Chapter 5

Southern Europe

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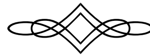

This paper intends to examine the connection between the conceptualizations of European historical regions and some key historical passages in the history of Southern Europe. Its perspective is that of an observer specializing in East Central and Southeastern European history. It is in this sense an intentionally external and highly selective perspective. It focuses on a case of "the dog that did not bark" (as Sherlock Holmes would have put it)—that is, a category which has never really been consolidated conceptually, let alone in terms of scholarly research.

The end of the Cold War is sometimes used as an all-encompassing turning-point for all kinds of scholarly debates and polemics, but in the conceptualization of historic regions it has played an indisputable role. It has provided the basis for, on the one hand, the actual process of European unification (East–West, and no longer simply North–South, as was the case with the so-called Carolingian EEC), and, on the other, for a radical rethinking of the definition of historic regions in modern and contemporary European history (Troebst 2003; Mishkova, Stråth, and Trencsényi 2013; Baumeister and Sala 2015).

Which Southern Europe?

The term "Southern Europe" remains a highly elusive concept, even in comparison with other highly contested regional conceptualizations. This is due to a variety of factors, which will be discussed in this paper. Two preliminary points should be stressed. The first is that it remains an asymmetrical category: while in historical and scholarly literature there is a "Southeastern Europe," there has never been any consolidated use of the term "Southwestern Europe," despite the fact that this is, in fact, the precise geographical region

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which is usually intended by the term "Southern Europe." When Gustav von Aschenbach planned "a siesta of three or four weeks in one of the usual places for holidays in the lovely South," there is no question as to which "South" was to be the destination: Venice, Italy (Mann 1912, quoted in Schenk and Winkler 2007, 8).

The second point is of a more practical nature. For a variety of reasons, over the centuries the concept of Southern Europe has generally tended to be associated with the territories south of the Alps (i.e., Italy), rather than south of the Pyrenees (i.e., Spain and Portugal). The latter have not generally been associated with Southern Europe, but rather with the Iberian Peninsula. The exceptions to this trend have occurred during the phase of the so-called Southern European Transitions to Democracy (which covered the cases of Portugal, Greece, and Spain in 1974–75) and, more recently, the financial and economic crisis that started in 2009 with the Greek Depression and rapidly spread to Spain, Portugal, and Italy. Even these exceptions have never led to the consolidation of any image (or self-image) of Southern Europe. The conceptualization of a hypothetical Southern Europe has, in any case, remained a fragile construction, not least because of the very strong competition from alternative conceptualizations, starting from a variety of "Mediterranean world" categorizations.

The Montesquieuian Moment and the Nineteenth-Century Perspectives of the Midi

The distinction between Southern and Northern Europe appears to be so firmly rooted in European intellectual history from time immemorial as not to require any great elaboration. For some centuries, the dichotomy had functioned as a distinction between the "barbaric" North versus the "refined" South (Thompson 1957; Jones 1971; Shuger 1997). It is, in fact, intimately connected to the development of climate theory in European intellectual history, from Ibn Khaldūn to Bodin (Gates 1967; Tooley 1953).

A key shift occurred with Montesquieu's climate theory in 1748, which defined the basis for the conceptualization of a "backward" (Catholic) South versus an "advanced" (Protestant) North (Shackleton 1955; 1960, 302–19; Rotta 1974, 200–1). The basis for this conceptualization was the fact that "The discovery of the New World and the concomitant outbreak of modernity had caused a radical shift in the axis of world trade, now centered on northern Europe and the Atlantic. . . . not only had Montesquieu's Mediterranean been marginalized by the discovery of America; it had also been pushed to the margins of modernity itself" (D'Auria 2015, 44). Unsurprisingly, Montesquieu's conceptualization of Southern Europe did not find a receptive audience in

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the region itself, since it involved the acceptance of historical marginality. Crucially, this marginalization extended also to the intellectual sphere. By the end of the seventeenth century, "the spiritual hegemony [was] no longer exclusively Latin" (Hazard 1935, vol. 1, 102).

The classic case of a reemerging dichotomy between Northern and Southern Europe was provided by Madame de Staël (as it happens, a French intellectual at one point married to a Northern European diplomat). In her many essays and novels, she confirmed the paradigm of the radical difference between Northern and Southern sensibilities (Staël-Holstein 1799; 1807; 1813; see also chapter 16 in this volume). Climate was the key factor in explaining it (Staël-Holstein 1799, ch. 11).

