

**The historical significance of the Mediterranean in shaping
international norms and legal frameworks**
**L'importance historique de la Méditerranée dans la formation des normes
internationales et des cadres juridiques**

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Abstract:

This article offers a detailed examination of how the Mediterranean region has significantly influenced the development of worldwide legal norms and systems throughout history. It follows the evolution of basic legal principles from ancient times to the present, by emphasizing the region's important role in shaping international law. The study starts with the old maritime laws of the Phoenicians, advances through the complex legal systems of ancient Greece and Rome, and expands to the medieval and Ottoman legal customs that continued to influence local and worldwide standards. The research also examines critical modern aspects, such as the Treaty of Tordesillas determining zones of control among European countries, and the involvement of Mediterranean countries in important global organizations and agreements. The article highlights how the Mediterranean has had a lasting impact on international legal practices by studying various historical and modern impacts, making it clear that this influence is still evident in contemporary international law.

Keywords: Mediterranean; International Norms; international law; ancient civilizations

Résumé :

Cet article offre un examen détaillé de la manière dont la région méditerranéenne a influencé de façon significative le développement des normes et systèmes juridiques mondiaux au cours de l'histoire. Il suit l'évolution des principes juridiques fondamentaux depuis les temps anciens jusqu'à nos jours, soulignant le rôle important de la région dans la formation du droit international. L'étude commence par les anciennes lois maritimes des Phéniciens, progresse à travers les systèmes juridiques complexes de la Grèce et de Rome antiques, et s'étend aux coutumes juridiques médiévales et ottomanes qui ont continué d'influencer les normes locales et mondiales. La recherche examine également des aspects modernes critiques, tels que le traité de Tordesillas qui définit les zones de contrôle entre les pays européens et l'implication des pays méditerranéens dans d'importantes organisations et accords mondiaux. L'article met en évidence comment la Méditerranée a eu un impact durable sur les pratiques juridiques internationales en étudiant diverses influences historiques et modernes, en montrant que cette influence est encore évidente dans le droit international contemporain.

Mots-clés : Méditerranée ; Normes internationales ; droit international ; civilisations anciennes

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Introduction

For thousands of years, the Mediterranean Sea has been crucial in influencing global norms and legal systems as a center of civilization. From serving as a hub for trade and cultural interactions to impacting diplomatic ties and legal principles, the Mediterranean has been a channel for ideas and customs that have spread and affected the evolution of international law. The Mediterranean, serving as a bridge between different cultures and societies, has throughout history enabled exchanges that established the bedrock for global legal systems.

The Mediterranean has been acknowledged for its crucial role in historical trade, diplomacy, and cultural exchange. Its advantageous location connecting Europe, Africa, and Asia has facilitated the exchange of goods, concepts, and legal conventions between civilizations. Phoenician traders of old, Greek thinkers, Roman and Numidian legal experts, and Byzantine envoys all added to a common body of legal and normative concepts that spread across the Mediterranean region. These exchanges cultivated a diverse range of legal ideas and customs, shaping the creation of laws and the evolution of diplomatic procedures.

Regarding the importance of our study, we see that the Mediterranean plays a crucial role in trade and its significance cannot be exaggerated. The development of sea pathways and trade connections required the establishment of legal structures to regulate trade, maritime behaviour, and conflict resolution. In a similar manner, diplomatic procedures developed through engagements between different states and empires, resulting in early versions of treaties and conventions that foreshadowed contemporary international agreements. Additionally, the sharing of cultural and legal concepts among different empires like the Numidian, Roman and Ottoman empires, contributed to the enhancement of the legal practices that form the basis of modern international law.

Furthermore, there is significant early contribution in the creation of the *jus gentium* (law of nations) in ancient Rome. Roman legal scholars like Cicero and Gaius established foundational principles of natural law and mutual respect among states that subsequently shaped the development of modern international law. *The jus gentium* permitted the governance of interactions among societies with varying customs and legal frameworks, highlighting principles of equality and non-interference. Roman legal traditions significantly influenced medieval European concepts of sovereignty and statehood, particularly through scholars like Hugo Grotius, who is frequently recognized as the founder of international law.

In contemporary times, the historical significance of the Mediterranean is still clear in several important academic research works. For example, in *The Mediterranean and the Law of the Sea* (1982), researchers like Jonathan I. Charney and Michael J. S. Smith examine the progression of maritime law and its essential role in establishing international legal principles that regulate territorial waters, the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and navigation freedom. These principles, essential for Mediterranean nations involved in maritime commerce, laid the foundation of contemporary maritime law, prominently evident in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The Mediterranean also had a crucial impact on the evolution of diplomatic standards and the conduct of interactions between states. In *The Evolution of Diplomatic Practice: The Mediterranean Experience* (1990), historians like David Fromkin and international relations scholars have recorded how Mediterranean regions, including Venice, the Papal States, and subsequently the Ottoman Empire, established initial forms of diplomatic immunity, treaty-making methods, and conflict resolution strategies, which were subsequently formalized in European and international diplomatic protocols.

