included Northern Africa. The Mediterranean ceased to be a border of France separating Europe from Africa but became the maritime bridge connecting France to its new southern department. Finally, Borutta examined how the Midi was again marginalized after decolonization. He thus made clear that the representation of Southern Europe was closely tied to the economic, political, and demographic entanglements with North Africa.

In the final paper of the section, HEINRICH HART-MANN (Basel) discussed the role of Turkey in Southern Europe by tracing Turkey's path to modernity in the postwar era. He deliberately did not take a cultural approach tracing discursive constructions of Southern Europe, but instead focused on economic strategies and planning that linked or drew boundaries between spaces. Turkey's place in Europe thus appeared as the result of decisions made by political and economic experts. While Turkey was integrated into Europe through the Marshall Plan, which encouraged agricultural production in Southern Europe to "feed" Northern European countries specializing in industries, the Treaty of Rome excluded Turkey from the European market and thus led to a severe and long-lasting economic crisis.

In his comment, Martin Baumeister stressed that in discussing Southern Europe as a concept it was essential to distinguish between the search for common traits uniting Southern Europe and discursive constructions of Southern Europe by Northerners who wished to attribute negative characteristics to the South in order to legitimate spatial hierarchies in Europe. He stressed that it was more common for Northern Europeans to think of a European South, while many Italians and Spaniards would deny that they shared a common cultural space with each other and Greece and Portugal.

The third section took a closer look at the political development of Southern Europe and the transitions from authoritarian regimes to democratic forms of government. MARIO DEL PERO (Bologna) argued that Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece did not form a common cultural space, since these countries' national experiences were very different. In international relations, no concept of Southern Europe existed. There was neither an alliance of Southern European nations nor a block of Southern European nations with similar interests in NATO.

TILL KOESSLER (Bochum) called into question whether the standard narrative of Southern European history after 1945 as one of gradual democratization was the only proper one. He instead emphasized that authoritarian regimes were not simply backward and traditional and had to be overthrown for Southern European nations to become more modern and "European." Presenting a case study on Spain under Franco, Koessler showed that authoritarian regimes sought to modernize their societies by tracing how the Franco regime attempted to rationalize Spaniards' daily life routines through reforms of public time in the 1960s. The Franco regime did not see itself as a bulwark of traditionalism, but, on the contrary, sought to depict itself as a modernizing force after the Second World War. Koessler thus demonstrated that we should go beyond simplistic democratization narratives in writing Southern European history.

JOSÉ M. MAGONE (Berlin) asked about the contributions of Southern Europe to the development of the European Union and came to the conclusion that Southern European nations have little agenda-setting power. Usually they have succumbed to decisions made by Germany and France and have only taken a firm position in discussions about EU money transfers to Southern Europe through the cohesion, agriculture, and fisheries funds ("Club Med"). He found the most important reason for the South's lack of influence in its elites' uncritical idealization of the EU. They believed that their societies' domestic problems would be solved by EU membership and thus made little effort to democratize and modernize

their political, economic, and social systems. The enthusiasm about Europe, however, might suffer in the current debt crisis.

MARIANO TORCAL (Barcelona) investigated whether the idea that Southern Europe had a different political culture than the rest of Europe was valid. Comparing the results of surveys in Southern European countries with those in other European democracies, he found that it was difficult to speak of a Southern European exceptionalism. In some dimensions such as popular support for democracy, Southern Europe was similar to Western Europe; in some dimensions such as low levels of social trust or political disaffection as measured by confidence in political institutions as parliaments, parties, and politicians, it was different from Western Europe but shared common attitudes with Eastern European democracies; and in some dimensions such as satisfaction with democratic performance, Southern European countries were very heterogeneous. Only with regards to lower levels of subjective political interest, Southern Europe displayed an anomaly. Torcal, however, warned against deducing a Southern European exceptionalism from this insight, since political disaffection did not necessarily result in lower levels of actual participation in politics as measured by voter turn-outs.

