



COMB-Commission 'MEDITERRANEAN BASIN'
COMB- Commission 'BASSIN DE LA MÉDITERRANÉE'

Prepared by Maria Paradiso, COMB Chair

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Commission Mediterranean Basin, the first IGU Commission with a regional focus, has been extremely flourishing since its inception in IGU Cologne 2012, despite many challenges which a peculiar Commission like COMB has to face with.

Firstly, it should be noted that its membership stems in a significant amount from developing countries which face severe financial constraints.

Secondly It should be reminded that our inception occurred in post 2011 so called Arab Spring transition. We continue to be affected by regional instability which causes even more challenges for organising and participating in COMB and IGU at a large events.

Thirdly, by its same regional nature, vis à vis other Commissions, our regional coverage scientifically, culturally, politically is a mosaic of different cultural-scientific worlds characterized by *at least* three languages English, French, Arab and at least two ideas of society (secular and religious codes inspired societies) which altogether eventually shape approach to science, mindset and career developments.

We are committed to cope with cultural dialogues among these 'scientific zones' and find solutions to harmonize national systems and international scientific requirements. It should be stressed that some emerging issues in human geography may be considered taboo in some countries and cannot be practised.

Last but not least, everybody should be reminded that in some case/country Colleagues cannot provide full visibility to their presence in endeavours with Colleagues from countries which are considered hostile or enemies.

Therefore, probably, compared to other more 'classic' Commissions we have to cope sometimes with some issues to ensure safety to Colleagues. Colleagues also need special closeness and encouragement!

Par example we developed internal communications via mail or socials like whatup for communications and exchanges and skype meetings more than open public website. Recently, political elections in some countries restricted Colleagues' communications behaviours.

We would like to drive the EC attention that recently in some countries blockages to socials or internet phone communications like Skype or whatup have been imposed by some governments. Recently, some European Universities and authorities warned Colleagues to participate to Conferences in some countries. Geopolitics obviously affects us more than other Commissions.

Despite all, as COMB Charter spells out, we have been always highly committed and successful in joining forces, make develop and reinforce ties and common endeavours among geographers accross shores.

We prove to be highly successful in many regards. One of the evidence of these achievements is that many Geographical Societies in the Arab world or non European one ask COMB Chair to circulate information, join forces to prepare events and foster geography internationalisation in some countries.

We were the first Commission since Cologne to initiate systematically proposals of joint sessions with other Commissions when it was not customary at all. Now it became a regular routine for several Commissions.

Since COMB inception we adopted via mailing list a almost weekly basis information and sharing of scientific news (conferences, posts, calls for publications) that built a high trust. Thanks to Chair and Steering activism, words-mouth about supportive and open communcations raised membership in 4 years to ca 200 members from all shores but also continental Europe, United States, Canada, China, Japan, Australia. Only a part can participate to events for both language skills in oral presentations and lack of funds.

We are particularly inclined to mentor and enhance young scholars' development. Therefore for an effective training, for getting fresh ideas and additional dynamism, for building the future, COMB proposed Steering Committee 2016-2020 integrates de facto 3 Young Scholars (34 and 36 aged people) as effective Steering Committee one from North Africa one from Middle East one from Serbia.

We try hard to enable women scholars participation and be sensitive to gender issues. Recently COMB Chair is advising and supporting the Palestinian Geographical Society Journal to review the International Advisory Board with female scholars and enlarging beyond Arab speaking countries Colleagues.

As EC acknowledged in Kyoto Meeting with Commissions, COMB has been the first Commission to propose a project to European Research Framework and win a grant: FP7 Marie Curie IRSES 'MEDCHANGe-EuroMediterranean Changing Relationships' 2013-2017, Coordinator Maria Paradiso.

COMB Chair tried again with Colleagues peer competitions for funded project:

- 1) a bid in the frame of EU funded H2020 'Mediterranean' Calls, 2) a UNESCO cultural diversity funding, and 3) in cooperation with Queen Mary University and Barcelona UN University the British Fund Emergency Research Call on Mediterranean Migration Crisis; we got high scores but no funds.

COMB Chair promoted and we published two edited books beyond other ones and up to day a rich reference list can be displayed; actually it under-represents our publication achievements since we provide evidence of publication on the basis of what Colleagues sent to Chair.

1. Membership

COMB Steering Committee 2012-2016:

Maria Paradiso, **Chair**, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy (paradiso@unisannio.it). Mobile: +39-3277856516

Ali Toumi, University of Tunis, **Executive Secretary** (alitoumi2003@yahoo.fr)

- *Fathy Abo Ayana*, University of Alexandria, Egypt (aboyana@yahoo.com)
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- *Izhak Schnell*, University of Tel Aviv (schnell@post.tau.ac.il)
- *Theano S. Terkenli*, University of the Aegean, (t.terkenli@aegean.gr)
- *Barney Warf*, University of Kansas, (bwarf@ku.edu)

A. Corresponding members:

The total number of corresponding members is: **200 ca. A good amount comes from developing countries.**

Members come from: Algeria, Australia, China, Croatia, Egypt, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, UK, and US.