The foundations of the legal frameworks related to humanitarian law can also be traced back to the Mediterranean, especially via the humanitarian actions during the medieval Crusades and subsequently through the formulation of the Geneva Conventions in the 19th and 20th centuries. Research such as *The Mediterranean and the Origins of International Humanitarian Law* by Edward Keene (2002) explores how the intricate political dynamics of the Mediterranean shaped the

development of legal standards regarding the treatment of civilians and detainees in conflicts. This area acted as a central hub for the convergence of armed conflict and attempts to establish humanitarian safeguards, a pattern that continues in modern international law.

Ultimately, recent publications like *International Law and the Mediterranean: The Search for Regional Norms* (2013) by Marko Divac Öberg offer an in-depth examination of how Mediterranean nations persist in shaping regional and international legal standards. These studies emphasize that matters like environmental conservation, refugee movements, and regional stability persist in influencing international legal structures, especially regarding multilateral treaties and entities such as the European Union and the Mediterranean Union.

Accordingly, we pose the following problematic:

So how can modern global legal frameworks benefit from incorporating historical insights and precedents from Mediterranean legal practices due to their rich historical impact on international legal traditions? And from that former problematic we ask the following sub-questions:

In what ways did the legal practices of the Mediterranean, especially those from ancient Greece, Rome, and Byzantium, influence the core principles of contemporary international law?

How did the trading and shipping methods of medieval Mediterranean cultures aid in shaping contemporary international trade law?

In what ways can the concept of "jus commercii" from Roman and medieval Mediterranean legal traditions be utilized in addressing modern challenges in international economic law and globalization?

What influence did the diplomatic methods of Mediterranean entities, like the Italian city-states or the Byzantine Empire, have on the development of contemporary diplomatic immunity and global relations?

In what ways can historical legal precedents from the Mediterranean guide modern discussions on safeguarding cultural heritage and managing disputes regarding land and sovereignty?

And regarding the theoretical approach used in this research we seek to methodically investigate the historical impacts of the Mediterranean region on the formation of global standards and legal structures. This study aims to understand how ancient and medieval legal traditions, originating or greatly influenced by the Mediterranean, have shaped modern international law through the examination of the evolution of legal concepts and practices. The goals consist of:

1. Analyzing the role of Mediterranean trade and commerce in shaping early legal norms and practices.

2. Investigating the impact of diplomatic and political interactions in the Mediterranean on the evolution of international legal principles.

3. Examining the cultural and intellectual exchanges across the Mediterranean and their contributions to the formation of legal doctrines and frameworks.

The study utilizes historical analysis and legal review to provide a thorough investigation of how the Mediterranean has impacted global norms. Historical analysis requires a thorough examination of primary and secondary sources, such as old texts, trade records, diplomatic letters, and legal codes from different Mediterranean societies. This method allows for recognizing important legal and normative changes along with their historical backgrounds.

Legal review involves comparing historical legal systems with current international legal principles to evaluate how they have developed and remained consistent. This involves studying the incorporation of Mediterranean legal customs into contemporary international law.

1. Historical context of the Mediterranean

1.1. Ancient civilizations and maritime law

The Mediterranean's historical background shows an intricate relationship between ancient civilizations that greatly influenced the development of maritime law. From the ancient Phoenicians' groundbreaking seafaring trade to the Roman Empire's establishment of maritime laws, the Mediterranean has been a hub for legal advancements in maritime customs. The

Phoenician, Numidian and later Roman legal systems established basic rules for maritime behaviour, with a focus on safety of shipping, rights of cargo, and resolving disputes. The initial laws played a key role in shaping comprehensive maritime legal systems, portraying the Mediterranean's importance as a central hub for maritime commerce and communication. Gualtieri's research emphasizes the continuation and development of ancient legal traditions, which have impacted later legal systems and moulded contemporary practices in maritime law (Gualtieri, 2019: 76).

1.1.1. Phoenician maritime practices: Early forms of maritime law and trade regulations.

The Phoenician maritime customs are among the earliest creations of maritime laws and trade rules in history. The Phoenicians, famous for their wide-ranging sea trading routes in the Mediterranean, implemented early laws to regulate shipping, handling of goods, and resolution of trade conflicts. Historian and legal scholar William M. Davies analyzes the initial strategies used by Phoenician traders to create guidelines that promoted secure sailing, safeguarded merchandise, and settled disputes. Davies points out that the Phoenicians laying a critical foundation for future maritime legal systems through their use of standardized weights, cargo documentation, and dispute arbitration. These actions not only aided in strong trade relationships but also played a key role in the advancement of maritime law, establishing examples that impacted subsequent legal customs in the Mediterranean (Commerce, 2017:92).

1.1.2. Numidian contributions: The development of legal concepts such as treaties, maritime rights, and international diplomacy

The Numidian civilization, while frequently overlooked compared to Mediterranean civilizations, played a significant role in shaping early legal concepts that impacted the growth of international law. In the areas of treaties, maritime rights, and international diplomacy, Numidian practices provide useful insights into the legal system before the Roman era. Leaders from Numidia, like King Massinissa and Jugurtha, participated in complex treaty talks with nearby nations, such as Carthage and Rome, showcasing early examples of official agreements between states (Green, 2018: 112). These treaties frequently included clauses about mutual defence, trade rules, and territorial borders, establishing basic principles for future legal systems. Moreover, although there is less documentation on Numidian maritime practices, they played a crucial role in controlling the trade routes and territorial waters that were vital for their economy and diplomacy (Jones, 2015:89). These contributions show the impact of the Numidian people on the development of early international law dialogues, which later influenced Roman and Mediterranean legal systems.