A more formalized contribution and systematization was provided in 1813 by Sismondi's *De la Littérature du Midi de l'Europe,* which presented an overview of the literatures of all the Romance languages, from the Middle Ages onwards (with a chapter on early Arabic literature). In this context, the four-volume work is significant not just for the title chosen, but also for referring to "les peuples du Midi" as "un ensemble" (Sismondi [1813] 1829, volume 1, ii).

The affinity of Romance languages and literatures was always acknowledged in the study of languages and literature, but the presumed unity of the "peuples du Midi" was not. Various factors determined this result. For a start, French culture was not inclined to belittle itself by associating itself with cultures in decline: the golden age of Portuguese and Spanish literatures was over, and the end of the seventeenth century saw a radical change of the terms of intellectual exchange between France and Italy (to the detriment of Italy) (Wachet 1989).

Romance studies always preserved some idea of regional unity. In 1842, the Collège de France nominated Edgar Quinet to the chair of *Histoire des littératures et des institutions comparés du midi de l'Europe,* from which he was suspended four years later for political reasons (Quinet 1842; Bataillon 1947). Significantly, in 1925 the chair was newly titled *Histoire des littératures comparées de l'Europe méridionale et de l'Amérique latine* and assigned to Paul Hazard. The new appellation reflected a further shift away from regional categorization. From all these literary endeavors, despite their potential for further development, no conceptualization of "les peuples du Midi" was ever consolidated; the linguistic and cultural element (*langues néolatines*) always prevailed over the regional aspect, and in any case excluded France itself: according to Quinet, "la mission de l'esprit français est de servir de médiateur entre l'Europe du Midi et l'Europe du Nord" ("the mission of the French Spirit is to serve as a mediator between Southern Europe and Northern Europe"; Quinet [1848] 1857, 73).

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From the neoclassical and romantic eras onward, German perspectives on Europe south of the Alps were heavily oriented toward the literary and cultural sphere (classical heritage and romantic imagination). There was also, however, a more strictly geographical perspective, which began to emerge from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards. Hans-Dietrich Schultz has provided a broad overview of the varieties of categorization of Southern Europe that emerged in so-called classical German geography. The starting point is Zeune's assumption that "Südeuropa" consisted of the "Pireäenhalbinseln," the "Alpenhalbinseln" and the "Balkanhalbinseln" (Zeune 1808). This was soon discarded in favor of a clear division of "Western" Europe into a Northern part (the Nordic countries), a Central part (Mitteleuropa, including France, German lands, and the Habsburg monarchy), and a Southern part (the Italian peninsula) (Wittmann 1839). This was then followed by another division into a Northern (British Isles and Scandinavia), Western (France and the Iberian Peninsula), and Southern part (the Italian and Balkan peninsulas) (Fischer 1860). In 1931 there emerged a division into Western Europe (British Isles and France), Northern Europe (the Nordic countries), Central Europe (Germany and East-Central Europe), and finally Southern Europe (the Iberian, Italian, and Balkan peninsulas) (Seydlitz 1931). All these categorizations reflected historically contingent factors (Schultz 2003, 291). These German categorizations, despite their differences, appear to share a more land-oriented approach, rather than a sea-oriented approach. In the case of Southern Europe, this created the basis for a more consistent conceptualization. Conversely, a sea-oriented approach would have led (as it regularly did in other conceptualizations) to dissolving "Southern Europe" into the Mediterranean Sea.

Imperial Interests

Since the eighteenth century, British perspectives on "the South" have been strongly oriented toward the literary sphere (travel literature in the widest sense) and Anglo-Italian historical links (British sympathies for the Risorgimento) (Pemble 1987). In fact, the Anglo-Italian connection was firmly established once British naval power consolidated itself in the Mediterranean. As Frank O'Gorman (2009–10, 129–30) has pointed out, "The Mediterranean was absolutely central to British political, economic and naval interests throughout the eighteenth century" (see also Holland 2012). This remained the case until the 1970s.