The majority of Colleagues from MENA countries use yahoo or gmail accounts; some of them are based in France; some colleagues may use a yahoo.fr but they work and live in North Africa.

COMB corresponding members' addresses:

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- B. The current accurate URL of the commission's web site. We started under google+ and Google site (IGUCOMB). However some Colleagues from some countries prefer getting info on mails and not having full visibility of joint actions with Colleagues from other countries which are normally displayed on a website. We moved in smaller groups on What's up and G+.

2. Meetings

COMB since IGU Cologne (as Mediterranean Renaissance Program) has held sessions in all IGU Conferences: Cologne, Kyoto, Kracow, Moscow. It is going to held sessions in IGU 2016 Beijing too.

In June 2016 COMB Annual Conference takes place in Turkey, Antalya in cooperation with Turkish Geographical Society.

We have at least once a year a business meeting.

We have an average participation to each session of 15-20 people.

IGU Cologne 2012 as IGU Program : Mediterranean Renaissance Program

Session: Towards a democratic Maghreb-Mashrek? / Vers un Maghreb-Mashreq démocratique?

Chair(s): Maria

Paradiso,

Ali

Toumi

Session: Recent developments of geography of energy
Chair(s): Maria Paradiso & Stan Brunn

Joint session were co-organised with Commissions:

C08.14 Geography of the Global Information Society entitled : **Mediterranean Information Society**

Chair(s): Maria Paradiso, Mark Wilson

with Commission Climate CO4: Climatology: "**Climate change in the areas with Mediterranean climate: characteristics, mitigation and adaptation**". Chair: Annick Douguédroit.

COMB in **AAG-Association of American Geographers, NYC February 2012** arranged joint with-IGU Commission Geography of Global Information Society. Session 'Media and social justice in Mediterranean Democratic Movements' (Chair M. Paradiso).

COMB for IGU Kyoto 2013

Two own COMB calls for papers were approved by KRC (changing settlements in the Mediterranean and the Gulf : critical views and implications) and in addition **3 joint sessions** with other Commissions, respectively:

Information Society **Traditional wisdom and modernity: ICT and intangible culture** (Chair M. Paradiso),

Local Development, **Local and regional development in the Mediterranean basin** (Chairs M. Paradiso, M. Sofer)

Full details are visible on:

http://oguchaylab.csis.u-tokyo.ac.jp/IGU2013/session_proposals.html

[IGU Kyoto August 2013: COMB own sessions and joint ones](#)

COMB in: [EUGEO ROME September 2013](#): IGU COMB session '**New spatialities: Europe and its neighbouring regions**' (2 slots) were arranged and chaired by Maria Paradiso (Unisannio, Italy) and Sebastian Lenz (Leipzig Leibniz Institute of Geography, Germany)

Session code: S22 |

COMB in IGU Kracow 2014

Kracow IGU Conference August 2014 own calls:

'Mediterranean changes and challenges' I and II (Chair M. Paradiso)

The Adriatic-Ionian sea: challenges in planning the future (Chair A. Gosar)

Ethnic minorities, structures of mobility in a global reality. In cooperation with EUFP7 MC IRSES 'MEDCHANGe' 612639 (Chairs M Paradiso, I Schnell)

Middle East and North African Cities in turmoil (Roman Stadnicki, Maria Paradiso) (not enough papers submissions for financial constraints, Colleagues could not afford participations costs).

Climate change and its impacts on lives and activities in the Mediterranean Basin I and II (chairs: Annick Douguédroit H. Ben Boubaker)

and jointly ones were proposed with

C12.10 Gender and Geography and C12.30 Mediterranean Basin **Gendered Perspectives on Mediterranean Mobilities and Migration: Inclusions, Exclusions and Integration** (organisers Shirlena Huang, Maria Paradiso). No enough submissions.

C12.17 Global Change and Human Mobility C12.30 Mediterranean Basin **New trends of human mobility in the Mediterranean basin: towards a new migratory model** (Josefina Domínguez Mujica Maria Paradiso)

Geography of the Global Information Society / C12.30 Mediterranean Basin - **Mediterranean Internet**

C12.30 Mediterranean Basin / C12.39 Urban Commission: Urban Challenges in a Complex World - **Urban Challenges for Mediterranean and Gulf Cities** (Chairs M Paradiso MJ Pineira)

C12.28. Local and Regional Development And C12.30 Mediterranean Basin Regional and Local Development: **Mediterranean local and regional development** (Chairs Maria Paradiso, Michael Sofer)

Comb participates in [Mega Events thematic sessions](#) .