In the discussion, the question was raised as to whether autocrats and fascists in Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Greece used the concept of Southern Europe to legitimate their rule by linking the democratic form of government to Northern Europe and thus making authoritarianism appear as Southern Europe's "default condition". In his comment, FEDERICO ROMERO (Florence) suggested "provincializing" Northern Europe - given that Northern Europe is usually taken as a standard of measurement without critical reflection.

The final section of the conference addressed the economies and welfare regimes of Southern Europe and how they compared to the rest of Europe. STEFANO CAVAZZA (Bologna) traced the development of a consumer society in post-war Italy. At the end of the Second World War, U.S. foreign-policy makers encouraged attempts to make Italy a "consumer society" to prevent it from falling prey to communist temptations. Italians' consumption has risen continually ever since the 1970s, because Italian companies - fearing social conflict and strikes - raised wages significantly, the "scala mobile" (a mechanism to offset inflation) was introduced, and public spending was increased. Cavazza thus concluded that the transformation of Italy into a consumer society was similar to that of other continental European countries.

ALEXANDER NÜTZENADEL (Berlin) compared the development of public debt and its influence on economic development in Portugal, Italy, Greece, and Spain. He found that Southern European states had much in common in terms of economic history such as late industrial development, the persistence of agriculture, low labor productivity, balance of payment deficits, high public debts, and state institutions comparatively weak in collecting taxes and providing infrastructure and social welfare. He could not find empirical proof, however, for the thesis advanced by Carmen M. Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff that high levels of public debt would necessarily result in a decrease of economic growth.

CLAUDE MARTIN (Rennes) compared Southern European welfare regimes to those of Northern Europe. According to him, the role of the family in providing social security set Southern Europe apart from other European regions. It was not clear, however, whether family solidarity was particularly strong in Southern Europe because of the inefficiency and limited scope of public welfare or whether South Europe's welfare regimes developed their particular traits as a result of strong family support in that region. Since the 1990s, however, we could witness profound transformations in the labor market, the welfare state, and gender roles such that it was possible to speak of a gradual convergence of welfare systems in Europe.

ANTONIO SCHIZZEROTTO (Trento) investigated the commonalities and dissimilarities between Italy and Spain with regards to educational inequality, occupational stratification, social mobility, and economic development. Numbers of those in school attendance have increased sharply since the late 1950s in Italy and the mid-1960s in Spain - a development that did not fully change the fact, however, that social origins remained influential in determining whether young people finished high school successfully and attended universities. As Southern European economies have witnessed slow growth and actual recession in recent years, moreover, a proper education did no longer translate into professional success or even the attainment of full-time jobs. Schizzerotto emphasized, however, that these socio-economic developments could be seen in most European countries, such that it would be incorrect to claim that Southern European countries had more in common with each other than with the rest of EU member states.

The following discussion called for using the concept of Americanization or Westernization to compare Southern Europe to Northern Europe, since the development of consumer societies characterized all of Europe. It also

raised the question whether scholars should not leave behind the nation-state framework and instead study regional variations, since Northern Italy, for example, differed sharply from Southern Italy in terms of attitudes towards violence and gender.

The conference showed that there are characteristics that Southern European nations have in common and that set them historically apart from their Northern neighbors such as late industrialization, weak administrative states, and welfare regimes that rely heavily on family protection. It became clear, however, that one should be careful not to automatically assume a Southern peculiarity, since other countries - such as Eastern European democracies - might display similar traits such as disillusionment with parliaments, parties, and politicians or a lack of interest in political affairs; hence differences from the North European states cannot merely be explained by cultural factors. The conference also brought to the fore the danger of "essentializing" differences between Southern and Northern Europe. The concept of Southern Europe can carry a negative connotation allowing Northern Europeans to use it to establish and legitimize spatial hierarchies and thus preventing negotiations within the European Union on an equal basis. Historians therefore need to deconstruct the concept of Southern Europe and trace processes of mental mapping in Europe. Who speaks of "Southern Europe" and with what intentions? Is it a self-description by Southern Europeans or a label used by Northerners? Being careful not to "orientalize" Southern Europe entails "provincializing" Northern Europe and not uncritically taking it as a standard of measurement. Deconstructing "Southern Europe" also means understanding it as a concept which is contested. Southern Europe's borders, moreover, are fluid and keep changing according to which perspective one takes. Historians using Southern Europe as an analytical tool to study contemporary European history need to address the role of Turkey, France, Malta, and Cyprus and the former colonies of Southern Europe's nations. Moving beyond the framework of nation-states is another challenge historians using the concept of Southern Europe will have to meet. Northern Italy and Catalonia, for example, might have more in common with Norhtern Europe than with the Mezzogiorno or Andalusia, such that defining Europe's South by a list of nation-states might be inaccurate.