For Italian observers, and especially aspiring leaders of emerging Italian nationalism, the categorization of Southern Europe was crucial, involving the Mediterranean balance of power and ultimately the role of the future Italian

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nation-state. Twentieth-century Italian historiography has often framed this issue in terms foreshadowing Italian imperialism in later eras, seen either as a positive development (by historians of the Fascist period) or as a negative one (by later historians). More recently, Maurizio Isabella (2012) has argued, instead, for approaches that "address the Risorgimento debates on empire in their own right" (232) and considers definitions in this perspective:

> what the [Italian] patriots hostile to European imperial expansion and those in favor of it both shared was a determination to define Italy as, at one and the same time, a European and a Mediterranean country. . . . The combination of the two geographical definitions, the European and the Mediterranean, is crucial. First, it enabled Italian intellectuals both to demonstrate that Italy was part of a geographical space to which the most advanced countries in the world belonged, and to vindicate the specificity of her location in the Mediterranean. This combination also enabled patriots to respond to the Northern Europeans' condescending remarks about the degeneration and backwardness of Italy. What was at stake was precisely the position of the country in the geography of civilization: Italy was indeed a Mediterranean periphery and not, more worryingly, outside of it, and abutting upon the uncivilized East. (247).

For Italian patriots, says Isabella, "the stakes were high, because Italy and Greece risked being perceived simply as another Palestine or another Egypt, not as the Southern appendix of civilized Europe, but as the Western border of the Eastern world" (659–60).

From the Franco-Prussian War until World War I, there was not much scope for any conceptualization of Southern Europe (Moe 2002). In this respect, the consolidation of a system of nation-states (following the Italian and German models and the results of the Berlin Congress of 1878) made any inclination to conceptualize a wider region (such as "Southern Europe") much less likely.

At the same time, a quite different factor emerged on the European scene: the *Kulturkampf.* This new religious divide reflected cleavages within societies (pitting secular elites against Roman Catholic rural populations), within states (non-Catholic regions and central authorities versus Catholic regions), and ultimately a general cleavage between a Protestant and/or "secular" North and a Catholic South (Clark and Kaiser 2003). This was essentially a conflict over visions of modernity, described by Manuel Borutta (2013, 62–63) as: "The dichotomizing of Catholicism and modernity was 'naturalized' in the process; the conflicting character of the culture wars was obscured by the objectivist tone of seemingly neutral academic analysis" (see also Borutta 2011).

This renewal of Montesquieu's dichotomy in a more advanced historical setting, and for that matter in a "scientific" form, made any regional categorization even less likely than before. Portugal had long been marginalized in

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Europe; Spain would soon be experiencing the end of its imperial delusion with the trauma of 1898. For its part, Italy was intent on projecting its newfound political, economic, and military power eastwards (across the Adriatic, in the Balkans), or southwards (Ottoman Libya, East Africa).

France continued to remain outside the picture of any conceivable Southern Europe. The potential for a Southern-oriented identification (which could have been represented by some form of Occitanism) was always weak, and was firmly ruled out after the French defeat in the war of 1870–71, which led to a much stronger centralizing orientation in the French state (Zantedeschi 2013). At a wider European level, there could also have been some potential with the Latin Monetary Union, created in 1865 and theoretically existing until 1927 (Einaudi 2001). Despite its name, it was not exclusively Latin (since Greece was at one point part of it). Once again, the name chosen reflected a presumed cultural affinity, rather than any regional unity.

The Fascist Dream and Southern Europe

The immediate result of World War I and of the peace treaties that followed was Italy's promotion from the uncertain status of "The Least of the Great Powers" (Bosworth 1979) to a fully-fledged great power. This would prove, in retrospect, to have been a great illusion; but at the time it had some credibility, even outside Italy. After all, the defeat of Germany, the greatest military and economic power in continental Europe, together with the transformation of Imperial Russia into a Soviet "rogue state," created the appearance of Italy as a great power.

This repositioning of Italy led not so much to a change in Italian perspectives, but rather to the extension of preexisting Italian ambitions. The key elements were, on the one hand, the recognition of Italian rights (as a full-fledged great power, finally) over the Mediterranean as a whole (*Mare Nostrum*); and, on the other hand, the acceptance of Italian expansion in North Africa and East Africa. Indeed, the objective was to curtail both French and British presence in the Mediterranean. These ambitions were not confined to radical Fascist fringes; they were part of the assumptions shared by large parts of the Italian establishment (pre-Fascist, Monarchist, Liberal, and Fascist).

