

A Tale of Three (Port) Cities: An Assessment on the Sociopolitical Factors that contribute to Air Pollution in Southern Mediterranean Coasts

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A Tale of Three (Port) Cities: An Assessment on the Sociopolitical Factors that contribute to Air Pollution in Southern Mediterranean Coasts

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Abstract

This thesis will analyze the sociopolitical background of Southern European states surrounding the Mediterranean in order to understand the political and institutional shifts that have caused an impact on the air quality of these particular regions. By examining the consequences of human interaction in the environment, in respects to the greatest contributing economic sectors to the worsening air quality conditions in specific regions of Southern Spain, Italy and Greece, the research will provide an interpretation on the effects of multilateral legislation on the domestic policies of such. The research will be corroborated through the scrutinized view on the chronology of international political events that have led the energy industries and maritime trade become one of the leading unregulated atmospheric pollutant sources. Due to the given states' geopolitical vicinity, their shared legislations established by the supranational powers of the European Union will provide this research with a comparison on how these policies have been enforced in their respective Southern regions. In addition, environmental law and legislation can also be seen through an even smaller lens; this thesis will include an in-depth examination of the reliability on multilateralism and its effects on regionally enforced regulations relating to the emissions of air pollutants.

This environmental policy report will uphold the central premise of social domestic affairs hindering the conservation of air quality in the vulnerable coastal regions of the Mediterranean for the sake of embracing capitalist agenda. Therefore, all three countries have enabled a social indifference towards environmental policies. Based on the aforementioned comparisons between state and international environmental legislations, this thesis will be able to demonstrate the

hypothesis, which justifies how sovereign countries that have endured comparable economic recessions in the modern era, have left behind any moral concept regarding the preservation of the environment, adhering to treaties and endorsing corporations directly related to non-renewable energy production and trade, large emitters of extremely prejudicial polluting gases.

Research Question

How have sociopolitical factors affected the ever-increasing emissions of air pollutants in Southern European coastal regions?

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List of Abbreviations

UN	United Nations
OECD	The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
PM	Particulate matter
EEC	European Economic Community
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Introduction

Much like Dicken's descriptive narrative of the peasantry and working class during the midst of the French Revolution in his novel *A Tale of Two Cities*, the Southern European regions bordering the Mediterranean have experienced the inefficiencies of accustoming themselves into the Western globalized society, and their implications with economic and social marginalization in comparison to the rest of national sovereignties in the Western realm. One of the novel's main argument appraises the idea of moving forward; weighing the opportunities that could arise by removing oneself from oppressing powers. Notwithstanding, and similarly to Dicken's retail of the French Revolution, the Southern regions in the present appear to have been led by injustice; subjects of the ruling hand by the relative local leaders, mostly comprised of nobility. The striving for political adequacy in coastal areas has been closely tied to the progressively narrower demographic of the regions. These states have been predominantly known to base their economies on agriculture, trade, and transport, allowing employment to form a space for the marginal working class (Ferrera, 6). As the post-industrialist era progressed, the working classes took on the role of factory workers, as high demand for low-skilled workers called upon citizens from rural and marginal areas to move into the main cosmopolitan regions. While the population numbers have shown a rapid decrease of local population in these Southern regions, the primary and secondary sectors of the economy have been great assets for the remaining workers in said regions.

All three regions have encountered periods of political and economic shifts, that appeared hand in hand with the urge to privatize and nationalize their respective national resources in times where social progress and outreach was manifesting all across the Western hemisphere.

As an immediate effect to the implementation of the Italian (1958), Greek and Spanish (1986) governments into the global economic community with their accession into the European Community, these countries sought to assimilate to fellow economic and democratic powers, as a widespread result from the repercussions of authoritarian rule in each of these nation-states. However, in modern times, international institutional cohesion must be brought forward as the theorized dual enforcer of measures and inflicting ‘entity’ for environmental concerns in the socioeconomically diverse regions of Spain, Italy and Greece, among others. Considering the Mediterranean lifestyle being one of the most celebrated and appropriated by many societies, these associated states, along with other sovereignty incorporated into the global agenda, have reached a critical point in their internal grounds -due to their comparable expansion of political inclusion under democratic capitalism. Although coastal regions encompassing seaports have been powerful national assets for their respective countries throughout history, southern regions in the Western hemisphere are known to be characterized as weaker welfare states compared to those of Northwestern Europe” (von Kondratowitz, Hans-Joachim, 58).