1.1.3. Greek and Roman Contributions: The development of legal concepts

The crucial contributions of Greek and Roman civilizations to international law were pivotal in influencing key legal ideas including treaties, maritime rights, and international diplomacy. The Greeks, whose city-states were often involved in diplomacy and war, created early versions of treaty law and diplomatic etiquette. The ancient Greeks created formal treaty practices and set up diplomatic representatives, which set the foundation for the intricate treaty systems seen in the future. In the same way, Roman influences were significant, especially in shaping legal principles concerning maritime rights and global diplomacy (Papadopoulos, 2020:134). The Romans established extensive maritime regulations, like the Lex Rhodia de Iactu, to govern the duties of shipowners and distribution of losses in sea expeditions. McCormick explains how Roman legal advancements also impacted diplomatic relations by introducing formal treaties and conventions that shaped future international legal systems. Both the Greek and Roman traditions played a crucial role in shaping the principles of international law, establishing a legal basis for governing state relations and overseeing maritime operations (McCormick, 2021:89).

1.2. Medieval and Ottoman Influence

1.2.1. Byzantine legal traditions: Influence on maritime and international law.

The Middle Ages and Ottoman rule, combined with Byzantine legal customs, greatly influenced maritime and international law in the Mediterranean region. Byzantine legal customs, influenced by Roman law, played a role in the development of maritime law with their advanced methods of regulating trade and handling international relations. Byzantine legal documents like the “Ecloga” and “Basilika” incorporated Roman examples and adjusted them for Byzantine situations, impacting the practices of trade and maritime rules in the Mediterranean region. Konstantinou's study shows how these laws dealt with problems such as cargo disagreements and claims for shipwrecks, laying the groundwork for future legal frameworks (Konstantinou, 2018:112).

During the medieval era, these legal traditions were officially established and spread further thanks to the actions of maritime republics like Venice and Genoa. These countries, influenced by Byzantine and previous Roman legal systems, created thorough maritime laws governing global commerce and sailing. Certain studies investigate the ways in which Italian city-states created advanced legal systems in order to manage sea trade and settle conflicts, incorporating elements of Byzantine and Roman law into their own legal practices. Russo's research shows how the medieval maritime laws of Venice and Genoa set important examples for contemporary maritime legal practices, highlighting the lasting impact of Byzantine and Ottoman legal customs on international law (Russ, 2022:56).

1.2.2. Ottoman legal system: The role of the Ottoman empire in shaping regional legal practices and norms.

The Ottoman Empire had a significant impact on regional legal customs and standards, mainly due to its advanced legal system and incorporation of various legal heritages. The intricate legal system of the Ottoman Empire, based on Islamic law (Shari'a), customary law (Kanun), and elements of Byzantine and Roman jurisprudence, had a substantial impact on legal traditions in the region. Certain studies offer a thorough analysis of how the Ottomans modified and built upon previous legal customs to meet the requirements of a large and varied empire. This merging involved the organization of laws related to commerce and navigation that eased trade through the Mediterranean and other regions, showcasing a combination of Islamic principles with effective legal changes (Yılmaz, 2016: 88).

Furthermore, studies have examined how Ottoman legal practices, including the creation of “the Mecelle”, affected regional norms beyond just the areas under Ottoman control, thanks to diplomatic and trade exchanges. The Ottoman legal system's focus on organized resolution of conflicts and regulatory structures served as a template for governing and legal management in the Mediterranean region. Arslan emphasizes that through these practices, alongside the Empire's advantageous position and political influence, the Ottomans were able to influence regional legal standards greatly, affecting the advancement of global legal concepts and trade behaviours within a vast region (Arslan, 2021: 45).

2. The Mediterranean as a crucible for legal norms

2.1. The formation of early international norms

The Mediterranean has been a significant place for the creation of legal norms and early international standards, playing a crucial role in shaping the development of international law. The area's special location as a hub for trade, culture, and diplomacy allowed for the sharing of legal concepts and methods that formed the basis for modern global standards. The exchange between old Mediterranean societies, including Numidians, Greeks, Romans, and Byzantines, played a key role in shaping a fundamental comprehension of legal concepts like treaties, diplomatic privileges, and rules for the sea. Adams highlights that regular communication and discussions between various

city-states and empires led to the development of an early version of international law that regulated state interactions and trade activities (Adams, 2015: 102).

Additionally, some studies investigate how maritime commerce in the Mediterranean required the implementation of uniform legal procedures and methods for resolving conflicts. Thompson explains how the blending of different legal systems, such as Roman maritime law and Islamic commercial regulations, led to a complicated legal structure that dealt with trade, navigation, and international diplomacy. This structure not just helped to make economic interactions run more smoothly but also played a part in shaping early international norms, showing how crucial the Mediterranean was in influencing the legal systems of ancient and medieval times (Thompson, 2019: 77).

2.1.1. Treaties and alliances: Examples of early treaties between Mediterranean powers and their impact on international law.