The Fascist dream of Italy as a great power was too short-lived to serve as the basis for any new conceptualization (which in any case would have been centered on the category of the Mediterranean rather than an ambiguous Southern Europe). The proceedings of the Volta Conference of 1932 provide some indication of what could have been the direction chosen by the academic supporters of Italian Fascism (Giordano 2004, 116–17; Fioravanzo 2011). Giotto Dainelli, one of the leading Italian geographers, did in fact produce a

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comprehensive geographic conceptualization of Europe (see Dainelli 1933). He did not point to any North-South dichotomy, but rather to an East-West dichotomy (in which Italy was firmly attached to the West), while at the same time emphasizing the "Mediterranean" dimension of European civilization (centered on Rome and Italy). Echoes of this orientation can also be found in the work of Carlo Curcio, who in 1927 actually produced a journal entitled *Sud*. The purpose of the journal was not to study a hypothetical "Southern Europe," but rather "to study aspects and technical problems of our inevitable and necessary march toward Africa and the East" (Curcio 1941, 7; see also Curcio 1927).

A much more significant case of a Mediterranean perspective was offered by Federico Chabod, generally considered one of the most important Italian historians of the twentieth century (Woolf 2002). After a highly successful academic career during the Fascist era, he managed to achieve full acceptability in the postwar era, through his participation in the anti-Nazi resistance in 1943–45. What stands out in his historical writings on Italian foreign policy is not any Fascist subtext, but rather a remarkable continuity in his historical work on Italian Mediterranean policy, from the pre-Fascist era, through Fascism and its final unravelling in 1943, to his history of Italian foreign policy in 1870–96 (Chabod 1940; 1951; and 2014). As Piergiorgio Zunino has clearly illustrated, for Chabod there was no contradiction in being critical of Fascism as a totalitarian system, being hostile to the alliance with Nazi Germany, and holding a firm belief in Italy's rights as a Mediterranean power (Zunino 2002).

All these Italian Mediterranean dreams—pre-Fascist or Fascist—evaporated in the face of the Italian collapse of September 1943 (Aga Rossi 2000), which is still seen as a "death of the Nation" (Galli Della Loggia 1996). This reaction has led to a tendency in Italian debates to underestimate the seriousness of Italian Mediterranean aspirations, at least from an intellectual point of view, if not from a strategic perspective. Fascism had actually created or strengthened a whole range of academic and policy-oriented institutions, ranging from an already consolidated tradition of Oriental studies, to institutes for the study of Eastern Europe and the Balkans (Soravia 2004; Santoro 2005; Bona 2005). The experience of defeat in 1943–45 led to an unceremonious burial of these traditions. In short, in interwar Italy there was no conceptualization of any Southern Europe.

Postwar Visions

Southern Europe emerged, quite literally, with the Cold War. It was the natural consequence of the redefinition of strategic interests following the collapse of the Fascist dream in September 1943. This was already evident in the well-

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known Churchill-Stalin talks in Moscow in October 1944, with the so-called percentages agreement, which involved a conceptual redefinition of the borders of Eastern Europe (and, by implication, also of Southern Europe).

These talks have been extensively interpreted and discussed (Resis 1978; Tsakaloyannis 1986; Sfikas 1999; Roberts 2006). In this context, what matters is the actual meaning of the presumed agreement. The only substantive point of the agreement was that Greece was going to be left to the Western Allies (Roberts 2014, 251). The rest of the agreement concerned countries that were destined to end under Soviet control, and Churchill was well aware of that. As he said to Stalin, "Let us settle about our affairs in the Balkans. Your armies are in Rumania and Bulgaria." The percentages agreement did not create Southern Europe (out of a division of Europe), but it represented a tentative ratification of the new balance of power in Europe, which the military outcome was creating on the ground. As a consequence, Greece was (militarily and conceptually speaking) excluded from Eastern Europe (to which it had belonged since at least the Byzantine era). Maria Todorova has pointed out the discrepancy between Churchill's relatively accommodating attitude to a Communist takeover in Yugoslavia and his very strong feelings on the possibility of an equivalent takeover in Greece (Todorova 1997, 135).

