

Integration(s) in the Mediterranean / Intégration(s) en Méditerranée

Rennes-2 University / Université Rennes 2

Campus Villejean

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Call for Papers

A historical process of transformation is unfolding in many Arab Mediterranean partners of the European Union (Euro-Mediterranean Partnership - EMP) since 2011. The political revolutions and uprisings of the 'Arab Spring' are not only changing the societies of these countries, but they are reshaping the entire regional landscape. It would be fair to argue that the Arab Spring, as well as the deep transformations of the EU over the last two decades and particularly in the last two years of crisis necessitate new enquiries into this geopolitical context: the workings of integration, its limits and gaps, its diversity and its paradoxes are of central importance. It is the complex interplay between integration and fragmentation that we wish to address in this conference. This interdisciplinary conference aims at offering an analysis of the state of the "Euromediterranean", a region framed as political construct by numerous policies initiated by the European Union (EU) towards its "Mediterranean partners" since the 1990s. The conference will examine the normative effects of the Euromed policies and their institutional settings on the social and spatial practices of the actors of the Euromediterranean region.

A changing context

The Euromediterranean was considered as a geopolitical device to structure EU policy towards the southern Mediterranean neighbors. It was inspired by the vision of the (European) founding fathers of the EMP. It aimed at the emergence of a "shared area of peace and stability" and "prosperity" in the Mediterranean (Barcelona Declaration, 1995), very much in the vein of the EU's own foundational idea. However, in 2013, the emergence of the "shared space" prophesied by the Barcelona Declaration is still a remote prospect, for many reasons. First, severe political hurdles are in the way of further integration, in particular the long-standing issue of the Israeli-Arab conflict. Second, the gaps in social, economic and political development between the two shores are deep as ever, as are the misunderstandings among their societies¹. Twenty years of Euromediterranean policies have failed to build more convergent paths of development in this regard. In fact, it might be justified to ask whether they had any impact at all. Finally, the different EU policy initiatives towards the Mediterranean that have occurred since Barcelona (European Neighbourhood Policy in 2003; the Union for the Mediterranean in 2008) have failed to build upon each other and eroded the

regional approach enclosed in the EMP in favour of more differentiated bilateral partnerships between EU members states and its partners. Important geopolitical changes within the EU since the launch of the EMP in 1995 have also played an important role in the transformation of the euro-Mediterranean. On the one hand, the waves of enlargement of the 2000s have absorbed much of Union's political energy, administrative capacity and budgetary resources. They have also raised new questions and insecurities as to where the 'limits' of the EU lie. On the other hand, progresses in the EU's internal process of integration (from the internal market to the Schengen area) have changed the nature of its external borders, and above all fortified them. They have progressively transformed the Mediterranean region into a "borderland zone", where the line between the "inside" and the "outside" is blurred in many respects². Nowadays, the Mediterranean is where the many tensions between the increasing transformation of the nature of EU borders and the objectives of deeper north/south integration play out the more vividly. Finally, the political and economic dynamics of the Mediterranean are not defined solely by the divide between the EU and its southern neighbours. They are increasingly shaped by globalisation and the emergence of a new regional power balance where Gulf countries, emerging Asian countries and to a certain extent also Turkey have a say.

Changing perspectives: How does integration play out in the Mediterranean? The Mediterranean has changed over the last two decades. How have the prospects of further integration set in the 1990s evolved? No one would dispute that over the last two decades, the Mediterranean landscape has changed considerably. And few would doubt that the objectives stipulated in the Barcelona Declaration remain far from being met. The Mediterranean remains a fractured and divided region where paths of convergence and complementarities are scarce. The starting point for this conference is nevertheless the observation that things do happen in the Mediterranean! New social and cultural transnational configurations emerge, new norms, models and ideas are shared, networks and flows of humans, goods, services, finance, culture, languages etc... develop. The new practices of a wide range of actors contribute to define new spaces within the Mediterranean. The Arab uprisings have made visible new pan-Arabic networks of culture and politics, while the rise of Islamist movements in the region have created an arc of mostly pro-US governments close to the Muslim Brotherhood. People and ideas move freely between parties as diverse the Freedom and Justice Party in Egypt, Tunisia's Ennahda, Palestine's Hamas and Turkey's Justice and Development Party. Particularly interesting is

also the case of Turkey, which has become a player in the Euromed region of its own right, both as economic and regional political power. Ten years after the launch of the European Neighbourhood Policy, five years after the Union for the Mediterranean, two years after the start of the Arab uprisings, this conference aims at exploring the practices and spaces that push the Euromediterranean area (including Turkey) towards differentiated forms of integration that may in fact diverge from the vision set by the founding fathers of the Euromediterranean Partnership project.