COMB in IGU 2015 Moscow

http://www.igu2015.ru/sites/default/files/public/session_list_le_27feb2015.pdf

C12.30 Mediterranean Basin **Humanity and Human Activities Under Changing Climatic Conditions in the Mediterranean** (organisers and chairs: Maria Paradiso, Barbaros Gonencgil)

C12.30 Mediterranean Basin IN COOPERATION WITH 7FP Marie Curies IRSES MEDCHANGe **Ethnicities, mobilities, changing relationships in the Mediterranean in a global reality** (organisers and chairs: Maria Paradiso, Izhak Schnell schnell@post.tau.ac.il)

61. C12.30 Mediterranean Basin IN COOPERATION WITH 7FP Marie **Regionalisation concepts and practices in 'inner seas' as mobile global realities** (Maria Paradiso, Alun Jones)

C12.14: Commission on Global Information Society AND C12.30: Commission on the Mediterranean Basin **ICT, Social Networks and Activism in the Mediterranean** (Maria Paradiso, Mark Wilson)

9. C12.14: Commission on Global Information Society AND C12.15 Geography of Tourism, Leisure, and Global Change AND C12.30: Commission on the Mediterranean Basin AND C12.39 Urban Commission: Urban Challenges in a Complex World **Mega Events: The Role of Spectacle in Urban Development** (Chair: Mark Wilson)

C12.17 Global Change and Human Mobility (Globility) **New trends of the human mobility in the Mediterranean basin: towards a new migratory model?** (Organisers and Chairs: Josefina Domínguez-Mujica josefina.dominguezmujica@ulpgc.es Maria Paradiso paradiso@unisannio.it)
C12.30 Mediterranean Basin IN COOPERATION WITH WITH 7FP Marie Curie IRSES MEDCHANGE 612639.

C12.30 Mediterranean Basin AND 48 C12.35 Sustainability of Rural Systems Commission **'Sustainable Food Systems: new trends in the Mediterranean Basin** (organisers and chairs : Ana Firmino, Maria Paradiso).

Thematic, FP7 Projects Conferences and Workshops:

- *Slovenia* 2014. COMB Chair Maria Paradiso in Primorska University per invitation of Professor Milan Bufon, May 2014; Workshops on Mediterranean conceptualization with Slovenian Colleagues and students.
- *Turkey*, 2014 University of Ankara and Istanbul, Geography Symposium, October 2014 Maria Paradiso invited as second keynote in the opening session on Mediterranean new regionalisation concepts and in workshop with Turkish Colleagues; IGU President was the first keynote.
- *Italy* January 2014 FP7 MEDCHANGE Conferences and Workshops: *University of Sannio* Kick off Workshops MEDCHANGE on Early concepts of Mediterranean Mobilities and *EuroMed changing relationships*: speakers Alun Jones, M.Spotorno, M. Alouat, S. Sierra, D. Chinarro, M. Paradiso, L. Fonseca, A. Fernandez, A. Guennous, K. Zahi, M.Elaklaa, I. Schnell.

- *Morocco* FP7 MEDCHANGE May 2014 Project Research Workshops May 2014 Cady Ayyad Marrakesh, May, June, Women migration and return migration : M. Paradiso, K. Zahi, Mohamed Elaklaa, M. Spotorno, L. Fonseca, S.Lamari, S. Ourkhafi, O. Tebbaa, and PHD).
- *Morocco* FP7 February 2015 MEDCHANGE Conferences and Workshops Casablanca University Hassan II Faculty of Economics and law, Ain sbaa : V. Durac, A. Jones, L. Fonseca,, S. Lamari, S. Ourkafi, M.Paradiso, J. Settar) Views on Europe and Mediterranean from Morocco (Convenors: A. Jones. M. Paradiso, S. Lamari) with Master Students active participation.
- *Morocco* FP7 November 2015 MEDCHANGE Workshop in Department of Italian Studies, Sense of belonging to the Mediterranean: viewpoints from Morocco. Convenors: S. Favaro, R. Nassir, M. Paradiso. Keynote: M Paradiso.
- *Turkey*, November 2015 University of Akdeniz, Antalya, Official Opening Conference of New Department of Geography and Mediterranean Studies, workshops with Colleagues, Geography Teachers, a Phd and Master students. Business meeting COMB-Turkish Geographical Society. Lecturing: B Gonencgil, I Bulut, T Denir, M Paradiso.

b. A **brief** summary of the topics addressed at each meeting and the findings or conclusions resulting from the discussions if appropriate.

New ideas and insights identified at each meeting and their immediate and long-term theoretical and practical implications include 1. assessment of so called Arab Spring and possible future implications; 2. issues of conceptuality and imaginations of Mediterranean Region beyond Orientalism and Mediterraneism; 3. new directions for Mediterranean mobilities/migration; the transformations of societies and settlement in light of Gulf States transformations and neo-liberalism approaches; 4. initial impacts of climate changes on societies 5. Ethnic minorities, structures of mobility in a global reality.

