



Ordine internazionale e diritti umani

International Legal Order and Human Rights
Ordenamiento Jurídico Internacional y Derechos Humanos
Ordre Juridique International et Droits de l'Homme
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EDITORIALE
SCIENTIFICA

DIPLOMATIC HISTORY OF SOUTHERN ITALY IN THE EUROPEAN MIDDLE AGES

The article investigates the diplomatic history of Southern Italy within the broader evolution of the European international legal order, or *jus gentium Europaeum*. The article posits that the Italian pre-unital experience, documented through monumental collections like the *Codex Italiae diplomaticus*, serves as a foundational pillar for European identity and a precursor to modern international relations. It argues that Italy transitioned from a system defined by the bi-lateral authority of the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire toward a framework of “multi-regional states” where the *jus contrabendi* became the primary tool for maintaining political stability and equality. Within this framework, Southern Italy is characterized not merely as a local entity, but as the “Mezzogiorno” of Europe, acting as a strategic geopolitical balancer between the Western, Eastern, and Arab-Islamic empires. The research traces the shift from a medieval order based on imperial hierarchy to a modern Westphalian system rooted in national sovereignty, eventually leading to the decline of traditional empires and the birth of the Italian state. Ultimately, the article suggests that the “millennial treasure” of Italian diplomatic history offers critical architectural insights for contemporary global security, especially as the 21st century enters a new “era of uncertainty” marked by a resurgence of neo-imperialist tendencies that threaten the established internationalist balance.