The separation of Greece from its historical hinterland was rarely challenged in the Atlantic sphere, with a few exceptions (Seton-Watson 1975, 483). Scholarship in the Federal Republic of Germany was less affected by this exclusion, because of the existence of research centers organized around the category of "Südosteuropa," which would also have included Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus (see, e.g., Grothusen 1975–98). The incorporation of Italy into NATO was by no means as smooth as might seem in retrospect. Truman was very reluctant to agree to include Italy in the first wave of NATO members; after all, Italy was neither Northern nor Atlantic (Smith 1983). At the negotiations for the creation of NATO, as Sergio Romano (2002, 58) has pointed out, "the majority of participants argued that the presence of Italy was undesirable." France seems to have played a role in supporting Italian entry into NATO, stressing the Mediterranean dimension of the military alliance, since at the time it still possessed a *département* on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, in Algeria (Romano 2002, 60).

Greece and Turkey had to wait for the first NATO enlargement in 1952 to become fully integrated members of the Alliance (Hatzivassiliou and Triantaphyllou 2012, 667–69). This marked the creation of NATO's "Southern Flank." No conceptualization of the Southern Flank as some kind of Southern Europe ever took place. This was due not only to the most obvious cultural and religious diversities, but first of all because the Southern Flank was always seen in strictly military terms and it was never expanded into the po-

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litical and economic sphere. Furthermore, by 1955 the divergence of interests of the three pillars of the Southern Flank was manifest after the outbreak of the anti-British rebellion in Cyprus and the anti-Greek riots in Istanbul in 1955. As Dionysios Chourchoulis (2015, 223) has pointed out, "The Southern Flank in the 1950s was a political situation rather than a military strategy of the alliance."

What is interesting is what this definition left out, from a strictly Southern European perspective: Spain and Portugal. Spain was an embarrassing partner kept out of NATO (and, by implication, of the subsequently created EEC). There was consistent opposition to Spanish entry from some Northern European EEC members (for example, the Netherlands), despite French efforts in that direction. Portugal was a different case: it was a marginal player from an economic point of view (although not from a strategic point of view), and in many respects it was historically more connected to Great Britain than to the emerging Western European entities (Kiernan 1973).

A conceptualization of Southern Europe (in the sense of Southwestern Europe) would not have emerged simply as a result of the existence of a Southern Flank of NATO. Nor would the presence of an adequate US university–based area studies focus on Southern Europe have been sufficient to ensure such a conceptualization. However, the absence of these two factors did play a role (together with many other factors) in discouraging the establishment of a Southern European perspective.

The year 1955 represented in itself a turning point for Southern Europe, with the admission of Italy, Portugal, and Spain as new members in the United Nations, as part of a sort of formalization of the end of World War II (Mazower 2014, 313). The crucial French decision to go ahead with plans for the creation of the EEC was taken in the aftermath of the Suez debacle of 1956, which marked a downsizing of French ambitions as a European power (Milward 1993, 187–89). This was the moment when there was a decisive shift from a trans-Mediterranean framework to a neo-Carolingian one. Thus a Franco-German hegemony was rapidly and irreversibly defined, starting from the administrative practice of the EEC. All these changes deeply affected Southern Europe as a whole. The result was the emergence (at different levels) of Italy and Spain as significant players on the European scene; but "Southern Europe" never emerged as a category for analyzing the region.

Southern Europe in the Social Sciences

A "Southern Europe" of sorts actually emerged in the field of development economics. When in 1944 Wilbert Moore began publishing his studies on economic demography, he used the label "Eastern and Southern Europe,"

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as if it were uncontroversial (Moore 1944 and 1945). However, in 1943 Paul Rosenstein-Rodan (who came from a Polish and Habsburg background) was already talking of "Eastern and Southeastern Europe," almost as if he were implying the existence of some kind of Southwestern Europe (Rosenstein-Rodan 1943). He subsequently explained that "Eastern and Southeastern Europe were selected as a model not because of any special interest in those countries, but because their governments in exile were in London and because Eastern and Southeastern Europe (like Latin America) constitute a group of similar but not identical models" (Rosenstein-Rodan 1984, 207). Clearly the perception of the incoming Cold War was beginning to have an effect. Rosenstein-Rodan had been involved in the study of Italian economic development since the 1930s, and he maintained a connection with Italian economists throughout his working life (Bhagwati and Eckaus 1972).