The topics of crisis, cooperation, and regional change, changes and challenges are preferably examined from a critical reflexive perspective. The theme includes a broad spectrum of topics and from a variety of perspectives : migration and virtual/corporeal mobilities, spatialities and phantasies of macro-regional structuring; diversity and inclusion, interfaith (included the Muslims one) relations and implications in the 'region'; crisis and impacts at different scales. Unconventional views stemmed from par example the spatialities of affect and emotion and reflections on reconciliatory practices were considered, for instance those originated from the arts, the cyberspace interactions, activism, NGOs.

C. The meetings or other events we plan to hold in 2016 or later years.

- June 2016 *COMB Annual Conference in Antalya* '**Mediterranean Sustainability between climate change and human mobility** (also advertised on IGU website) in cooperation with Turkish Geographical Society. COMB Conference is under high patronage of PAM-Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean. <http://igu-online.org/comb-annual-conference-antalya/> (Chairs Maria Paradiso Barbaros Gonencgil; Steering Annick Douguédroit, Ahmet Taertek, Ihsan Cicek).
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- April 2016 Limassol, Cyprus **1st Euromediterranean Smart Blue City Conference and Exhibition. Smart Urban Development and Blue Growth Opportunities for Cities, Communities and Islands in the Mediterranean Basin** <http://www.smartbluecity.com/> (convenors Anastasia Stratigeia, NTUA Athens, Crysse Lisaded Cyprus University). COMB co-organiser.
- August 2016 IGU Beijing Congress General Call for Abstracts and sessions series: **The Mediterranean Within Global Contexts**. Beijing COMB sessions series is aimed to explore new concepts and practices in regionalization approaches and impacts to 'inner seas' and disentangle some of the key drivers of socio-spatial change. We welcome papers on the Mediterranean and other 'inner seas' (e.g Baltic, Black Sea, Caribbean, East Asia). As Steinberg stated (2009) the construction of the sea as an 'outside' space of mobility is a critical element in modern spatial politics through its intrinsic relations with 'inside' space. 50 This COMB session will explore some of the official and popular movements, flows, implicit and not-so-implicit trends in 'inner seas'. The topics of regionalization, cooperation and regional challenges will be examined from a critical reflexive perspective. The sessions are potentially attractive to a broad spectrum of research topics and from a variety of methodological perspectives: • migration and virtual/corporeal mobilities, • spatialities and phantasies of macro-regional structuring; conflicts and harmony; • diversity and inclusion, interethnic, interfaith (included the Muslims one) relations and their implications in the 'region'; • crisis and impacts at different scales and of various nature (hegemonic, fiscal, climate impacts etc.); • global change in particular climate change and impacts on societies. • wellbeing and prosperity and, simultaneously, locations and dynamics of forced mobilities, environmental degradation, and economic-political ethnical ruptures; refugees camps, mobilities and spatialities • Euromed Changing relationships. • Changing and networked geographies of the Gulf countries. Unconventional views stemming from, for example, the spatialities of affect and emotion and reflections on reconciliatory practices are also invited, for instance: those originating in the arts, cyberspace interactions, activism, NGOs. Of overriding interest is the understanding of regionalisation in a global mobile world in which long distance corporeal and virtual communications may become highly meaningful to peoples' everyday lives; where the notions of borders and closed areas are challenged and 'inner seas' become significant for wellbeing and prosperity and,

simultaneously, as locations of forced mobilities, environmental degradation, and economic-political ethnical ruptures. This call raises the issues of citizenship, problématiques of multiculturalism, diversity, integration, 51 affect, emotion, marginalization, exclusion, hegemonic attempts, solidarity, considered at different geographic scales, national, regional and local and in networks. It specifically raises the question of new regionalisms and concepts of regionalisation. We strongly welcome papers on 'inner seas' from scholars working from various disciplinary perspectives and within and beyond the Mediterranean Basin.

- November 2016 Tunisia, Association of Tunisian Geographers First International Conference "**Environnement Durable, Aménagement et Equité Territoriale**" Hammamet (Tunisie) 3-6 november.

3. Networking and communication

- A. Ways COMB has collaborated with other IGU Commissions and Task Forces in the period 2012-2016.

A rich array of joint sessions initiated by COMB were developed for all IGU Conferences with many Commissions (Gender, Political, Information Society, Climate, Tourism, Cultural Turn, Local Development, Global Mobility, Urban Geography, Rural Sustainability . Comb participates also in Mega Events thematic sessions organized by Prof. M. Wilson in Kyoto, Krakow and Moscow. Kindly see in the above section on meetings.

For IGU COMB Antalya own meeting a special cooperation was agreed with IGU Commission Coastal Management (Françoise Breton leading person for CCM).

- B. Collaboration with other international, intergovernmental, and inter- and multi-disciplinary.

