



ESF / SCSS Exploratory Workshop:

Euro-Med and Middle East Political Economy: Assessing the State of the Field

Florence, Italy, 22-24 May 2003

REPORT ON THE ESF EXPLORATORY WORKSHOP

'EURO-MED AND MIDDLE EAST POLITICAL ECONOMY: ASSESSING THE STATE OF THE FIELD'

Eberhard Kienle, IREMAM-CNRS, Aix-en-Provence
Steven Heydemann, SSRC, New York

OBJECTIVES

Convened by Steven Heydemann and Eberhard Kienle in association with Giacomo Luciani the exploratory workshop Euro-Med and Middle East Political Economy: Assessing the State of the Field took place as scheduled from 22 - 24 May 2003 at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence.

As originally planned, the workshop progressed in two stages. The first part was dedicated to papers discussing the state of the art of Euro-Med and Middle East political economy research from a wide range of perspectives. The second focused on how a new network of political economists working on the Euro-Med and MENA regions could address research deficits such as those identified in the first part.

The working definition of political economy was deliberately wide ranging, encompassing phenomena and social processes in which political and economic factors interact to shape outcomes. The intent in adopting such a broad definition was to be as inclusive as possible at this early stage in discussions of a research network, and to benefit from the experience of economists, political scientists and other social science disciplines (in particular demography and anthropology) in assessing the state of the field.

FORMAT AND PARTICIPANTS

As in similar such cases the list of participants had to be amended over time but most of those initially contacted attended the workshop (see definite list of participants and programme attached). Two among our initial invitees informed us in good time of unanticipated overlaps with other commitments and could be replaced, one had to cancel in extremis due to official commitments; all three remain associated with the project. Such continuity favoured continuous exchanges about the objectives and format of the workshop which proved useful for focussing the debates.



ESF / SCSS Exploratory Workshop:

Euro-Med and Middle East Political Economy: Assessing the State of the Field

Florence, Italy, 22-24 May 2003

Unfortunately changes in the list of participants had some impact on their geographical mix by reducing representation from the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean. Nonetheless the final list included participants from Egypt, Israel, Turkey, the Mediterranean and non-Mediterranean parts of the European Union and the United States.

The vast majority of papers closely followed the convenors' recommendations. Rather than systematically surveying the state of the art in given issue areas such as the political economy of regime transformation or of labour markets they emphasized selected thematic, theoretical and methodological issues that participants working on these issues had encountered in their own research. A few papers primarily reflected current research but still provided a useful basis for charting maps for future research needs.

The debates were constructive throughout, even and in particular when specific approaches and paradigms were questioned as to their bases and uses. A promising consensus emerged around two papers, one written by a sociologist focussing on the comparative advantages of simple quantitative methods as opposed to more complex ones, the other produced by a political scientist mainly highlighting qualitative methodological shortcomings in much of the contemporary political economy research on the Middle East and North Africa. It was also stressed that political economy issues in the MENA area need to be discussed comparatively and thus in close contact with colleagues engaged in similar research programs that focus on other parts of the world.

Thus, the two core conclusions of the state of the field review were the need for methodological upgrading of Euro-Med and Middle East political economy, across disciplines, and the need to link such research more closely with political economy approaches more generally. In addition, it was widely agreed that a network would be highly useful in raising the profile of Euro-Med political economy research within the social sciences, giving it more visibility and credibility, and providing a structure that is now missing for the organization of research and training activities. These concerns and outlooks shaped the subsequent discussion about the purposes, form, and content of a research network and the role it might play in the support and development of Euro-Med and Middle East political economy research.