The relevance and salience of the debates on Italian economic development throughout the entire Cold War era was evident, both among neoclassical economists and less orthodox figures such as Alexander Gerschenkron and Albert Hirschman (Gerschenkron 1962 and 1968, Adelman 2013). These debates were also connected (often critically) to the wider framework of modernization theory in its economic aspect (Rostow 1960; Gilman 2003; Sosnowska 2004; Leszczyński 2014), and they also connected to the creation of a community of economic historians that covered both sides of the Cold War (Berg 2015).

A conceptualization of Southern Europe (or, quite exceptionally, of Southwestern Europe), eventually emerged in the early 1990s, on the basis of the flowering of economic history in post-Franco Spain (Molinas and Prados de la Escosura 1989; Tortella 1992); Portuguese economic history emerged somewhat later (Lains 2002). Greek historians benefited from an earlier entry into the European Community and from the strong increase of their presence in Northern European academic institutions. Various factors played a role in this unfolding. The 1980s (and even more the 1990s) reflected a more general pattern of academic renewal and expansion of the countries of the region. Despite the fact that Italian social scientists, as a whole, proved to be much less interested in comparative research, it represented a genuine breakthrough for Southern European studies (Tortella 1991).

Economic development debates had an impact, at least in terms of the research programs, in US-based area studies. This became clear at a later stage, at the end of the 1950s, in the heyday of modernization theory. The stage was set by Banfield's *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society* (Banfield 1958; Gilman 2003). His work continues to find an echo (however critical it may be) in social science debates in Italy and elsewhere (Ginsborg 1990; Putnam 1993; Meloni 1997; Mastropaolo 2009). The fact that it has quite recently

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been translated into Greek is surely significant (Banfield 2014). In fact, Banfield's idea of "amoral familism" (as the key to understanding a backward society, such as Italy was called at the time) was only one of a series of concepts that social scientists (first and foremost social anthropologists) have used to explain Southern European and Mediterranean societies: honor, patronage, clientelism. Taken as a whole, they are best seen as a cluster of mutually reinforcing concepts. In their wider usage in public debates (as distinct from scholarly discussions), the terms are often interchangeable.

The case of social anthropology was, apparently, quite distinct. In this discipline, Southern Europe found its place as a subregion of the so-called Mediterranean sphere, which John Davis surveyed as a whole (Davis 1977; for a subsequent overview, see Albera 2001; see also chapter 4 in this volume). This was in many ways inevitable: a whole series of factors (disciplinary, political, and cultural) pushed toward a conceptualization of this kind. As Davis pointed out, "The Mediterranean attracted anthropologists almost before any other region of the world." But, at the same time, "Mediterranean people have been affected, sometimes in important ways, by the anthropological works which have been written about them: for better or worse, anthropology has helped create a history of the Mediterranean" (Davis 1977, 1–3).

A focus on Southern Europe was to emerge much later, in 1954, with the publication of Julian Pitt-Rivers's *The People of the Sierra* (Boissevain 1979, 81). Anthropological interest in the Mediterranean as a whole vastly overshadowed any potential interest in Southern Europe as a distinct entity. The postwar era coincided with the golden age of social anthropology, dominated by the British tradition (Barth 2005, 32–53). Predictably, the key concepts to emerge (or reemerge) in the postwar era were honor, patronage, and clientelism. Anthropology as a whole could not share any of the normative implications of political science, let alone those of modernization theory. What Banfield saw as symptomatic of a generally "backward" society, social anthropology could analyze in terms of "Mediterranean" societies.

The Southern European Transitions and the End of the Cold War

The wave of democratic transitions was not entirely unexpected. What was unexpected was the speed of these transitions, and their virtually peaceful outcome (despite the attempted Spanish military coup in February 1981). This outcome facilitated, in the first half of the 1980s, a new phase of enlargement of the European Community, which was now to include Southern Europe in its entirety. In terms of conceptualization, it also led to the emergence of a subfield of transitological studies (which were destined to have a

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strong influence on the interpretation of the post-Communist transitions). A useful overview of the available literature was eventually produced as a serious effort to establish an actual field of Southern European studies (Malefakis 1992). There was also a general history of the region, which included Turkey in Southern Europe (Sapelli 1995). Yet all these efforts were rapidly overshadowed by the second transitological wave, which followed the end of the Cold War (Linz and Stepan 1996). It is striking that social scientists working in Southern Europe have generally neglected an element of all the countries of the region: the common experience of dictatorship. This is in part due to the difference in timing of the transition to democracy in Italy (1945) and in Portugal, Greece, and Spain in the 1970s. There is also a clear desire to minimize the historical heritage of all these dictatorships (Troebst 2014).