The emerging internationalization of Mediterranean countries has contributed to a deterioration of the air quality which holds various sociopolitical factors accountable, encasing the blame on regional, national and international schemes. The environmental conditions in coastal cities of the Mediterranean have deteriorated considerably in the past century, due to the insufficient policies and unsustainable attitudes that have led to the current mishandling of greenhouse gas emitters in the neighboring continents of the Mediterranean. Following the recent World Health Organization’s (WHO) air quality guidelines, the United Nations along with environmental coalitions have assessed and established the intent to halt the exponential increase of pollution by

proposing intergovernmental regulatory policies in Climate Change summits such as the Paris Climate Agreement (COP21).

Through a guided assessment on the common conceptions on the international territorial waters, the research will consist of a set of comparisons, comprised of geopolitical, historical and environmental evaluations. The effects of the major polluting companies and structures (industries and shipping) will be introduced, as they are common and constant to all three of my target countries in study. With the support of detailed research on the originating international conventions that enabled the institutions of said air pollution emitters, I will further look into the everyday reality that pushes preestablished policies into action. Although the initial theory is that neither of these countries take on a serious enforcing role towards managing the emissions of harmful gases into the atmosphere.

In addition, the framework of the research will contain the polarized standpoints of two commonly diverging factions, environmental interest groups and political neoliberalism. While these two realms have competing motives at times, it is of great necessity that both come in juxtaposition to obtain enactments on improvement of air conditions in unregulated areas. It must be noted that the section on the theory for this kind of political negligence will include partial understanding on the subjective voices of environmental activists, which must be taken into account to find the social responses to the problem. The scientific approach to the findings of the sources of pollution will include factual data, based on trials of measurements determining the average amount of particulate matter (PM), emitted by the major pollutants in the intended regions.

Literature Review

The *European Commission* serves as the backbone to all intergovernmental agreements in the Western European realm. With its initial economic institutional establishment in March of 1957 under the *Treaty of Rome*, the EEC implemented the custom international norm of multilateralism in the trading realm, a free market for all member states. This step towards a deepened integration aimed to provide transparency and equal terms for the multinational single trade market throughout the member states of the Western continent. During the *Treaty of Maastricht* in 1992, 12 member-states signed to ratify the revision of the European community into the institutional Union that we know today: the European Union. In this second treaty, all three subject Southern states had already incorporated themselves into the European Community, therefore adopting equal freedoms and rights simultaneously. As economic integration process evolved, the areas of interest within the trade community unified, introducing regulations along the way, developing accordingly to the *fundamental rights* in European commerce. With a supranationally established single-market, and a politically steered governance, the European Commission facilitates the understanding of an integrated framework to assess the subject regions of Greece, Italy and Spain.

Following the previous institutional source based on supranational governance and decision-making, the World Trade Organization follows as it carries the role of the legislative anchor to all consenting members of the international system. The purpose of this organization based on international trade-related agreements is to shift all competent states towards a centralized outlook regarding free commerce legislations. Whilst the whole international realm is involved in the WTO to a certain extent, there is a spectrum of participant member states according to

their geopolitical location. The European Community is delegated by diverse legislative and judicial institutions, which often go hand in hand with WTO's treaties; reinforcing the rights and boundaries constituted to the interdependent system of international trade. Nevertheless, European *common law* can interfere with specific laws or agreements that involve specific parties of the EU system. Such interferences can originate from individual member states' initiatives, as well as supranationally enforced governance. "Furthermore, the WTO interacts with, draws support from, constrains and is constrained by domestic constitutional orders" (P. Trachtman, 625). This dynamic structure of trade legislations does not act as a centralized force of law, as each state manifest their own individualisms through their enforced authority that seeks to attain sociopolitical objectives pertaining to the states' preferences. The precursory necessity for an intergovernmental Constitution regarding to the laws of air, land, and maritime commerce, derives from past conflicts between states that failed to amend unilateral decisions. States that carry out *protectionist* attitudes towards an otherwise internationally relevant interest can interfere with external democratic harmony of the international realm. States that considered the centralization of economic property conflictive, were known to be states that resorted to unilateral decisions, potentially imposing supremacy over less prominent welfare states. Therefore, the global awareness of the collective need to cooperate on concrete subject-matters is the catalyst for the WTO's signing in 1994. "The US gave up the right to take unilateral action to enforce its rights under WTO law, in exchange for strengthened dispute settlement (P.Trachtman, 633)."