We are proud of two main achievements and cooperation with IYGU:

- international, intergovernmental. COMB has been invited **by PAM-Parliamentary Assembly** to join the Academic Platform as a Scientific Network. We are the only group of Geographers in there. PAM is the advisor political body for the EU gathering together Parliament members from all countries across Mediterranean shores. It gathers all countries across shores. PAM gave high patronage for COMB 2016 Annual Conference in Antalya.

- inter- and multi-disciplinary. **RESEARCH GRANT: European Commission, 7FP Call People Marie Curie IRSES** Research Staff Exchange EuroMediterranean 2013, *MEDCHANGe Project 612639*. Successfully approved, Granted. 48 months Starting month October 2013. Geographers lead in cooperation with International Law, antropologists, economists. Call for participation was circulated in COMB by Maria Paradiso, and with some COMB Colleagues' contributions Maria prepared the draft, submitted to EU and drove negotiations with EU Research Officers.
- inter- and multi-disciplinary With **IYGU** there is an active participation for outreach goals. COMB Chair Maria Paradiso gave an effective cooperation to IYGU Director Professor Werlen and Jena Secretariat to establish RACs in the Mediterranean cities and via COMB Colleagues : Tunis (prof. Habib Ben Boubaker), Athens (Prof. Stratigeia) have started operations, other RACs are on their way.

We have stable cooperation with the following scientific organisations:

- **ICSU** Italy (M. Paradiso on National Board) and Morocco.
- **AIC association Internationale de climatologie** (A. Douguedroit et L. Henia)
- **MEDCLIVAR** (P. Lionello)
- **Academia Europaea London** (Interdisciplinary Academy); Academia Europaea 'Mediterranean Hub in Barcelona (Maria Paradiso).
- inter- and multi-disciplinary Young Academia Europaea Initiative (for the benefit of COMB Young Scholars; for AE Prof. J. Peltzer Heidelberg).
- inter- and multi-disciplinary United Nations University on Mobility and Migration, Barcelona Campus (ref. Director Parvati Nair and COMB Char Maria Paradiso).
- international, intergovernmental Anna Lindh Foundation (Euromediterranean cultural Cooperation for Union for the Mediterranean), COMB is representative in AL via EUROGEO; COMB has partnerships with Eurogeo for representing on behalf of Eurogeo and COMB Mediterranean focus initiatives where laws admit only Europe-based organisation.
- EUGEO (Prof. Kovacs) and EUROGEO, the Association of European Geographers (Prof. Donert)
- international, intergovernmental UN Alliance of Civilisations program focus 'Mediterranean', Label for sponsoring a Conference entitled: 'Migration as mobilities, geographical perspectives from the Mediterranean' has been submitted to the Malta

meeting of Foreign Ministers, UN Alliance of Civilisations. We got the label which we are going to use for future COMB Annual Conference.

- AAG-Association of American Geographers (Europe and Middle East Specialty Group)
- international, intergovernmental the Euro-Med University EMUNI being one of the founding members, Portoroz Slovenia.
- international, intergovernmental the Union for the Mediterranean the EU-Med policy initiative in particular with the Secretariat of Education and Research (Prof. Chet), Secretariat of Social Affairs (Hon. Cecilia Attard).
- the CERES-Centre d'Etudes Sociales-économiques de Tunis.
- ENSB Ecole Supérieure de Bouzereah, Algeria
- National Council of Research Italy
- Israeli Academy of Sciences (geography representative)
- French Association of Geographers (ref. Professor Antoine Le Blanc)
- Catalan Research Institute, Spain (Professors Guerero and Garcia Ramon)
- Tunisian Association of Geographers (Professor Ben Boubaker)
- Turkish Geographical Society and Ankara Research Centre on History, Geography, Language (Professors Taertek, Gonecgil, Cicek)
- Morocco: Rabat Agdal University (Geography Department), Mohamed V ; Marrakesh Cady Ayyad, Hassan II; Fès University.
- Palestinian Geographical Society and Journal (Prof. H. Al Rimmawi).
- EuroMediterranean Cluster on Smart City and Blue Growth (Prof. Stratigeia, Athens Polytechnic)

With Journals:

- Europa Regionale (Leipzig University)

- Insularis Geographia (Palma Mallorca University)
- Miscellanea Geographica (Warsaw Dept of Geography)
- La Méditerranée (Marseille-Aix)
- Documenti Geografici (Italy)
- Euromediterranean International Journal (Portoroz)
- Espace Politique (France, Editor Stéphane Rozière)
- Turkish Geography Review
- Palestinian Geographical Society Journal (COMB members recently joined the international board)

C . Cooperative efforts with ISSC (International Social Science Council) and with ICSU (the International Council for Science) programs

Maria Paradiso presented a paper in **ISSC** Montreal 2013 within the IGU panel 'Geographic and Social Dimension of Digital Age' and collaborated with Mark Wilson and Aharon Kellerman for proposing the panel.