THE NETWORK PROJECT

The diversity of approaches and indeed definitions of political economy represented at the workshop have far-reaching implications for the content and structure of the proposed network. One important line of debate concerned inclusivity versus focus in the composition and activities of a network. Some participants argued for a tighter, problem-centered conceptual identity, suggesting that this would enhance the network's ability to define research agendas around specific concerns in Euro-Med political economy. At the same time, there was a general



ESF / SCSS Exploratory Workshop:

Euro-Med and Middle East Political Economy: Assessing the State of the Field

Florence, Italy, 22-24 May 2003

recognition of the value of a more inclusive approach, including the opportunity to develop interdisciplinary work, to promote exchange of research across regions and approaches, and to raise standards of research across multiple fields. A second, related line of debate concerned methodological scope. This raised important questions about the boundaries of political economy as a domain of research, and what kind of criteria should be used to determine the methodological limits of the field. This debate echoed larger methodological concerns in the social sciences about what constitutes appropriate strategies of research, in particular the tensions between causal and interpretive approaches. Overall, however, this part of the workshop was extremely productive in reviewing a range of considerations that will need to be addressed in the subsequent development of a research network. It was especially useful to the convenors to have the opening round of this conversation take place among a group that was intellectually so diverse.

Following on these discussions, the task at present is to develop concrete proposals about how to reconcile large participation and membership with the intellectual diversity to be found in the large pool of potential network members. Inclusiveness remains important as the representatives of all intellectual trends face the same difficulties pertaining to information, communication, dissemination and training. Inclusiveness also remains important in order to prevent the various trends to develop into self-referential and autistic sects. At the same time, the progress of particular intellectual enterprises warrants a degree of exclusiveness to prevent them being permanently impeded by interparadigmatic debates of principle.

The solution that we are envisaging consists of a “network of networks” approach to questions of inclusivity versus focus. The network will be broad enough to encompass different conceptual, disciplinary, and methodological approaches. It will also provide an organizational framework that will encourage activities organized around more specific themes, approaches and debates. A first set of such more specific issues could give rise to a few workshops organized in conjunction with the annual Mediterranean meetings of the Schuman Centre at the EUI in Florence.

In light of discussions in the May workshop, social policy issues—including labor policies, welfare and social service provision, economic reform, and migration policies, among other—stand out as particularly valuable starting points for activities that could be organized in conjunction with the Mediterranean meeting in March 2004. As it appeared not least from the substantial papers given at the May workshop, these issues are not only chronically underresearched in the MENA area but in the light of research done elsewhere also particularly appropriate for attempts to methodologically upgrade political economy research on this area. They also link nicely to current Euro-Med policy debates in ways that will make such activities useful for a wide range of audiences.



ESF / SCSS Exploratory Workshop:

Euro-Med and Middle East Political Economy: Assessing the State of the Field

Florence, Italy, 22-24 May 2003

As a matter of course, simultaneously progress must be made towards the establishment of the wider network itself. This raises the questions of participation/membership, activities and governance. In principle, participation should be open to all those interested in political economy issues: academics involved in relevant teaching and research projects, research students, practitioners in governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental agencies involved in development activities in the wider sense, etc.

Activities need in general to focus on improving communication and exchange between participants in order to contribute to the emergence of a specialized academic community or a community of debate. This includes critically communication with research students and trainee practitioners and therefore an important training component. The planned workshop on social policy issues (see above) would only be the beginning of a tradition of annual workshops dedicated to (i) the methodological and theoretical upgrading of work conducted by research students, and (ii) themes likely to shape future research agendas because of their academic or wider political relevance.

Governance must reflect the nature of participation and activities and should be as light and simple as possible. After necessarily informal beginnings elections must be held among participants/members to select a coordinating body. A certain degree of institutionalization is indeed unavoidable if the network intends to organize activities for which funds have to be raised and administered.

FUTURE FUNDING

The convenors contemplate to apply for funding from various sources that could be earmarked for specific aspects of the wider project. A future application for an ESF-funded network would be intended to cover the general infrastructure of the network and seed funding for specific activities such as workshops. The latter would however be the subject of additional applications to other funding bodies we are in touch with.