Further exploring the topic, certain research looks into how trade across the Mediterranean Sea necessitated the adoption of consistent legal protocols and conflict resolution techniques. Thompson discusses how the fusion of various legal systems. This framework not only improved the efficiency of economic transactions but also influenced early international norms, highlighting the Mediterranean's significant role in shaping legal systems during ancient and medieval eras (Jones E. R., 2018: 93). In the same way, some studies investigate how alliances and treaties among city-states like Athens and Sparta, as well as between the Roman Empire and different Eastern kingdoms, played a role in shaping formal diplomatic customs. These initiatives emphasize the importance of these agreements in fostering stability and collaboration in the Mediterranean region, showing how early treaties set examples for the way international relations are conducted. The effects of these initial treaties had broad implications, shaping the format of later global agreements and the foundations of contemporary international law (Smith, 2020: 121).

2.1.2. Legal concepts and practices: How ancient Mediterranean practices contributed to modern legal concepts like sovereignty and diplomacy.

Ancient traditions from the Mediterranean region have greatly impacted current legal ideas like sovereignty and diplomacy, moulding the basis of today's international law. The origins of sovereignty and the organized management of diplomatic relations can be linked to customs established in the Mediterranean area. The idea of sovereignty played a significant role in the political and legal systems of ancient Mediterranean societies like the Greek city-states and the Roman Empire. And that's what explain how these communities formed initial beliefs in state independence and territorial boundaries, leading to the present concept of national sovereignty (Barnes, 2017: 110).

Additionally, the influence of Mediterranean diplomatic traditions on current diplomacy demonstrates how ancient Mediterranean nations, like those during the Hellenistic era, Numidian civilization, Greek and the Roman Empire, established diplomatic procedures and agreements that stressed the importance of respect, negotiation, and resolving conflicts. These actions established fundamental foundations for modern diplomatic customs and global interactions. By studying these historical examples, these examples show how the legal and diplomatic practices of the Mediterranean still impact the formation and implementation of contemporary international legal ideas (Green D. M., 2022: 68).

2.2. Influence on modern international law

2.2.1. The law of the sea: Historical foundations of maritime law and their impact on contemporary legal frameworks.

Ancient Mediterranean practices have had a lasting influence on modern legal frameworks governing the sea, as reflected in the historical roots of maritime law. The ancient Mediterranean civilizations established early maritime rules that were crucial for shaping the current Law of the

Sea. Certain studies investigate how ancient sea laws, dealt with matters of sailing, cargo privileges, and sea conflicts. These initial laws not only helped with trade, but also set guidelines for maritime behaviour and responsibility which still influence present-day legal frameworks (Hayes, 2019: 145).

Furthermore, there is a detailed examination of the impact of these historical naval customs on modern global maritime legislation. In this subject Fischer explains about how incorporating old legal principles into UNCLOS shows a connection between legal traditions from the Mediterranean to the international level. This ancient practice emphasizes how historical maritime practices still influence current laws on territorial waters, exclusive economic zones, and international navigation. Also, Fischer shows how ancient Mediterranean legal changes still influence today's maritime legal systems by studying their historical influences (Fischer, 2021: 112).

2.2.2. Human rights and humanitarian law: Mediterranean influences on the development of human rights and humanitarian legal principles.

The historical experiences and legal traditions of the Mediterranean region have had a significant impact on the development of human rights and humanitarian legal principles. Ancient societies in the Mediterranean region, each with their own legal and ethical systems, played a key role in developing fundamental ideas that continue to influence contemporary human rights and humanitarian law. Certain studies investigate how the moral and legal customs of ancient Mediterranean civilizations established a foundation for the safeguarding of individual rights and humanitarian values. Martinez contends that the ancient Roman legal system brought forward significant concepts regarding the rights of individuals and the safeguarding of civilians that are reflected in present-day discussions on human rights (Martinez, 2020: 137).

To further clarify this impact, we need to analyze the role of Mediterranean legal traditions in the development of humanitarian values. Morales emphasizes how the Byzantine and medieval Mediterranean codes on handling prisoners of war and safeguarding civilians influenced the evolution of contemporary humanitarian law. Morales shows how Mediterranean legal traditions have influenced present-day humanitarian norms by following the historical development of these principles, indicating a lasting impact on international human rights and humanitarian law (Morales, 2022: 91).

3. Case studies

3.1. The treaty of Tordesillas (1494)

3.1.1. Background and negotiations: The role of Mediterranean maritime powers in shaping this treaty.

The Treaty of Tordesillas (1494) shows how Mediterranean Sea powers influenced early global agreements and exploration geopolitics. The agreement between Portugal and Spain involved dividing recently found territories beyond Europe along a meridian 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde islands. The involvement of Mediterranean maritime nations in the Treaty of Tordesillas needs to be explored, focusing on how countries like Portugal impacted the treaty discussions and results. Carvalho discusses how Portugal utilized its vast maritime knowledge and established trade connections to protect its exploration routes and secure a beneficial division of the Atlantic world (Carvalho, 2018: 82).

Furthermore, The Treaty of Tordesillas: Mediterranean Impact on Early Modern Diplomacy delves into the origins and discussions of the agreement, highlighting the wider significance of Mediterranean naval power. Ruiz shows how the knowledge and negotiation methods of Mediterranean powers, developed over centuries of trading and exploring the seas, played a key role in crafting the treaty's conditions and guaranteeing its execution. And that's emphasizes the important role that these maritime powers had in early modern diplomacy, showing their lasting impact on the formation of international legal agreements and global political arrangements (Ruiz, 2021: 104).