She is member of ICSU Italy Committee since October 2014 and in contact with IGU President and General Secretary for opportune networking in favour of geography visibility and incidence from national basis.

COMB gave an initial contribution to IGU President regarding **Durban ISSC** 2015 sessions organization in cooperation with Professor Etienne Noel.

D. Publications

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Bar-Tal D. Schnell, I. 2013 *The Impact of the Occupation on Israeli Society*, Political Science Association Publisher: Jerusalem, (Hebrew).

P.Giaccaria, M. Paradiso (Eds) *Mediterranean Lexicon*, Italian Geographical Society and National IGU Committee Series, Rome, 2012. Presented during IGU Cologne 2012.

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Rosenberg, A., Schnell, I. 2014 *Mega Projects, As a Reflection of Change in Israeli Society*, Israeli Academic Press.

Schnell, I. Hopp, M. 2012 *Jews' attitudes toward the occupation*, Walter Libach Center, Tel Aviv University: Tel Aviv.

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Stratigea, A. (2015), *Theory and Methods of Participatory Planning*, Greek Academic Electronic Publishing, Athens, ISBN 978-960-603-241-7 (e-book) (in Greek).

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2. Stratigea, A. and Panagiotopoulou, M. (2014), 'Smart' Cities as a New Paradigm for Serving Urban Sustainability Objectives – A View in the Mediterranean Experience, In Korres, G., Kourliouros, Tsobanoglou, G. and Kokkinou, A. (Eds.), *Socio-economic Sustainability, Regional Development and Spatial Planning: European and International Dimensions and Perspectives*, International Conference Proceedings, Department of Geography - University of the Aegean, Department of Sociology - University of the Aegean, International Sociological Association (ISA), July 4th – 7th, Mytilene, Lesvos, pp. 213-220.

3. Stratigea, A., Kikidou, M., Patelida, M. and Somarakis, G. (2015), Participatory Approaches for Planning the Regeneration of Open Public Spaces – The Case of 'PEDIO-AGORA', Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on "Changing Cities II: Spatial, Design, Landscape & Socio-Economic Dimensions", Porto Heli, Peloponnese – Greece, 22-26 June (in electronic form).

4. Athanasopoulos, K. and Stratigea, A. (2015), Public Participation in Decision Making in the New Institutional Framework for Spatial Planning and Environment, Proceedings of the 3rd National

Conference of Urban and Regional Planning and Regional Development, Volos, 24-27 September (in electronic form) (in Greek).

5. Somarakis, G. and Stratigea, A. (2015), Participatory Approaches in Spatial Planning and the Contribution of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs): The Greek Experience, Proceedings of the 3rd National Conference of Urban and Regional Planning and Regional Development, Volos, 24-27 September (in electronic form) (in Greek).
6. Stratigea, A. and Leka, A. (2016), Geography of the Mediterranean Small and Medium-sized Cities: Challenges, Risks and Prospects, 1st Euro-Mediterranean Conference and Exhibition 2016 “Smart Blue City – Smart Urban Development and Blue Growth Opportunities for Cities, Communities and Islands in the Mediterranean Basin”, April 14-16, Limassol, Cyprus.
7. Panagiotopoulou, M., Leka, A. and Stratigea, (2016), Towards a Methodological Approach for Measuring Smart Cities and Communities’ (SCC) Performance, International Conference on “Urban E-Planning: Recent Developments, Emerging Issues and Future Challenges”, International Journal of e-Planning Research and Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning, University of Lisbon, March 31 – April 1, Lisbon, Portugal.

6. Continuation

We wish to continue our work, with same denomination Commission Mediterranean Basin, acronym COMB.

The statement of the mission of the Commission/Task Force is proposed as COMB Charter:

A. COMB Charter

COMB-Commission on Mediterranean Basin emerged from The Mediterranean Renaissance Program (MRP), initiated in 2005 by IGU Past President Adalberto Vallega, as a Special Program. It aims at the promotion and fostering of geographical research on the Mediterranean Region. It aims further at the development of a Mediterranean regional network of geographers.

COMB organises each year sessions for the IGU conferences, and from time to time it has its own meetings.

COMB contributes to international projects devoted to Mediterranean issues, and inner seas thus fostering the role of geographers on subjects such as cultural dialogue, mobility, climatic change and society, security and safety, pollution, green cities, spatial justice, information society, urban and rural environment and systems (livelihoods, food security, water, transports, energy, environment, risk, desertification, climate change fires and vegetation, conservation), urban and

regional planning, governance, coastal management, tourism and leisure areas, tangible and intangible heritage, geoparks, small and medium enterprises and local development, conflict resolution and more.

COMB is member of PAM Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean Academic Platform. EMUNI (European Mediterranean University), centred in Portoroz, Slovenia. It is linked to Academia Europaea Mediterranean Knowledge Hub in Barcelona.

COMB is committed to interact with related organisations such as the UfthM (Union for the Mediterranean) and related bodies, research centres and foundations devoted to Mediterranean studies and cultural dialogue and exchange, directorates of the EC (European Commission), and the UN Alliance of Civilizations.

COMB Chair is Prof. Maria Paradiso (Italy), and its steering committee members, as well as the commission members, come from most of the Mediterranean countries but also from other world regions. Scholars from non-Mediterranean countries interested in the topic are welcome to join (please write to Maria Paradiso: paradiso@unisannio.it).

- B. Our proposed steering committee members includes de facto also Young Scholars and serves in full communication and cooperation with previous Steering members now serving in the Honorary COMB Board.

COMB Steering Committee 2016-2020:

Maria Paradiso, **Chair**, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy (paradiso@unisannio.it). Mobile: +39-3277856516

Vice Chair and Executive Secretary to be discussed in Beijing business meeting.

- *Mohamed Alouat*, ENSB, Algeria (Young Scholar Committee) alouat777@yahoo.fr
- *Fathy Abo Ayana*, University of Alexandria, Egypt (aboyana@yahoo.com)
- *Habib Ben Boubaker*, University of Manouba, Tunisia (hboubaker@yahoo.fr)
- *Lluis Frago*, University Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain (llfrago@ub.edu)
- *Anton Gosar*, University of Koper / Capodistria, Slovenia (anton.gosar@quest.arnes.si)
- *Naji Khedi*, Université Libanaise – Zahlé, Saida, Lebanon (Young Scholars Committee) naji.kehdy@hotmail.com
- *Antoine Le Blanc*, Université Littoral, France (Antoine.Le-Blanc@univ-littoral.fr)
- *Jelena Lukovic*, University of Belgrade, Serbia (jlukovic@gef.bg.ac.rs) (Young Scholar Committee)
- *Izhak Schnell*, University of Tel Aviv, Israel (schnell@post.tau.ac.il)
- *Mehmet Semoncu*, University of Ankara, Turkey (Mehmet.Somuncu@ankara.edu.tr)
- *Anastasia Stratigea*, National Polytechnic of Athens, Greece (stratigea@central.ntua.gr)
- *Barney Warf*, University of Kansas, United States (bwarf@ku.edu)

- **Honorary Board**

- *Antoine Bailly*, University of Geneva (antoine.bailly@unige.ch)
- *Anne Buttimer*, University of Dublin, (anne.buttimer@ucd.ie)
- *Annick Douguédroit*, University of Marseille-Aix en Provence (Annick.Douguedroit@univ-provence.fr)
- *Aharon Kellerman*, University of Haifa, Israel, (akeller@univ.haifa.ac.il)
- *Maria Sala*, University of Barcelona, Spain (sala@trivium.gh.ub.es)

C. Summary of the COMB work plan for the 2016-2020 period.

We refer but we are not limited to the following endeavors.

Future Plans:

- **Publications:**

Douguédroit A. Gonencgil B. Schnell I Paradiso M. (eds.) , Book proposal entitled 'Mediterranean sustainability between climate change and human mobility' (tentative plan)

Katsoni, V. and Stratigea, A. (2016) (Eds.), *Tourism and Culture in the Age of Innovation*, Springer (in press).

James W. Scott, Filippo Celata, Raffaella Coletti (Eds) in Political Geography:
"Between Crises and Borders: Mediterranean Neighbourhood and the Power of Spatial Imaginaries".
Forthcoming.

James W. Scott, Filippo Celata, Raffaella Coletti Eds: Special issue of Journal European Urban and Regional Studies: "Bordering Imaginaries and the Everyday Construction of Mediterranean Neighbourhood". Forthcoming.

Stratigea, A., Kyriakides, E. and Nicolaidis, C. (2016), *Smart Cities in the Mediterranean - Coping with Sustainability Objectives in Small and Medium-sized Cities and Island Communities*, Springer (forthcoming).

Panagiotopoulou, M., Somarakis, G., Vescoukis, V. and Stratigea, A. (2016), Broadening Spatial Planning Perspectives in a Smart City Context: Crowdsourcing Potential, 1st Euro-Mediterranean Conference and Exhibition 2016 "Smart Blue City – Smart Urban Development and Blue Growth Opportunities for Cities, Communities and Islands in the Mediterranean Basin", April 14-16, Limassol, Cyprus.

Panagiotopoulou, M., Leka, A. and Stratigea, A (2016), Climate Change and Sustainable Tourism Accommodation: A Challenge for the Mediterranean Islands, 2016 Annual IGU COMB Conference – “The Mediterranean Sustainability between Climate Change and Human Mobility”, International Geographical Union, Commission on the Mediterranean Basin COMB, June 1-5, Antalya, Turkey.

Stratigea, A. and Katsoni, V. (2016), Developing Evaluation Criteria for Assessing Digital Communication Pattern and Readiness of DMOs – Application in the Greek Context, 1st Euro-Mediterranean Conference and Exhibition 2016 “Smart Blue City – Smart Urban Development and Blue Growth Opportunities for Cities, Communities and Islands in the Mediterranean Basin”, April 14-16, Limassol, Cyprus.

Conference/Sessions Organizations

- **COMB 2016 Annual Conference 1-5 June ‘Mediterranean sustainability between climate change and human mobility’ Antalya Turkey** in cooperation with Turkish Geographical Society, Department of Geography Ankara University; Dept of Geography Istanbul University under the High Patronage of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean – PAM (Malta, La Valletta an EU stemmed body gathering all Parliamentary House Representatives across Mediterranean shores).
- **1st Euro-Mediterranean Conference and Exhibition 2016**, aiming to elaborate on issues related to the “Smart Urban Development and Blue Growth opportunities for cities, communities and islands in the Mediterranean basin”, Limassol, Cyprus, April 14-16, 2016. The Conference is co-organized by: the National Technical University, School of Rural and Surveying Engineering, Dept. of Geography and Regional Planning, Greece; the KIOS Research Center for Intelligent Systems and Networks, University of Cyprus; and the Smart Cities Mediterranean Cluster (SMART-MED) - CNE Business Development Ltd, Cyprus.
- 2016 First International Conference of Tunisian association of Geographers.
- **IGU Beijing C12.30 Mediterranean Basin** General Call: 1 The Mediterranean Within Global Contexts (Maria Paradiso paradiso@unisannio.it) <http://www.igc2016.org/dct/page/70060>

Beijing COMB sessions series is aimed to explore new concepts and practices in regionalization approaches and impacts to ‘inner seas’ and disentangle some of the key drivers of socio-spatial change. We welcome papers on the Mediterranean and other ‘inner seas’ (e.g Baltic, Black Sea, Caribbean, East Asia). As Steinberg stated (2009) the construction of the sea as an ‘outside’ space of mobility is a critical element in modern spatial politics through its intrinsic relations with ‘inside’ space. 50 This COMB session will

explore some of the official and popular movements, flows, implicit and not-so-implicit trends in 'inner seas'. The topics of regionalization, cooperation and regional challenges will be examined from a critical reflexive perspective. The sessions are potentially attractive to a broad spectrum of research topics and from a variety of methodological perspectives: • migration and virtual/corporeal mobilities, • spatialities and phantasies of macro-regional structuring; conflicts and harmony; • diversity and inclusion, interethnic, interfaith (included the Muslims one) relations and their implications in the 'region'; • crisis and impacts at different scales and of various nature (hegemonic, fiscal, climate impacts etc.); • global change in particular climate change and impacts on societies. • wellbeing and prosperity and, simultaneously, locations and dynamics of forced mobilities, environmental degradation, and economic-political ethnical ruptures; refugees camps, mobilities and spatialities • Euromed Changing relationships. • Changing and networked geographies of the Gulf countries. Unconventional views stemming from, for example, the spatialities of affect and emotion and reflections on reconciliatory practices are also invited, for instance: those originating in the arts, cyberspace interactions, activism, NGOs. Of overriding interest is the understanding of regionalisation in a global mobile world in which long distance corporeal and virtual communications may become highly meaningful to peoples' everyday lives; where the notions of borders and closed areas are challenged and 'inner seas' become significant for wellbeing and prosperity and, simultaneously, as locations of forced mobilities, environmental degradation, and economic-political ethnical ruptures. This call raises the issues of citizenship, problématiques of multiculturalism, diversity, integration, 51 affect, emotion, marginalization, exclusion, hegemonic attempts, solidarity, considered at different geographic scales, national, regional and local and in networks. It specifically raises the question of new regionalisms and concepts of regionalisation. We strongly welcome papers on 'inner seas' from scholars working from various disciplinary perspectives and within and beyond the Mediterranean Basin.

- 2017 December, Italy, Rome or Naples MEDCHANGE EuroMediterranean Changing Relationships, International Conference in cooperation FP7 MEDCHANGE and COMB, Project Closing Conference

_ **IGU Thematic Conferences.** COMB is interested to propose sessions in the proposed Baku, **Azerbaijan**, thematic conference on 'Energy and Sustainable Development'.

- Interest is in the meeting in **La Paz, Bolivia** also planned for 2017 (proposed I. Schnell, COMB Steering)
- **IGU 2018 Quebec:** COMB will propose sessions.
- **A SPECIAL interest is in IGU Istanbul 2020** Congress since a Mediterranean country will hold the Congress. We are interested in active cooperation with Istanbul LOC in selecting topic, keynotes with a special relevance for the Region in a Global scenario.

- Cooperation With IGU RACs in Tunisia, Greece.

-EU and international bids for scientific projects: we aimed at getting funds for new projects.

Archival Contribution.

Our Reports are available via IGU coordination. Books can be sent under Authors/Editors availability.