When analyzing an unexamined subject matter, there is little space for accuracy of source findings. Thus, it is crucial to consider the basis of the concern. In this case, it is the search for sociopolitical outreach and response to the problems emerging from the major pollutants in

society. While there is scientific data to reinforce the empirical evidence of carbon emissions in each of the selected areas, one cannot precipitate a sound resolution on the problem of air pollution, without associating said scientific findings to a holistic conceptual understanding of the case. The aim for this paper is to conceptualize the political justification to the selected environmental issue of air pollution, in the widespread territory of the southern Mediterranean coastal regions. Due to the prompt's extensiveness, the aim for the study is to explain in depth the various components to the problem. The first premise, being the current prevalent and unregulated sources to air pollution, which have been correlated to the target regions, having been selected to broaden the observation of the greater scheme: the problem. The matter in question is the scarcity of regulations contending to the heightening levels of air pollution.

The book *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* by Pierre Bourdieu inquiries about the essence of a nation-state, which is of extreme importance to appreciate the foundations of their political practices and behaviors. Although his interpretations hold very elaborate philosophical approaches, the contemporary sociologist acknowledges the individual sociopolitical foundations that create the distinction between each independent state. This applies to the subject state's willingness to cooperate in an international realm. All customary practice that has been adopted diversely and claimed by each individual country is a response to the *social space, symbolic space and social classes* that encompass the country's dynamic (Bourdieu, 2). In its essence, social space refers to the coexisting spaces and provide and interact with other external social spaces for the sake of gaining material, cultural and symbolic capital. The social space in question for this work is the local and regional attitudes taken towards the heightening problem of environmental concerns, with special regard on air pollution. These characteristics compose the various realities to which the states accustomed to, but also occurs within each of the sociopolitical aspects of a

sovereign system. As Bourdieu suggests, those forms of substantial practices in certain states can appear ethnocentric to the rest, as their own forms of governance and decision-making are biased to the state's self-interest. Internally, social classes take a considerable role in this given topic, as each of the substantial practices of the varying socioeconomic positions hold attitudes towards one another, and this can be argued to be applicable to all developed post-industrial states. "From the point of view of the relative weigh of economy capital and cultural capital in their patrimony, professor (relatively wealthier in cultural capital than in economic capital) are strongly opposed to industrial employers (relatively wealthier in economic capital than in cultural capital), and this is no doubt as true in Japan as in France (Bourdieu, 7).

Through the recognition of preexisting international conventions that have dealt with international environmental remediation, it is expected for the collective members of the convention to settle a consensus based on the common interest. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is the leading international entity that sets a standard on implemented policies worldwide. The organization's basis encases a set of "legal instruments" that cover the various fields that encase the member states' common interests. Forms of active action towards environmental remediation has been apparent in the international community, with global attempts to enforce multilateral and unanimous legislations. There have been some notable achievements on the efforts of controlling and limiting the emission of green-house gases in the international realm; the United Nation's recurring Conventions on Climate Change have proposed the implementation of supranational methods to handle the leading global polluters. Efforts such as the *Carbon Tax*, and internationally agreed BAT remediations have been set out to incentivize the states with less emissions and hold economic accountability to countries that push the conversion into non-renewable energies as their internal priority.

Chapter 1 - *Identifying forms of governance in the Southern European states: top-bottom or bottom-up?*

To be able to decipher the relevance of foreign policy connecting to Spain, Italy, and Greece's unrestricted pollution emission levels in coastal regions, each state must be measured in relation to their application and action to international custom. While, on the surface, these states can be associated due to their likeness in their compatible prominent economic assets; tourism and international commerce being of shared interests, there is a correlating socioeconomic feature that sets them aside from the rest of the democratic realm, which is in theory, discerned as the generator of the detrimentally high levels of greenhouse gases. Might it be worth pondering whether there is a consistency of Constitutionalism among the selected states, which creates a synecdoche for their overall adherence to domestic affairs over the will of other external actors when encountering the shared challenge of atmospheric pollution.