The end of the Cold War also had another consequence, less emphasized at the time: the creation of a set of "orphans" of the Cold War. All of a sudden, at the end of 1991, a whole series of political elites on the Northern shores of the Mediterranean lost their strategic relevance, at least in the eyes of the remaining superpower. Henceforth, the old clients and beneficiaries of the Cold War in the region (starting from Yugoslavia) lost their strategic value. Southern Europe in the strict sense (Italy, Spain, and Portugal) was not affected in the same way by the post–Cold War changes in US priorities in relation to the Balkans. On the other hand, Greece (which had always kept and acknowledged some aspects of a Southeastern European historical identity) was significantly affected (both in its internal politics and in its external relations). The exception to an otherwise stagnant debate on Southern Europe in the social sciences as a whole is represented by social policy. It is the one case in which the debate has introduced a new approach with clear implications for government policies. It also offers a new angle for an actual conceptualization of Southern Europe (meaning of course Southwestern Europe).

The debate emerged in the 1990s, focusing on the emergence of what began to be defined as the "Southern European welfare model" (Ferrera 1996; Rhodes 1997 and 2015). This debate pointed quite clearly to the characteristics that had been taken on by the welfare state in Southern Europe following decades of European Community integration (and funding). The social, economic, and, ultimately, financial consequences of this model were to prove quite stark. The issue of the Southern European welfare model has also been discussed (and adapted to the local context) by social scientists in Turkey (Buğra and Keyder 2006).

This is not in itself an argument in favor of a rehabilitation of Banfield's analysis. It is, rather, an argument in favor of a conceptual reevaluation of the historical heritage of the European South. From a historian's point of view, what is interesting in Ferrera's and Rhodes's conceptualization is the fact that

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it is not a rehabilitation of all-encompassing categories such as "amoral familism" or "clientelism," but is instead a straightforward illustration of a causal process (Rhodes 1996).

Another field in which some kind of conceptualization of Southern Europe might have emerged (and perhaps did, in an informal way) was the debate on the "varieties of capitalism" which emerged after the 1990s. While not specifically focused on regional conceptualization, the analysis of long-term trends in economic management in Southern European countries still offers scope for innovative perspectives on the historical similarities (and dissimilarities) between these countries (Molina and Rhodes 2007).

Adjacent and Counter-Concepts: The "Défi Méditerranéen" and the "PIGS"

Braudel's major historical work (Braudel 1949)—conceived and written at a time in which France still possessed territories on the southern shores of the Mediterranean—also helped to focus attention on the sea as a category. Furthermore, the label "Mediterranean" has presented many advantages in terms of academic marketing, since it potentially covers a very wide range of topics, ranging from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to Algeria, from Cyprus to Spain, from Turkey to Italy. This continues to be the case, and many social scientists have adopted the Mediterranean label (e.g., Burke III 2012). Southern Europe remained on the drawing-board of social scientists.

John Armstrong (1977, 635) saw Braudel's *Méditerranée* as "*Un Défi Latin,*" ("A Latin Challenge") envisaging "a reaffirmation of Latin civilization which is bound to influence Latin America as well as Latin Europe." Armstrong called for "tighter, more consistent theories" that would have required "more precise conceptual points than Braudel [could] offer" (636). In the post–Cold War era, the Latin *défi* has been advanced essentially by Italian philosophers. The starting point was a book by Franco Cassano (1996), a Southern Italian sociologist (writing in an essentially philosophical manner). This was written in response to Fukuyama's (1992) book on the "End of History," which Cassano considered an enshrinement of the "North-Western" model. Interestingly, the counter-concept proffered was not the idea of European "Southernness," but, rather, the idea of *mediterraneità* (Cassano and Fogu 2010). The only acceptable "South" was the global one. The use of the term "South" (in the sense of "Global South") came into public discourse following the publication of the "Brandt Report" in 1980 (ICIDI 1980; Garavini 2012).