Attached:

- Final Programme
- Final List of Participants



ESF / SCSS Exploratory Workshop:

Euro-Med and Middle East Political Economy: Assessing the State of the Field

Florence, Italy, 22-24 May 2003

FINAL PROGRAMME:

Thursday 22 May 2003

Presentation of Findings of Mediterranean Programme Working Groups:

- 13:00 Kamran Ali and Martina Rieker
Trans-Actions: Tourism in the Southern Mediterranean
- 15:00 Steven Heydemann and Eberhard Kienle
Networks of Privilege: The Politics of Economic Reform in the Middle East
- 19:30 **Bus from Hotel to Restaurant:**
Trattoria Da Mimmo
via San Gallo 57-59
Florence
tel: 055 48 10 30
- 20:00 *Welcome Dinner*

Friday 23rd May 2003

- 09:00 - 09:30 Eberhard Kienle and Steven Heydemann
Welcome and Introduction
- Jakob de Haan
Presentation of the European Science Foundation
- 09:30-10:15 Caglar Keyder
Macroeconomic Approaches to Economic Development
Discussant: David Waldner
- 10:15-10:30 *Coffee break*
- 10:30-11:15 Ray Bush
The Study of Income Distribution in the ME and Euro-Med Regions
Discussant: Jesus Nunez
- 11:15-12:00 Myriam Catusse
Socio-Political Change and the Categories of Political Economy
Discussant: Caglar Keyder
- 12:00-12:45 Eberhard Kienle
The Political Economy of Regime Change
Discussant: Giacomo Luciani



ESF / SCSS Exploratory Workshop:

Euro-Med and Middle East Political Economy: Assessing the State of the Field

Florence, Italy, 22-24 May 2003

12:45-13:45	<i>Lunch</i>
13:45-14:30	Giacomo Luciani New Politics of the New Economy <i>Discussant:</i> Reem Saad
14:30-15:15	David Waldner States, Markets, and Development <i>Discussant:</i> Ray Bush
15:15-16:00	The Politics of Economic Policy Making <i>Discussant:</i> Steven Heydemann
16:00-16:15	<i>Coffee</i>
16:15-17:00	Reem Saad Economics, Development, and Identity <i>Discussant:</i> Philippe Fargues
17:00-17:45	Jesus Nunez, The Political Economy of Conflict <i>Discussant:</i> Eberhard Kienle

Saturday 24th May 2003

09:00 - 09:45	Michael Shalev Methods and Comparison in Euro-Med and ME Political Economy <i>Discussant:</i> Myriam Catusse
09:45 - 10:30	Massoud Karshenas Labor Markets and Social Policies <i>Discussant:</i> Samir Radwan
10:30-10:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:45-11:30	Philippe Fargues Euro-Med Migration Issues <i>Discussant:</i> Massoud Karshenas
12:00-13:00	<i>Lunch</i>
13:00-18:00	From Planning Meeting to Research Network: Design, Governance, Programming, Funding, Outreach and Other Issues
20:00	<i>Closing Dinner</i>



ESF/SCSS Exploratory Workshop:

Euro-Med and Middle East Political Economy: Assessing the State of the Field
Florence, Italy, 22-24 May 2003

Final List of Participants

Convenor:

1. **Eberhard KIENLE**
Directeur
Institut de Recherches et d'Etudes sur le Monde
Arabe et Musulman (IREMAM)
5 Avenue Pasteur
13617 Aix-en-Provence Cedex 1
France
Tel: +33 4 42 23 85 21
Fax: +33 4 42 23 85 01
Email: kienle@mmsch.univ-aix.fr

Co-Convenor:

2. **Steven HEYDEMANN**
Programme Director
Social Science Research Council
810 Seventh Avenue
31st Floor
New York NY 10019
United States
Tel: +1 212 377 2700 ext. 466
Fax: +1 212 377 2727
Email: heydemann@ssrc.org

Local Convenor:

3. **Giacomo LUCIANI**
Co-Director
European University Institute
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies
Mediterranean Programme
Via dei Roccettini 9
50016 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)
Italy
Tel: +39 055 4685 752
Fax: +39 055 4685 770
Email: Giacomo.Luciani@iue.it

ESF Representative:

4. **Jakob DE HAAN**
University of Groningen
Faculty of Economics
PO Box 800
9700 AV Groningen
Netherlands
Tel: +31 50 363 3706
Fax: +31 50 363 7337
Email: j.de.haan@eco.rug.nl

Participants:

5. **Riccardo BOCCO**
Université de Genève
Institut Universitaire d'Etudes du
Développement
24 rue Rothschild
CP 136
1211 Genève 21
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 705 71 11
Email: riccardo.bocco@iued.unige.ch
6. **Ray BUSH**
Lecturer in Politics
University of Leeds
POLIS
Room SSB 13.12
Leeds LS2 9JT
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 113 343 4392
Fax: +44 113 343 4400
Email: r.c.bush@leeds.ac.uk
7. **Myriam CATUSSE**
Institut de Recherches et d'Etudes sur le Monde
Arabe et Musulman (IREMAM)
3-5 avenue Pasteur
13617 Aix-en-Provence Cedex 1
France
Tel: +33 4 42 23 85 27
Fax: +33 4 42 23 85 01
Email: catusse@mmsch.univ-aix.fr
8. **Philippe FARGUES**
Directeur de Recherche
Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques
(INED)
133 Boulevard Davout
75980 Paris Cedex 20
France
Tel: +33 1 56 06 20 78
Fax: +33 1 56 06 21 93
Email: fargues@ined.fr
9. **Massoud KARSHENAS**
School of Oriental and African Studies
Department of Economics
Thornhaugh Street
Russell Square
London WC1H 0XG
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 20 7898 4535
Fax: +44 20 7898 4829
Email: mk@soas.ac.uk

ESF Exploratory Workshops Unit ▪ Administrator: Philippa Rowe

European Science Foundation ▪ 1 quai Lezay Marnésia ▪ FR-67080 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel: +33 (0)3.88.76.71.60 ▪ Fax: +33 (0)3.88.76.71.80 ▪ Email: philippa@esf.org ▪ <http://www.esf.org/workshops>



ESF / SCSS Exploratory Workshop:

Euro-Med and Middle East Political Economy: Assessing the State of the Field

Florence, Italy, 22-24 May 2003

10. Caglar KEYDER

Bogazici University
Department of Sociology
34342 Bebek, Istanbul
Turkey
Tel: +90 212 263 1540
Fax: +90 212 287 0944
Email: keyder@boun.edu.tr

Binghamton University
Department of Sociology
Library Tower, Room 404
PO Box 6000
Binghamton, NY 13902-6000
Tel: +1 607 777 4708
Email: keyder@binghamton.edu

11. Jesus NUNEZ

Institute for Studies on Conflicts and
Humanitarian Action (IECAH)
Calle de la Libertad n 22, 2D
28004 Madrid
Spain
Tel: +34 915 219071
Email: director@iecah.org

12. Reem SAAD

American University in Cairo
Social Research Center
PO Box 2511
113 Sharia Kasr El Aini
11511 Cairo
Egypt
Tel: +20 2 797 6952
Fax: +20 2 795 7298
Email: reemsaad@aucegypt.edu

13. Michael SHALEV

Hebrew University
Social Science Faculty
Department of Sociology
Mt Scopus
91905 Jerusalem
Israel
Tel: +972 2588 3039
Email: shalev@vms.huji.ac.il

14. David A. WALDNER

University of Virginia
Department of Politics
P.O. Box 400787
Cabell Hall #146-A
Charlottesville VA 22904-4787
United States
Tel: +1 434 924 6931
Fax: +1 434 924 3359
Email: daw4h@virginia.edu

15. Tarik YOUSEF

School of Foreign Service
Georgetown University
Washington DC 20057
United States
Email: tyousef@worldbank.org