This exploration will focus on the following broad themes:

1. From « top-down integration » to « integration from below »: new approaches of the Mediterranean We will look at the different types and forms of integration processes that take place in the Mediterranean region - with, as well as in spite of gaps (e.g. the development gap or the perceptions of the other), limits (e.g. the borders) and conflicts. These aspects of integration will be analysed in relation with the EMP framework: whether they stem from it, take place in spite of it, or even in opposition to it. The objective here is less to examine the effects of the EMP - a project of regional "topdown" integration - but to elucidate the variety of processes, practices, representations, perceptions and places ... that are relevant for an analysis in terms of integration. The actors that shape integration (individual, collective, private, institutional, governmental...) adapt their strategies to the possibilities and the constraints set by the EMP framework, and/or the EU and/or of the nation states. They contribute to the unfolding of an alternative geography of the Mediterranean, made of transnational spaces of different nature and scope, at different scales, often asymmetrical, and to the emergence of places that articulate networks and routes, where visibility and invisibility can play out, where illegality and alternative practices can take place.

2. Norms, models and regional integration Integration in the Mediterranean is in part the by-product of the ongoing production of norms, and the exportation, diffusion, circulation of these norms. The EU is the one of the producers of norms in the region. They are exported through the Partnership's framework³ of cooperation and through the dominant position of the EU internal market. However, the EU is not the only player in the Mediterranean as international competition and the rising profile of the Gulf States are gaining pace. We should, of course, also not forget about the formidable normative power of the United States. How do norms spread, are they adopted and how, adapted or circumvented? What are the impacts of the circulation of norms on the processes

of regional integration? What kind of spaces is it shaping? What are the impacts of normative integration on policies, economy, social actors, the prospects of populations, the perception of the north-south divide? Linked to the issue of norms is the issue of the circulation of models in the region. For instance it can be argued that the European project, or the way it builds its external partnerships, develops powerful models that influence policy-making in the partners' countries, in sectors as diverse as economic development, trade agreements, urban planification, or decentralization processes. However, norms and models impact many other domains that do not belong solely to the realm of public policies such as professional practices, cultural production, perceptions and sense of identity, consumption models etc. And in this context of diverse models, we certainly see a number of competing visions, from the EU to the US, Turkey, the Gulf and even Iran. In the context of the Arab uprisings, the question of the models, their diffusion, their appropriation, and their actors has gained additional importance.

3. New geographies of the (Euro)Mediterranean area: circulations and transnational spaces / regional integration seen from the South
The Mediterranean is a space of intense circulations of humans, goods, services, investments, but equally of ideas, culture, norms, models, representations etc.
The conference will examine to which extent and how the different actors that develop transnational practices (from enterprises to smugglers, from migrants to professionals, from the individual to sophisticated networks etc.) use, bypass or adapt to the Euromediterranean frameworks.

We will look at the materialities of these circulations, rooted in infrastructures, passage points, transitions areas, on networks that are both material and human. What are the places favoured by the circulations examined?
Where are the pivotal thresholds, the interfaces, the connections, the crossroads, the corridors that structure the Mediterranean space?

We will also address the "integration from below", i.e. the whole range of informal or illegal circulations. How do this type of circulations adapt to the evolution of the political, legal and normative frameworks in the Mediterranean and to the on-going redefinition of the borderlands? How are they transformed by this evolving context?

Which impact do the combined processes of bordering and inclusion/integration have in the production of transnational space/spaces and places within the Mediterranean, on the production of new mental maps, or on new discourses on

otherness and identity? In this regard, the conference will also examine the production of alternative geographies of the Mediterranean.

An international interdisciplinary conference at University Rennes-2, France

We invite applications from the political science, economy and social sciences

(geography, sociology, anthropology) as well as from law and history. We particularly encourage the submission of papers based on empirical case-studies. Papers which present new theoretical frameworks or methodological

approaches are also very much welcome.

The questions that will be tackled in the conference reverberate in the whole

Mediterranean area. However, papers dealing with southern Mediterranean case

studies or processes will be given priority.

A selection of the best papers will be published in a special issue of a leading academic journal.

Application

Please apply with an abstract of not more than 400 words, together with a one-page biography or CV. If you are selected, you will be requested to submit

an extended abstract closer to the conference date.

Working languages will be English and French and you may apply in any of the

two

languages. Should you chose to present in French, please provide a

Powerpoint

presentation in English.

- Deadline for the submission of abstracts: 6 April 2013
- The Scientific Committee will reply by: 6 May 2013
- Deadline for the submission of an extended abstract (2500 words): 10 September 2013
- Conference fees: 60€

Please send your abstract to: conference-med@univ-rennes2.fr

Organisation

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