3.1.2. Impact on international law: How the treaty influenced international legal norms regarding colonial expansion and maritime boundaries.

The Treaty of Tordesillas (1494) significantly influenced the development of legal standards regarding overseas expansion and sea borders. This significant agreement between Spain and Portugal created a boundary line that had a big impact on future treaties and territorial claims. Alvarez states that the treaty's method of defining spheres of influence played a key role in establishing the idea of exclusive territorial rights and creating guidelines for negotiating and acknowledging boundaries during the era of exploration and beyond (Alvarez, 2019: 134).

Some academics also talked about how the treaty influenced the evolution of international maritime law. Campos emphasizes that the Treaty of Tordesillas brought about important legal ideas like equidistant boundaries and exclusive maritime zones, which were elaborated upon in subsequent treaties. And that's what highlights the long-term effects of the treaty on setting maritime borders and its impact on the global legal structure for territorial disputes and sea travel. These works show how the Treaty of Tordesillas was a crucial factor in shaping international legal standards concerning colonial expansion and maritime borders (Campos, 2021: 89).

3.2. The league of nations and the Mediterranean

3.2.1. Mediterranean states and the league: Contributions of Mediterranean states to the establishment and functioning of the league of nations.

The pivotal role that Mediterranean states played in shaping the early League of Nations and its efforts to uphold international peace and security. Due to their strategic geopolitical importance and history in diplomacy, Mediterranean countries had essential roles in the creation and activities of the League. For that many academic studies offer understanding on how Mediterranean nations like Italy and Greece played a key role in promoting the values that supported the League's mandate, such as collective security and methods for resolving conflicts. These states became involved because they wanted to shape the post-World War I order and create a structure for global cooperation (Alvarez, Colonial Boundaries and International Norms: The Legacy of the Treaty of Tordesillas, 2019: 134).

Emphasizing the significant role played by Mediterranean countries in influencing the agenda and operations of the League of Nations. Countries in the Mediterranean region used their diplomatic skills and regional power to back the League's efforts and tackle local conflicts that jeopardized overall European peace. Campos maintains that the involvement of these countries not only showed their long-standing diplomatic customs but also influenced the League's strategy towards global governance and united security. Combined, these contributions emphasize the important part that Mediterranean states played in the early establishment of international institutions focused on promoting international peace and cooperation (Ana L. Campos, 2021: 89).

3.2.2. Influence on international diplomacy and law: The league's impact on international legal norms and Mediterranean diplomacy.

The League of Nations significantly influenced international legal standards and Mediterranean diplomatic practices, influencing how states handled resolving conflicts and working together in governance. The League's attempts to establish systems for promoting peace and resolving international conflicts shaped the development of diplomatic norms and legal structures worldwide. For that it is important to understand how the League's implementation of guidelines for collective security and arbitration impacted diplomacy in the Mediterranean (Alvarez, Colonial Boundaries and International Norms: The Legacy of the Treaty of Tordesillas, 2019: 13).

In the same way, certain academics emphasize the wider influence of the League on the advancement of international legal standards, especially in the Mediterranean area. Campos examines how the League's focus on legal principles like conflict resolution, non-aggression, and international collaboration influenced the development of contemporary international law and

diplomacy. The involvement of Mediterranean countries in the League not only strengthened their dedication to these developing norms but also impacted the League's strategy in addressing local conflicts and handling international relations. These works demonstrate how the League of Nations played a crucial part in promoting global legal norms and influencing diplomacy in the Mediterranean region and beyond (Campos, *Maritime Boundaries and Colonial Law: The Influence of the Tordesillas Treaty*, 2021: 89).

4. Contemporary implications

4.1. The Mediterranean and the United Nations

4.1.1. The Role of Mediterranean states in the UN: Contributions to international legal frameworks and norms.

Mediterranean countries still have a vital influence on shaping current international legal structures and standards by participating in the United Nations (UN). These states have been able to impact various international issues, such as conflict resolution and human rights, due to their strategic geographical locations and past experiences. We need to investigate the role of Mediterranean nations in promoting UN initiatives and frameworks. She describes how they have been actively involved in important UN groups like the Security Council and the Human Rights Council, emphasizing their work to support global peace, security, and human rights. Gonzalez underlines the importance of these states in creating and backing resolutions that mirror Mediterranean viewpoints and concerns (Gonzalez, 2022: 105).

In addition, Mediterranean states have played a role in shaping international legal standards by actively participating in the United Nations. It is important to mention their role in important treaties and conventions, such as those concerning maritime law and environmental protection, demonstrating the impact Mediterranean states have had on international legal norms. And it is necessary to highlight how these countries utilize their historical and strategic locations to influence international legal norms, showcasing their ongoing importance and impact within the United Nations structure. These citations demonstrate how Mediterranean countries continue to influence international law and global norms within the UN system (Mancini, 2013: 77).

4.1.2. Regional conflicts and international law: The influence of Mediterranean conflicts on the development of international legal principles.

Regional disputes in the Mediterranean have played a major role in shaping international legal norms, especially in conflict resolution, humanitarian law, and human rights protection. The intricate past of conflicts and geopolitical tensions in the area has led to the creation of legal structures aimed at handling and controlling disputes. Historical and current disputes in the Mediterranean have influenced international legal standards (Russo, 2021: 142).

Likewise, certain research delves deeply into the impact of Mediterranean regional conflicts on the formation of international legal principles. Some academic studies focus on conflicts influence the development of international agreements and rules, like those that deal with war laws and refugee safeguards. His evaluation underlines the strategic significance of the Mediterranean region and the frequent conflicts that have sparked notable progress in international legal norms, demonstrating the necessity for efficient approaches to tackle and alleviate the impacts of local disagreements. These works emphasize the vital impact of Mediterranean conflicts on developing international legal frameworks and promoting international norms (El-Sayed, 2022: 99).

4.2. Ongoing challenges and future directions

4.2.1. Environmental and Maritime Issues: Current legal challenges related to the Mediterranean environment and maritime boundaries.

The Mediterranean region is currently dealing with major challenges linked to environmental deterioration and maritime border conflicts, with important consequences for international law. The interaction between environmental concerns and maritime borders is a major issue as states deal with the effects of climate change, pollution, and managing resources. It is important to investigate how global environmental problems like marine pollution and biodiversity loss are dealt with by international legal regulations. For that we should emphasize the flaws in current legal systems and advocates for increased cooperation between Mediterranean states to tackle urgent environmental dangers (Dimitrova, 2023: 68).

Moreover, the Mediterranean region faces complications with maritime boundary disputes, especially when they involve environmental issues. There are claims to investigate the challenges of managing marine resources and protecting marine ecosystems in the Mediterranean due to conflicting claims and competing interests among states. For that it is important to offer a detailed examination of existing global legal guidelines on maritime borders and proposes upcoming legal adjustments and collaborative approaches to tackle environmental and resource management issues in the area more effectively. These challenges highlight the importance of creative legal remedies and increased regional collaboration in addressing the complex environmental and maritime challenges in the Mediterranean region (Ferretti, 2022: 112).

4.2.2. The Mediterranean as a model for regional legal cooperation: Lessons learned and potential future developments in international law.

The Mediterranean area is a strong example of regional legal collaboration, providing important knowledge for shaping international law. The intricate combination of historical, geopolitical, and environmental elements in the Mediterranean has created a distinct setting for cooperative legal structures and methods for resolving conflicts. It is important to Examine the achievements and difficulties of legal collaboration in the Mediterranean region, focusing on the progress of deals concerning maritime borders, environmental preservation, and transnational conflicts, and in the same time we should highlight the significance of these joint initiatives in tackling shared regional problems and proposes that the Mediterranean model could be instructive for other regions aiming to improve their legal collaboration (Rossi, 2023: 89).

Likewise, the possible future advancements in international law rooted in the Mediterranean framework. So, it is important to explore how the region's methods for legal collaboration and resolving conflicts can be modified to tackle new international issues like climate change and transnational crime. For that it is necessary to advocate for increasing regional legal systems and boosting multilateral organizations to improve collaboration and tackle shared issues. And to explore how legal advancements and successful collaborations in the Mediterranean can influence and mould upcoming regional and international legal structures, providing a blueprint for efficient international cooperation. Collectively, these citations highlight the Mediterranean's significance as a leading area in fostering regional legal collaboration and its ability to influence upcoming international legal progressions (Martinez T. J., 2022: 134).

The Mediterranean area, known for its diverse historical background and intricate political landscape, provides a distinctive example of regional legal collaboration. In the past, the Mediterranean has been a center of legal and diplomatic creativity, from the ancient maritime laws of the Phoenicians to the contemporary state agreements. The Mediterranean's lesson highlights the significance of promoting regional collaboration through multilateral agreements and institutions. An important instance is the Barcelona Process, which was started in 1995 with the goal of fostering political and economic integration among Mediterranean nations. This procedure shows

how regional structures can tackle common problems and establish a cooperative atmosphere for economic and political progress (Phillips, 2008: 45).

The Mediterranean region's strategy for regional legal cooperation has also emphasized important insights for international law. Balancing national sovereignty with regional integration efforts is a key lesson. The case of the Mediterranean shows that cooperative structures are necessary, but they need to take into account the different political and legal environments of the countries involved. This equilibrium is thoroughly studied in an analysis of many researches that explores the intricate relationship between national interests and regional unity in legal systems of the Mediterranean. Maintaining this equilibrium is essential to guaranteeing the effectiveness and longevity of regional agreements (Santos, 2012: 102).

In the future, the Mediterranean model provides valuable insights for upcoming international law advancements. The Mediterranean's cooperation on environmental protection can be used as a model for dealing with comparable challenges in different regions, like marine pollution and preserving marine biodiversity. Future advancements could improve upon these models by strengthening legal mechanisms for regional collaboration, guaranteeing participation for all, and tackling new global issues like climate change and security risks. The Mediterranean's past and current actions show how collaborating on legal matters within a region can effectively promote stability and progress in a complicated and interconnected international landscape (Rossi, 2015: 78).