Despite these difficulties, pitfalls, and challenges, the concept of Southern Europe offers a new and potentially fruitful perspective for historians studying contemporary European history. Historians always have to draw temporal and spatial lines to create meaningful narratives; otherwise, they would have to write general and all-encompassing histories of the entire world from the beginning to the end. Focusing on Europe's South therefore must not necessarily provide Northern politicians with arguments to establish rules in Europe against the will of its Southern neighbors, if scholars keep in mind that "Southern Europe" is at least as much a cultural construct as a geographical region united by common political, socio-economic, and cultural features. Finally, using Southern Europe as a heuristic device does not necessarily contradict studies on Europe as a whole or on European identity formation. As the conference made clear, there is not one Europe, but multiple Europes, and it might be just this diversity that characterizes Europe as a continent.

Conference Overview:

Introduction
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Martin Baumeister (Rome), Roberto Sala (Basel): "Southern Europe since 1945": A Conversation with Giulio Sapelli (Milan)

Session I - Historical Regions and Mental Mapping in Postwar-Europe

Chair: Johannes Paulmann (Mainz)

Discussant: Bernhard Struck (St Andrews)

Patricia Hertel (Basel) (with Martin Lengwiler, Basel): "Centre" and "Periphery" in Western Europe

Wolfgang Knöbl (Göttingen): The Master Narratives of 'Modernization' and 'Modernity'

Gisela Welz (Frankfurt): Unsettling the Divide: Postcoloniality, Multiple Modernities, and Europeanization on the Mediterranean Periphery

Guido Franzinetti (Alessandria): Southern Europe and Historical Regions in Post-War Europe: Fragmentation and Conceptualization

Session II - Structures, Discourses, and Borders

Chair: Stefano Cavazza (Bologna)

Discussant: Martin Baumeister (Rome)

Martin Rhodes (Denver): Italy, Portugal, Greece and Spain in Social Scientific Studies

Marie-Janine Calic (Munich): Southern Eastern Europe and Southern (Western) Europe

Manuel Borutta (Bochum): Southern France: Algeria and the Midi between Colonization and Decolonization

Heinrich Hartmann (Basel): The Edges of What, the Periphery of Whom? Practising Discourses of Modernity in Turkey, 1950s to 1980s

Session III - Between Authoritarianism and Democracy

Chair: Roberto Sala (Basel)

Discussant: Federico Romero (Florence)

Mario Del Pero (Bologna): The Cold War, Southern Europe, and the Democratic Transitions of the 1970s

Till Koessler (Bochum): Southern European Dictatorships in Transnational Discourse and Historiography

José M. Magone (Berlin): Patterns of European Integration in Southern Europe. A Political-historical Study of the Impact of the Periphery on the Development of the European Union

Mariano Torcal (Barcelona): Political Culture in Southern Europe: Searching for Exceptionalism?

Session IV - Economy and Society

Chair: Martin Rhodes (Denver)

Discussant: Roberto Sala (Basel)

Stefano Cavazza (Bologna): From Endemic Poverty to Consumer Society

Alexander Nützenadel (Berlin): Public Debt and Economic Development in Southern Europe

Claude Martin (Rennes): Welfare Balance Between State and Family. A Southern Configuration?

Antonio Schizzerotto (Trento): Education and Economic Development

Round Table and Conclusions

Mario Del Pero (Bologna), Claudio Fogu (San Diego), Johannes Paulmann (Mainz), and Martin Rhodes (Denver)

Moderation: Martin Baumeister (Rome)

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the list discussion logs at:
http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl.