Mediterranean democracy, Year 1

Pisa, 18 December 2012

Dept of Politics, University of Pisa

Present (indicating areas of main interest): Marcella Aglietti (*citizenship and representative institutions in Italy and Spain*); Roberto Balzani (*Italian systems of government, especially in the Papal States*); Michele Battini (*intellectual history*); Paolo Benvenuto (*Italian political exiles in Paris 1848 and after*); Paul Blokker (multiple *forms of democracy in the modern world*); Alessandro Breccia (*Tuscan political history*); Nico de Federicis (*Hegel*); Luca di Mauro (*politics in Naples and Sicily*); Gian Luca Fruci (*electoral democracy and plebiscites*); Mauro Lenci (*intellectual history of democracy and liberalism)*; Marco Manfredi (*Italian culture during the Restoration*); Viviana Mellone (*revolutionary movements in southern Italy during the Risorgimento*); Emanuela Minuto; David Ragazzoni *(theories of parties and representation in C19)*; Anna Maria Rao (*Naples in the revolutionary era*)

And: Joanna Innes, Maurizio Isabella; Mark Philp, Eduardo Posada Carbo

Apologies, or expressed interest but didn't appear: Antonio Annino , Pierre-Marie Delpu, Mathieu Grenet, Luca Mannori, Virginie Martin, Federica Morelli, Lucy Riall, Simonetta Soldani, Nadia Urbinati

FIRST SESSION: THE PROJECT

Mark Philp described the recently completed first phase of the project, focussing on the North Atlantic (America, France, Britain, Ireland). An edited collection arising from this would be published in June 2013. Challenges that the project had taken on had included:

- Getting people to think across the French revolutionary divide
- Trying to study language not in isolation, but in relation to practices
- Key ideas that had emerged:
- That in the mid eighteenth century certain ideas about democracy were shared within the various sites of enlightenment culture
- These drew on, and mostly referred to, classical antiquity; democracy was commonly negatively characterised
- Growing interest in democracy, and attempt to develop political forms and practices appropriate to it, is not best understood as a matter of diffusion from any single centre. In each nation, a common heritage of ideas about democracy underwent a local and particular developmental process
  - o Ideas about and even meanings attached to democracy became more diverse: thus in France after 1815, it came to connote primarily a post-privilege society; in Britain and the United States, its connotations were more political
  - o Practices also differed: in the US, democracy came to be associated with elections; in Britain, with working men's struggle for recognition; in France, with revolutionary journées
- During the nineteenth century, the notion that there was or could be a distinctly 'modern' version of democracy appeared

The modus operandi of the project was networking and conversation between specialists with diverse knowledge bases. As well as giving rise to a book, the first phase of the project had

prompted various others interested in its premises to organise parallel workshops and conferences, or to seek cross-fertilisation.

Maurizio Isabella described the current phase of the project, which focussed on the 'Mediterranean'.

The intention was to proceed in roughly the same way, by convening workshops and conferences and encouraging conversations among a wide range of specialists.

As well as focussing on a variety of particular places (especially Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece – in each of which three workshops would be held), one aim of the project was to explore what insights might arise from considering the Mediterranean as a region, and in that context both contrasting and looking for common themes in experience.

Hypotheses about features common to the region:

- Democracy and liberalism here often took the form of oppositional movements. These ideas were associated with a high degree of conflict
- Napoleonic invasions had an important (if varied) effect on political life throughout the region
- Patriots in this era had some sense that it was a region with common problems, all southern European lands being in a state of decline and in need of 'regeneration'
- The period saw the region re-imagined as a political space: the establishment of Greece and Italy as autonomous nations formed a component of that larger process
- There were multiple forms of connection within the region: eg exiles; volunteers; emigrants
- In the 1820s, the Ibero-American revolutionary movement attracted wide interest across the region, prompting debate
- North-south European linkages?
- this Mediterranean framework offered an alternative to a more standard north-south framework of analysis, according to which Mediterranean lands were commonly analysed as developing primarily through interactions with northern European powers (Britain, France, Austria, Russia)
- but of course interactions with northern Europe were also very important and would need to be given attention. One example of an ideology which does seem to have moved from north to south was Guizotian, or doctrinaire liberalism, an anti-democratic discourse. There seems to have been some kind of Guizotian moment in global liberalism during the 1830s and 40s.
- Connections with Latin America also needed attention.
- Already existed in C18, when works of the Neapolitan enlightenment (Filangieri, Genovesi) circulated in Latin America
- These connections continued to develop during C19, esp during 1820s when revolutionary fervour fired both southern Europe and south America. Then and later, there was some circulation of armed volunteers across this larger region
- The Guizotian moment affected Latin America too
- Mazzini's ideas were also taken up in Latin America – and Garibaldi fought there

- Nations, empires
- Though commonly celebrated as an age of nascent nationalism, this was at the same time a world of empires, both declining and rising.

- It would be wrong to imagine that all dreams of the future privileged the nation state
- Empires were also major players in the region: eg Britain played an important part in the history of Sicily; operated a protectorate over the Ionian islands, informal empire over Portugal, and strove for influence in the Ottoman empire

- There were both old and new webs of connection
- An example of an older web was the Greek diaspora
- Of newer webs, linkages created by new movements of peoples (eg from Italy and Malta to North Africa)

Eduardo Posada Carbo

Explained how this current phase of the project would unfold in practice.

- There was funding for three years (Oct 2012 – Sept 2015).
- In the first year a series of informal, exploratory workshops, such as the one now taking place, would be held
- In the second and third years, there would be more formal workshops, with short presentations, and (it was hoped) somewhat larger audiences. Funding in the second and third years would make it possible to bring to each national meeting a few scholars from other places involved in the project.

DISCUSSION

Marcella Aglietti - one could not possibly omit France from consideration. *This was agreed; the intention in encouraging attention to comparisons and linkages within the Mediterranean was not to deny the importance of other axes.*

Anna-Maria Rao - asked how the eastern and southern shores of the Mediterranean would figure in the project. *It was explained that at the time when they made the funding application, the organising team had not developed good scholarly contacts in those parts of the Mediterranean: since partnerships had not been developed, it had not been possible to build into the application meetings there. But the intention had always been to try to build some such relationships in the course of the project. In the next two terms, a seminar exploring 'Ottoman and Arab perspectives' on the issues would be running in Oxford. Maurizio also noted that he had already been involved in a project – involving the holding of three international workshops -- which traced exile movements across all Mediterranean territories. A book was expected to arise from that.*

Viviana Mellone - wondered how one could model these processes other than in terms of diffusion: in the case of the Neapolitan revolution of the 1790s, diffusion from France. *It was argued that, even granted the importance of French influence (which was in no way denied), yet people elsewhere did not simply replicate French ideas and practices. They adapted them to their own circumstances and needs. This was why notions of diffusion only got one so far. In the case of Naples, local traditions also shaped thought and behaviour, and Spain was another source of influence.*

Gian Luca Fruci observed that it would be challenging to imaginatively shift the French revolution from the central place it traditionally occupied in Italian historiography – but

trying to do this might be stimulating and yield new insights. Not all new practices started first in France: the plebiscite provided a counter-example.

SECOND SESSION: LANGUAGE

Joanna Innes threw out a series of questions, to stimulate discussion.

- What place had an antithesis between aristocracy and democracy in eighteenth-century Italian discourse? Sismondi classified republics as tending one way or the other (preferring more aristocratic forms of republic). Did this antithesis (as seemed likely) provide a standard basis for analysis earlier? In what contexts and to what effects was it deployed – did patterns of use vary from state to state?
- At least during the Neapolitan enlightenment, there seemed to be a distinctive ardour for the project of democratisation, perhaps more frequently characterised in those terms than in France itself. Was this so, and if so, why was it? The American historian of the 'age of democratic revolutions', RR Palmer, suggested that Italian tradition robbed the idea of the 'republic' of some of the subversive charge it had in France, making democracy a more attractive term to conjure with. Was there anything in this? Was it a question of timing – was the language of democracy in fact more current under the Directory than in the early years of the revolution, such that Naples got swept up into the revolutionary flood at a moment when talk of democracy was particularly prevalent?
- What forms of anti-democratic discourse were there, and what new forms were they given in the early nineteenth century? Both Balbo (as characterised by Maurizio) and Sismondi (as characterised by Nadia Urbinati) defined political practices which they recommended *against* democracy; both indeed (employing the antithesis mentioned above) advocated the development instead of aristocratic forms. In castigating democracy, it seems that they made much of classically derived tropes, associating it with mob tyranny, and seeing it as in effect anti-modern. Were such forms of discourse widespread? And what if any forms of response were developed to defend democracy against this denigration? Were positive accounts offered of democracy's past? Of its future? Of both?
- What politics or political practices was 'democracy' taken to entail, either by its critics or by its early post-revolutionary advocates, if there were any? (In this context, we need to set aside the practice, embedded in both Italophone and Anglophone historiography, of using 'democrat' to constrast with liberals or moderates, without reference to people's self-descriptions or chosen forms of expression). How was 'democracy' seen to relate to 'the sovereignty of the people'? Did it strongly connote equality? Was it associated with voting – and if it was, with what forms of voting was it associated? Indirect or direct – did this matter? Could voting arrangements be called democratic even if there was some form of property or other discriminatory qualification?
- It seems that, across Europe, 'democracy' emerged in the 1840s as a common slogan for left-liberals. Was it that context that the term came into more general use in Italy – was it an international language first, only subsequently extensively applied to local concerns? It's not clearly established that Mazzini talked about democracy much before 1848, though he then came to champion the development of an international democratic movement. How did the development of an international democratic ideology interact with existing local discourses?

- How widely was the term used in 1848? Did it enter popular discourse? Did wider use encourage clarification or blurring of its meaning? At the foundation of the French second republic, the proposal that this should be a democratic was relatively uncontroversial (though deputies at the Constitutional Convention agreed not to discuss exactly what they understood by the term). Much more explosive was the proposal that the republic should be democratic *and social*. Was social democracy an important concept in Italian discourse at this time?
- How far was 'democracy' part of the vocabulary of the Risorgimento? If it was, who used it positively and who negatively, in what contexts? Did people see it as provocative and try to avoid using it, in order not to hinder the construction of broad alliances? Was Mazzini, who had associated himself with the cause of democracy, attacked as a democrat – and if so, what was this taken to mean?

Michele Battini – thought there was indeed a danger of anachronism. This language entered the historiography after the Second World War. It was used to classify people without paying attention to the identities they ascribed to themselves: in an etic rather than emic fashion. Historians are often guilty of anachronism: thus C20 Gramsci injected the peasant question into the Risorgimento when it didn't really belong there. He thinks understandings of democracy changed in France before 1848: Cabet, Leroux etc associated democracy with the social question. Linkages made between democracy and fraternity or brotherhood both facilitated and were reinforced by this linkage. There exists currently a network of historians, based at Grenoble and two other universities (in Germany and Italy) working on the political language of fraternity. [See http://www.ihmc.ens.fr/Fraternite-et-volontariat.html]; also Gilles Bertrand, Catherine Brice and Gilles Montegre, *Fraternité: pour une histoire du concept* (Grenoble, 2012)] He's not sure if this meaning was already present in the 1790s. It was in the French 1848 constitution that fraternity was first inscribed.

Paolo Benvenuto: is interested in the question when did 'democracy' acquire social connotations. He thinks that events during 1848 are important to understanding the change of definition. Thought that the [French?] constituent assembly provided the context in which democrats first defined themselves as such, meaning to identify themselves with the revolutionary convention. He thought it worth asking how Italian exiles in Paris understood the French revolution of 1848; also how their understandings were affected by the French deformation of democracy into Caesarism. Some of them returned to Italy in 1859 to fight.

Anna Maria Rao – Mario Marize [?]wrote a valuable doctoral thesis, in Naples, on French revolutionary-era catechisms. His work would make it possible to compare the use of 'democracy'-related words in these texts. She thinks that, after the trienio, references were mainly negative. In the Napoleonic era, 'constitution' emerged as a key term of reference. When surviving patriots from 1789 talked about the French Revolution during the 1830s, they tended to insist that they had wanted only to limit the monarchy, not to overthrow it.

Roberto Balzani – during the Roman Republic of 1848, a key moment came in the debate on republican forms: was it best to follow the ancient model of consuls, or like the French to have an elected president? As in France, distinctions were made in debate between *democratie pure* and *impure*. Reality changes words: developments in early 1849 changed ideas about democracy. Another illuminating source might be Mazzini's imaginary geography: what did he imagine to be the state of democracy in different parts of Europe? His ideas tended to change as he became more familiar with circumstances in particular places.

At one point he was very enthusiastic about Hungary, and sceptical about Russia, but when in London he got to know Slav exiles, he preferred them.

Marcella Aglietti – she wanted to respond first to the question about 'aristocracy'. During the eighteenth century, something very interesting happened in Tuscany. Traditionally nobility, as powerholders, were understood to constitute citizens. But when the Habsburgs replaced the Medici, they brought with them rather different ideas about power: they thought of it as entirely centred in the prince. Nobility came to connote people honoured by the prince. Citizenship meanwhile acquired a fiscal meaning: it came to connote those subject to the power of the prince. There was an interesting debate about this, in which 'aristocracy' was a key term at issue.

Marco Manfredi – important context was provided by the rise of the international book market, with centres in Paris and London. Books produced in this context helped to raise Italian consciousness of the Mediterranean question. The publisher he has studied, Vissieux, brought out – it was probably the first title he published – a book entitled *Les Barbaresques et les Chrétiens,* which he got it from a friend, Jena Emile Humbert, a Dutchman working in Tunis for the Bey; Vissieux translated it into Italian. This explored problems arising in the European Mediterranean.

Eduardo – picking up on the theme of pure and impure democracy, noted that in Colombia, 'pure democracy' was used to mean representative, not direct democracy.

Viviana Mellone – on usage in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in 1848: the term was used only among the reforming elite and middle classes. She thought that the term 'constitution' was in much wider circulation. In the Roman republic, the lower classes came to see the establishment of a constitution as a means to improve their social and economic condition. Newspapers in Naples didn't talk about democrats but about *exaltati*.

Paolo Benvenuto - literary sources would also be worth investigating, eg Italian historical romances. Thought that on the whole in Italian publications democracy had negative connotations, and was associated with direct democracy.

Luca di Mauro – picking up on the suggestion that people might have avoided talking about democracy because the word could be divisive: in Naples, he thought that it largely disappeared from public discourse after 1848, though not from private discourse. Middle-class propagandists and the Church represented democracy as dangerous, but the term retained currency in the secret-society milieu.

LUNCH

Some lunchtime conversations:

Paolo said that French exiles in Paris were often pro-Napoleon III, partly because of his position on the Italian question.

Viviana noted the continuing role of secret societies in the Italian south. They provided a non-Mazzinian context for talking about democracy.

Marcella – mentioned a research project based in Nice on the consular system and citizenship. Changes of thought meant that the French consul came to be seen as a

representative of the state, not of the French 'nation' in the older understanding of that term, a change with implications for understanding of the 'nation' across the Mediterranean.

AFTERNOON

THIRD SESSION: PRACTICE

Mark Philp had a few comments relating to the last session. He said that words didn't just have meanings, they were also used to do things. A word might be a 'fighting word', used to challenge or defy, with little specific content. Or the same word might be used to do different things in different contexts: support theoretical discussion in one context, be a fighting word in another. As to novels as sources, in Britain, democracy is discussed in novels of the 1790s, but during mid C19, Dickens made no use of the term.

Introducing the next session, he identified some topics worthy of exploration:

- Citizenship. How this was constructed in practice was an important question to think about. When criteria were defined, there remained the problem of operationalising these criteria: determining whether people fit them. What did citizenship entail in terms of constructing people as having rights or responsibilities?
- Political implications of military service: did this give people a sense of entitlement?
- How did forms of political organisation change during this period? Was there a shift from less to more organised forms of popular political manifestation?
- Did political institutions come to be seen to need legitimating in new ways?
- How helpful is the existing historiography in relation to these topics? What does it not illuminate that one might want to know about?

The discussion that followed repeatedly dropped and then returned to certain topics. I have reordered so as to bring exchanges about related topics together.

Forms of protest

Viviana Mellone – 1848-9 marked an important transition in terms of the shift from disorderly protest to demonstration. After the French constitution was abrogated in 1849, conflict in the Two Sicilies radicalised. Moderate newspapers then began to apply the term *demonstrazione* to include both popular charivaris and more formal organised protests, aiming in this way to discredit peaceful democratic tactics.
Maurizio – asked about 1820-1: were there no formal, peaceful forms of political action developed then?
Viviana – there was a parade to express joy at the establishment of a constitution

Gianluca Fruci – demonstrations may set off insurrections. He thinks the early C19 sees constant mixing in terms of different ways of expressing the voice of the people. *In response to a question*: wasn't sure when barricades were first used, though they were a means of expressing popular sovereignty.

Petitioning

Mark Philp – was petitioning a longstanding practice?
Gianluca – doesn't think it was an Italian form.

Maurizio – noted that a letter from an exile in London in the 1820s described a petitioning meeting, as something he expected his reader not to be familiar with.

Joanna Innes asked if there was interest in Daniel O'Connell's petition-led Catholic emancipation campaign: was that reported and noted? *No-one seemed to know.*

Later **Joanna** observed that as she understood it, petitioning did play a part in events in Naples in 1820

Luca di Mauro – true, but he thought that petitioning as a demonstrative, public practice was a novelty in 1848. Previously petitions had been sent to the King, but more privately

Joanna asked how the practice of public petitioning got started?

Luca local sections of the Carboneria encouraged the sending of petitions by local communities, eg there was one from Salerno. He wasn't sure if the practice continued once the Salerno *venditi* was suppressed.

He noted that in Naples in 1820 there was in general a rise in publications, as part of an attempt to create a form of public life.

Roberto Balzani - suggested that the revolutions of 1830-1 were important. There was a petition from the great powers to the Pope, the so-called *Memorandum*, asking for reform, which local patriots may have imitated when they submitted their own petitions for reform.

Maurizio observed that the movement started among Italians in the papal states; they sent a copy of their petition to Italian exiles in London, who presented it to Lord Holland. Liberal Catholics distinguished between the form (seen as radical) and the content (seen as proper).

Luca di Mauro – in 1799 patriotic societies in Naples issued petitions, but these were not recognised.

Anna Maria – during the trienio, public collective petitions were forbidden

Luca – there was an ancient regime practice of supplication. People approached the king humbly and expressing distress. These were collective petitions. They were presented by procurators/lawyers.

Gianluca – before the Risorgimento, petitions were the work of notaries

Banquets:

Mark Philp – was there any tradition of holding dinners for political ends?

Roberto Balzani – after 1789, there was such a tradition in Italy, with an emphasis on equality. Prizes might be presented. They were not common in Risorgimento Italy, but there were some.

Maurizio - there were banquets to honour Cobden.

Roberto but that is something different from popular banquets.

In Liberal Italy, banquets were held in connection with elections.

Associational forms:

Eduardo wanted to know whether there were clubs called democratic clubs.

Anna Maria Rao – the usual term was *sociétés populaires* or *constitutionales.*

Mark Philp asked if associations had 'constitutions' – eg, did the National Society have a constitution, and if so along what lines?

Maurizio the word used in this context would be *statuto* or *carta.* He asked what the founding text of *Giovene Italia* was called.

Roberto Balzani – this was both a prescriptive and an educational text. It provided that you had to be under 40 to join (that is, born after 1789). The key idea was 'publicita', that is, political communication. Mazzini was not at that time talking about democracy, but about '*gouvernement sociale'*. It was only after his exile in London in 1837 that he started talking about democracy.

Luca di Mauro – Young Italy introduced a revolutionary change. In the case of secret societies, regulations were addressed only to initiates, often being chiefly concerned to inform them about the mythical origins of the society. Aims were only very vaguely described, in moral terms: liberty, equality. Punishments for those who broke secrecy were specified. Sometimes they described quite complex organisational structures. By contrast, the regulations of Young Italy were intended to circulate publicly; anyone might choose to join.

Later **Marco Manfredi** remarked that there is no book about popular circles in 1848, comparable to Agulhon's study for France.

Later **Maurizio** asked what was involved in the transformation of Carboneria into Young Italy? How did secret societies develop in the 1820s when they moved more into the open?

Luca there was no unitary carbonarism. It was in effect a model of politicisation. Many different men used the label to frame their diverse political positions. In 1820-1, by no means all became legal, or supported the constitutional government. Some survived into the 1830s. Mazzini developed his own critique of them.

Local government

Joanna asked what forms of local self-government were introduced under Napoleon, and to what extent they survived into the Restoration era and beyond. That was another level at which concepts of citizenship could have meaning.

Roberto Balzani – in the Papal States, departmentalisation was associated with the creation of new forms, more territorial and less city-centred, stimulating battles over who controlled what. After the Restoration, there was a reversion to older forms, but meanwhile a new class of notables had been defined. Consalvi's reorganisation of local government attempted to respond to these changes. Another new development was the development of corporate organisation and spirit among doctors and engineers, as public employees.

In relation to military service

Joanna Innes took it that conscription existed under Napoleon, but what about after that?

Paolo Benvenuto there was a move to reintroduce it in Tuscany after 1848.

Roberto Balzani *returned to this theme later* – questions about the army have not been much researched. It's necessary to separate the national guard from other, more voluntaristic forms of armed force. Practices differed from state to state. In Piedmont, there was a form of conscription. Also in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies there was a conscripted force complementing the main force. But conscription was most extensively practiced under Napoleon.

Maurizio – did Restoration regimes drop conscription because it was unpopular?

Paolo – conscription was also used by monarchists against revolution, for example in Tuscany, also during the 1840s.

Religion:

Eduardo asked what place should be given to churches and religion in this discussion?
Maurizio a new Risorgimento historiography explores the different ways in which religion was conceived in relation to politics. Mazzini was only the most famous person trying to reclaim religion in relation to democracy. The Risorgimento was not a secular movement. Religious tropes pervaded its political language.
Viviana observed that Eugenio Biagini had shown that there was also a Protestant strand in the Risorgimento

Roberto Balzani - after the Napoleonic period, notaries were pushed outside political structures. In this context, they formed their own networks, with such names as *La Turba Liberale* and *Il figli liberali* – these were two societies which included artisans among their members. They challenged the power of the Church. In 1825, the Pope suppressed such organisations, and therefore politicised them.

Maurizio - the clergy were sometimes involved in revolutions
Marco Manfredi – until 1848; not after

FOURTH SESSION: THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION AS CONTEXT

Maurizio Isabella introduced discussion: in this session the object would be to explore what might be gained from setting Italy in a Mediterranean context: in terms either of comparisons, or considering circulations

Anna Maria Rao noted that Matteo Galdi in *Dei rapporti politico-economici fra le nazioni libere* (c1797) proposed a Mediterranean people's alliance – of Spaniards, French, Italians and Ottomans. The object would be to share the Mediterranean and North Africa. [It's available on-line in *Making of the Modern World*, and note he refers numerous times to democ*] His work was translated into French. She wondered whether such ideas circulated. The theme was taken up by the Fascists – but Galdi's project was built around the idea of 'civilization'.

Paolo Benvenuto, mentioned an 1850s project, developed in France, as a counter to the plans of Mazzini's London committe. This was to be a Franco-Iberian-Italian union, a Mediterranean Zollverein. The idea was taken forward by Lamennais and the Muratist movement. The idea continued after 1851, under Napoleon III, and was expressed in various publications. The hope was that there might be a federation of European republics

Roberto Balzani – noted that the Ionian islands had a complex history in the period, passing through Venetian, French and English hands. Ugo Foscolo came from this region

Mark asked about the effect of the Napoleonic system on commercial relations

Maurizio said that Murat's ambition was precisely to escape these constraints

Marcella Aglietti – Livorno, or Leghorn, was the principal base for the British 'nation', site of the 'British factory', in effect a political body. Their presence encouraged freemasonry. There was also an Anglican community

Joanna asked what work had been done on the broader international impact of the Risorgimento
Maurizio said not much, although there was some work by pupils of Gilles Pecout, like Simon Sarlin, Gregoire Bron, Anne-Claire Ignace.
Michele Battini – Antonis Liakos has written about the influence of the first phase of the Italian Risorgimento on Greek patriots.
He also suggested that it had a significant impact on the Balkans in later C19

In relation to the larger issue of the Mediterranean dimension, he noted that there were many transnational intellectual networks, eg those associated with Buonarroti. If we start with a group and then follow them through, we can identify many different geographies.

Joanna asked about the role of universities.
Michele – in Pisa there were Greeks, Maltese, Corsicans, some Catalans and Spanish
Marco Manfredi – there were also Greek students in Pavia, and in Padua, and indeed other universities

He also noted that Russian activities and plans in the Mediterranean were heavily reported in Italian newspapers, especially in Vieusseux' *Antologia*, and viewed with alarm: they were seen to represent the antithesis of civilisation and of democracy

FINAL SESSION – GENERAL DISCUSSION

Paul Blokker made some initial remarks about his view of the proceedings, as a political scientist. He has been working on the theme of 'multiple democracies' in the modern period. He thought that the project promised to provide interesting background. Political scientists don't reflect enough on the different meanings 'democracy' may bear.
Within civilisational theory, Eisenstadt had promulgate the notion of 'multiple modernities'. In that framework, it is possible also to conceptualise multiple democracies – but still too often the alternatives are conceptualised in binary terms: western/other (esp Islamic) democracy.
One way of conceptualising the alternatives is to rank them along a scale from more universalistic to more particularistic [though it's not clear that there are clear distinctions along this axis in the period of the project]
He also invoked the idea of an 'imaginary' (associated with Castoriadis).
It might be interesting to reflect on the different ethics implicit in different versions of democracy.
One might look for cross-contextual overlaps as well as differences.
He also invoked systems theory and historical functionalism, associated with Niklas Luhmann. [Or see Chris Thompson, who builds on Luhmann's work eg 'Towards a historical sociology of constitutional legitimacy', *Theory and Society* 2008]
He thinks that it's helpful to think about democracy as offering answers to some particular set of questions. These questions might focus on legitimacy; social inclusion; or differentiation (eg between the state and the church)

Joanna said that she had also been thinking recently about democracy's functions in an international as opposed to a national setting: about its uses in the construction of eg a legitimate international order

Marcella Aglietti worried about that the Mediterranean is an underspecified concept. How Mediterranean was Spain?

Maurizio responded that he thought it better not to try to reify it: the intention was not to identify some distinctive Mediterranean culture, but rather to see what could be learnt by taking a fuzzily defined region as a framework for enquiry. That some places within this space were oriented as much outside it as inside it was something whose implications needed to be considered and incorporated, but the fact that the framework did not answer all purposes did not mean that it had no utility.

Joanna added that the object was as much to contrast as to identify similarities between experiences within the region

Paolo Benvenuto thought that something might emerge from considering different generations as working with different sets of ideas

Roberto Balzani thought that it was hard to say anything very precise about democratic discourse unless attention was anchored on a particular context: eg armies, towns

NEXT STEPS

Eduardo reiterated that, following a series of exploratory meetings in the current year, during the next two years, somewhat more formal meetings would be held in the same sites: Pisa, Athens, Madrid and Lisbon; there would also be meetings in Paris and at the end of the year in Oxford. In the first four meetings, the object would be to extend further enquiries into national experiences (though with an eye to broader contexts). Further meetings in the third year would probably be more thematic in focus. During the second and third year, some funding would be available to move certain participants around from place to place, to encourage cross-fertilisation between discussions.

A collection of essays would emerge from the project, and there might well also be other, spin-off publications, more local or thematic in focus.

Joanna noted that she had established a space within the academic-networking website www.academia.edu : this space was in academia.edu's terms a 'research interest' with the name 'Re-imagining Democracy 18th-19th centuries'. Anyone who registered with academia.edu could choose to 'follow' this research interest, and could tag appropriate pieces of their own work (and when copyright rules allowed, upload copies): the effect of that was that the existence of these pieces of work, and perhaps also their content, would be reported or made available to all project members who had chosen to 'follow' the theme. She invited anyone already registered with academia.edu to 'follow' this research interest, and to publicise their own work to others interested in the project by tagging it accordingly. Others might wish to register and do likewise. She hoped before too long to circulate more detailed instructions that would assist those not already familiar with the operations of this website.