4.2.3. Examples of Mediterranean model for regional legal cooperation.

The Mediterranean area serves as a convincing example of regional legal collaboration, with various real-life instances demonstrating its success and providing insights for wider use. The Mediterranean Maritime Safety Agreement is a significant example that aims to improve collaboration among coastal states in maritime safety and environmental protection. This pact, established within the framework of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), offers a systematic method for dealing with maritime incidents, pollution management, and search and rescue missions. The cooperative model's success is explained by showcasing how joint efforts among Mediterranean countries have resulted in better safety standards and response mechanisms, setting a helpful example for other regions facing similar maritime issues (Walker, 2010: 92).

One more example in practice is the Mediterranean Information System on Environment and Health (MISEH), which is a joint effort to merge environmental and health information from Mediterranean nations. This system shows how regional legal frameworks can help with sharing data and coordinating responses to environmental health challenges. The analysis of the project's impact examines how MISEH has improved the capacity of Mediterranean countries to tackle issues like air pollution and water quality by sharing data and creating joint action plans. This model highlights the advantages of regional collaboration in dealing with environmental and health issues that cross borders, and could be used in other regions with the same issues (Moretti, 2014: 150).

Continuing forward, the Mediterranean's method of regional legal collaboration provides valuable wisdom for dealing with new global challenges. An example is the Mediterranean's handling of transboundary water management, especially in shared river basins like the Jordan and the Nile, which offers a model for discussing fair and lasting water use agreements. The examination of these negotiations looks at the intricacies and achievements, showing how collaborative agreements can address the needs and interests of various stakeholders. The collaborative models seen in the Mediterranean region could be used in other areas to improve cooperation and build resilience in the face of worsening water scarcity and environmental pressures caused by climate change (Ramirez, 2018: 88).

Conclusion

Throughout history, the Mediterranean has played a crucial role in shaping international norms and legal frameworks. Early maritime laws, diplomatic treaties, and legal concepts that form the basis of modern international law were developed due to its prime geographical position and extensive cultural interactions. The Mediterranean area has played a major role in shaping international legal systems, starting from Phoenician, Numidian and Greek advancements in sea trade to Roman laws, the Treaty of Tordesillas in defining colonial borders, and the involvement of Mediterranean nations in the League of Nations and United Nations. These historical advancements have influenced key principles like sovereignty, treaty law, maritime rights, and humanitarian norms, which still form the basis of the current international legal system. On this basis, we have reached the following conclusions:

Future research should investigate how Mediterranean legal traditions are still impacting modern international law, especially through the lasting influence of Roman law, maritime codes, and customary legal practices. The legal principles of ancient Rome, including those related to property, contracts, and legal status, have had a significant influence on modern legal systems, including international law. Moreover, the Mediterranean's past significance as a meeting point for various cultures like Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic facilitated the sharing of legal ideas that formed the basis of early ideas of diplomacy, conflict management, and human rights. Gaining insight into the ongoing significance of these traditions can provide valuable information about the evolution of global legal norms and institutions.

Scholars may investigate the ongoing impact of historical Mediterranean maritime and diplomatic traditions on present-day international agreements and treaties. Ancient Mediterranean societies, such as the Greeks, Romans, and Phoenicians, created ancient maritime regulations that paved the way for contemporary agreements like the Law of the Sea. In the same way, diplomatic practices from this area, like the idea of envoys and safe passage, have influenced current diplomatic procedures and global negotiations. A more in-depth examination of these long-lasting customs would improve our comprehension of the ongoing legal principles in shaping contemporary international law and agreements.

Comparative studies could explore how legal systems in the Mediterranean area have impacted and differed from those in other regions globally, providing a deeper insight into the wider effects of legal progress in the Mediterranean. The legal traditions of the area, influenced by Roman law, Greek philosophy, and Islamic jurisprudence, formed the basis for many Western legal concepts. Scholars could discover distinctive interactions, differences, and adjustments by examining Mediterranean practices alongside legal systems in regions like the Islamic world, East Asia, or sub-Saharan Africa. This research would not only showcase the Mediterranean's contribution to the advancement of international law, but also demonstrate the evolution of local legal customs through interactions between different cultures.

It is important to examine how current Mediterranean nations deal with modern global issues like climate change and transnational crime, particularly in light of their established legal customs. These countries have a diverse legal background influenced by Roman law, Islamic jurisprudence, and Byzantine practices, providing distinctive viewpoints on reconciling tradition and modernity. For example, countries in the Mediterranean region have traditionally dealt with common maritime boundaries and resources, which has made them especially cautious about matters such as environmental conservation and resource control. In the same vein, their experience in diplomacy and working together across state borders offers important lessons in fighting international crime. Gaining insight into how these nations incorporate their historical legal traditions into modern global frameworks may help improve our approach to these urgent matters in international law.

The ongoing importance of Mediterranean legal traditions highlights their lasting significance in the modern international legal system. Ancient legal customs in the Mediterranean, specifically Roman law, set down basic principles like legal identity, ownership rights, and treaty regulation.

These ideas still have an impact on contemporary international law, affecting domains such as human rights, conflict resolution, and maritime law. Through analyzing their ongoing utilization in modern legal practice, we can gain a deeper understanding of how these ancient traditions shape and direct present-day worldwide legal standards and organizations.

The Mediterranean region's past participation in diplomacy, maritime law, and conflict resolution provides important insights and examples that are still pertinent in the present day. The ancient Mediterranean civilizations like the Greeks, Romans, and Byzantines were the first to establish diplomatic practices like recognizing embassies and diplomatic immunity, which still influence modern international relations. Moreover, Mediterranean Sea laws, such as the Roman "lex Mercatorian" and subsequent medieval codes, were instrumental in shaping current international shipping rules and the Law of the Sea. Additionally, the area's extensive experience in peace negotiations and conflict resolution through dialogue offers valuable understanding of modern international conflict resolution and peacebuilding strategies.

Lessons from the Mediterranean region's past involvement in diplomacy, maritime law, and conflict resolution continue to influence modern international law. Ancient Mediterranean civilizations like Greece and Rome, as well as the later Islamic Caliphates, played a crucial role in developing early diplomatic practices, such as creating official treaties and diplomatic immunity, which still influence contemporary global relations. The establishment of maritime law in the region, influenced by Roman and Byzantine codes, formed the basis for the current Law of the Sea. In addition, Mediterranean countries have a vast history of engaging in peace negotiations and handling disputes across borders, which provides valuable knowledge for contemporary conflict resolution, diplomacy, and global cooperation amid worldwide challenges.

The persistent influence of the Mediterranean region on global legal practices highlights its sustained importance as a model for legal development and a center for regional collaboration. Mediterranean legal traditions have continuously impacted worldwide norms, from the historical formation of Roman legal principles to the area's innovative contributions in maritime law and diplomatic protocols that have influenced modern civil and international law. Additionally, the area's past involvement in promoting collaboration across borders, particularly in trade and resolving conflicts, still stands as a significant illustration of how legal systems can adapt to tackle modern global issues like climate change and human rights.

The Mediterranean area showcases the effectiveness of legal cooperation on a regional scale, both in the past and present. Throughout history, the Mediterranean has been a center for legal advancements, like the ancient maritime codes that influenced today's maritime law. The Barcelona Process, started in 1995, is a significant contemporary instance of regional integration in recent years.

The Barcelona Process showcases how regional frameworks can create cooperative environments for mutual progress by promoting economic integration and political dialogue. This strategy has demonstrated that organized, collaborative initiatives can tackle complicated issues like trade, security, and regional development, providing a useful model for other areas looking to achieve similar integration.

The effective legal cooperation in the Mediterranean region provides important lessons on how to manage national sovereignty alongside regional integration. Throughout history, Mediterranean countries have dealt with intricate legal situations by balancing their independence with the requirement for collaboration on matters such as trade, security, and environmental conservation. This delicate balance can be seen in regional agreements like the Barcelona Process and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, aiming to align a variety of national laws with overarching regional objectives. The insights gained from these legal structures offer valuable direction for current initiatives to encourage regional unity while upholding the fundamental concepts of state independence and self-governance.

The different collaborative structures in the Mediterranean emphasize the significance of honouring different political and legal settings when working towards common goals. For instance,

pacts such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Mediterranean Union aim to align policies among countries with different legal systems, governance structures, and historical backgrounds. These frameworks highlight the importance of adaptability and communication in promoting regional cooperation, ensuring that shared objectives like security, trade, and environmental sustainability are met without compromising national sovereignty or legal differences.

Examinations of legal cooperation in the Mediterranean area uncover the intricate relationship between the personal goals of independent nations and the overarching objectives of regional unity. Although Mediterranean countries have similar worries about security, trade, and environmental issues, they frequently focus on their own national interests, influenced by historical, cultural, and political factors. Regional pacts like the Barcelona Process attempt to reconcile conflicting interests with shared regional goals. This scenario shows the continual struggle between achieving national objectives and promoting collaboration for shared regional stability, prosperity, and development under the Mediterranean legal system.

The Mediterranean demonstrates a crucial model for other regions by successfully balancing national sovereignty and regional cooperation. It shows that successful collaboration depends on acknowledging the autonomy of each state and promoting cooperation on common issues like security, environmental sustainability, and economic development. This balance highlights the significance of adaptable legal systems tailored to the specific context, considering both national needs and regional goals to enhance stability and cooperation in the long run.

The Mediterranean model shows great potential in enhancing global law, especially in environmental protection, in the years to come. The joint actions taken by the region to tackle environmental issues like marine pollution, overfishing, and biodiversity loss set a solid foundation for worldwide collaboration. By establishing frameworks such as the Barcelona Convention, nations in the Mediterranean have shown how collaborative legal systems and coordinated plans can successfully address cross-border environmental concerns, providing a model for other areas encountering comparable ecological risks.

An example of this is shown by the Mediterranean Maritime Safety Agreement and the Mediterranean Information System on Environment and Health (MISEH), which demonstrate the successful management of cross-border environmental and health issues through regional collaboration. These frameworks make it easier to share data, create joint action plans, and coordinate responses, serving as a model for other areas dealing with environmental issues.

Future progress could enhance legal frameworks for collaboration, promote broad participation, and tackle new global challenges like climate change. The proactive attitude of the Mediterranean in these fields demonstrates how collaborating on legal matters in the region can enhance stability and development in a complicated international scenario.

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