In 2013, these themes were broached in a more incisive manner by the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben in a widely circulated newspaper article

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titled "Se un impero latino prendesse forma nel cuore d'Europa" (If a Latin Empire took shape in the heart of Europe; Agamben 2013). The interview was taken up all over Europe, not least in Northern Europe. In fact, Agamben was echoing a relatively unknown essay by Alexandre Kojève, "Esquisse d'une doctrine de la politique française," dated 27 August 1945 (Kojève 1990 and 2015; Howse 2004). Agamben (2013) summarized Kojève's essay in the following terms:

> Kojève proposed that France should head a "Latin Empire" which would have united economically and politically the three great Latin Nations (namely France, Spain and Italy), aligned with the Catholic Church, of which it would have collected the tradition, while at the same time remaining open to the Mediterranean. According to Kojève, Protestant Germany, which was soon to become the richest and most powerful nation in Europe (as it has become), would be led to adopt the forms of the Anglo-Saxon Empire because of her extra-European vocation. But, in this case, France and the Latin nations were destined to remain a more or less alien body, inevitably reduced to a peripheral role as a satellite.

Agamben's rediscovery of the idea of a "Latin Empire" had great resonance, although the target was in fact the European Union (Schümer 2013). The use of the term "Latin" is indicative of the artificiality of the label. It remains rather infrequent in Italian usage (in the Fascist period, the label "Roman" was preferred). In fact, it is more typical of French usage; the label "Latin America" reflected French, rather than Spanish, influence (Molino 2005, 58).

The "Mediterranean vocation" has always been present in Italian postwar politics and culture, occasionally with very concrete objectives, as happened when Enrico Mattei's National Hydrocarbons Agency (Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi, or ENI) strove to establish an independent policy in the field of petroleum supplies in the late 1950s. Otherwise, this so-called vocation consisted of speeches by politicians from all sides of the political divide, which were rarely taken seriously during the Cold War.

One of the consequences of the Eurozone crisis, which began in 2009 with the revelation of the depth of the Greek crisis, was the sudden reemergence of the term PIGS (covering Portugal, Italy, Greece, and Spain, and even Ireland for a certain period). This sudden revelation of the frailty of the Southern European economies appeared to retrospectively justify a conceptualization of Southern Europe, brushing aside the ambiguity inherent in the term "Latin" (inappropriate for Greeks, as heirs to Hellenic civilization). In fact, the gradual decoupling of Portugal, Italy, and Spain from the most serious aspects of the Greek crisis deflated the prospect of a negative Southern European identity. Given the durability of the crisis, it is unlikely that any of the countries

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labeled "PIGS" will be inclined to remain attached to this identity, whatever label is used.

It is striking that the revivals of these labels always assume the primacy of cultural, religious, or linguistic affinities, rather than any shared historical experiences or interests. This happens precisely when economists begin to look at Southern Europe as a regional entity (Grahl and Teague 2013; Simonazzi, Ginzburg, and Nocella 2013 and 2015).

Conclusion

A proper conceptualization of Southern Europe (in the sense of Southwestern Europe) has never really emerged, despite a number of factors and circumstances that could have favored some conceptualization. To be sure, the conceptualization of a South of Europe had an intellectual pedigree which went back to the Middle Ages (for example, the early versions of climate theory). Montesquieu provided an unequivocal version, in which the South was clearly identified with backwardness. Nineteenth-century literary sensibilities could have provided a more positive conceptualization, but this was never consolidated in other fields. German geographers favored a land-centered approach. Italian *Risorgimento* nationalists were more inclined to stress the Mediterranean dimension of Italy. This tendency was further developed when the modern Italian state was created, and even more after World War I, when Italy acquired an even more pivotal role in the Mediterranean. These dreams of Italy as an effective great power were finally shattered in 1943, with the collapse of the Italian state.

The Cold War created a "Southern Flank" of the NATO alliance, but it never acquired any cultural substance. The EEC marked a decisive shift toward a Northwestern European orientation, centered on the Franco-German axis. In the postwar era Southern Europe reemerged, conceptually speaking, in the social sciences, usually in a negative form, with a focus on economic backwardness, amoral familism, and clientelism. The Southern European democratic transitions offered a slightly more favorable conceptualizing option, but the end of the Cold War swiftly curtailed tendencies in that direction. At this point the notion of a Southern European welfare model began to emerge. However, the chain of economic and financial crises which began in the 2000s led to the emergence of an even more negative picture of financial profligacy (PIGS). Southern European intellectuals reacted defensively, arguing in favor of a "Latin" cultural and social alternative to Northern European models. At the end of the day, "Southern Europe" remains a highly elusive concept.

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