David G. Victor along with Robert Keohane offer a clear example on the defining political causes to *climate change*, in their shared article “The Regime Complex for Climate Change” (2011), attributing *distribution of interests, the gains from linkages, and the management of uncertainty* (12) as three considerable factors that come into play when states are faced with international cooperation, through the establishment of the predominantly agreed-upon multilateral institutions. Contrary to the initial theory on the individual state’s liability to the unregulated emissions of air pollutants of diverse kinds, it becomes apparent that states themselves are not to blame, but the conflicts that arise when various countries unite, in the efforts of legitimizing the coincidentally distinguished and undefended reinforcements to atmospheric pollution.

Despite the extensive nature of the effects of climate change, it is noted that there are four main problems that arise when foreign and domestic political endeavors intersect, attributing *coordination of emission regulations* to be of most importance (Victor, 13). It is evident that in the international political realm, there is no true binding public law against the existence of air pollutants, thus, the cognizant effects of atmospheric pollution, being a contributor to climate change, has encouraged the global political scene to expand Western *soft-law* measures to abate the problem. However, for states to completely abide by international law, be it, a cooperating system like the European Union, there must be consensus on shared interests, without the risk of compromising national interest. Secondly, states that stand firmly by political realism, will stand by a Westphalian system where their state comes first. Hence, in the power-seeking scheme, there is a strain in states with international financial obligations such as Spain, Italy and Greece, to adopt financially costly emission controls, making *compensation* a precursor to the third problem, *coordinating efforts*.

Countries with lack of funding on public sectors have demonstrated much lesser public reports to their funding which coincide with David G. Victor's claims on the challenges that arise when the organized domestic action is prevented by the lack of resources or actors in charge of the efforts. Aside from all political disputes that might arise domestically, which can fairly polarize societies regionally, it is also worthy of noting the possible outcomes to national interests in reflection of voting turnouts to certain policies or legislations. Considering the subject states' socio-cultural likeness, it must be dully noted that a national government ran by predominantly conservative jurisdiction will be associated with supporting nationally driven endeavors, alternatively to broadening their socio-economic prospects with the conditionality of interdependence with international actors. The last 'inadequacy' when discussing the difficulties of international cooperation, and altogether encasing the distinct circumstance of the selected Mediterranean countries, is the lack of "common scientific assessments", to allow the international community to compare and share corresponding data. Inclusively, this last issue can hinder the trust among treaty members, as states who refuse or fail to hold *accountability* (17) to their ignorance towards international standards on sustainable approaches to managing climate change challenges, must receive sanctions or further recommendations (Victor, 17). For Western states to further their development towards a more integrated and sustainable society, there must be complete transparency among members of environmental treaties to report complete statistical information to competent parties for the solidified purpose of emissions control and abatement.

When exploring the overall economic statistical reports on the OECD for each of the three subjected countries, there is no true consistency to these countries with respect to publishing updated surveys on their national financial management and growth. Nevertheless, it is a trend to find in all three national reports to include "Figures of Green Growth Indicators", as conveyed in

all the OECD database, with publication dates ranging from 2015 with Spain to Greece's more consistent research in 2018. Overall, Greece has met the requirement for becoming an integrated member of the European society, as it has demonstrated the strengths of a state that willfully maintains multilateral accords. This state has public information on their economic developments the year of 2020, with acknowledgements on the recent impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic effects on this European state's GDP, which continues to remain fairly low in comparison to the European average, with "just below 2% of average annual growth" (OECD-Greece, 9). Regardless, Greece has documented and published empirical figures on their economic, institutional, and structural revenues and spending throughout the most recent years, showcasing a great deal of transparency when discussing the Greek's most arduous years of economic recovery from the 2010's onwards. In the case of the two other states, Italy and Spain, there are significantly relatable numbers on their economic stagnation during the years following the economic recession, along with the prime interest being that these states' GDP continue to weaken in light to their fellow international partners. But in relation to their efforts to promote regional or even domestic public concerns facing environmental action, there is little to no data exposing plans of action for foreseeable policies demanding the integrity and fair cooperation. This example of symbolic similarities these countries accounts to the previously mentioned *coordination of emission regulations* as pivotal step for the cohesion of environmental policies that apply to all three states (among others) equitably.

Moving forward, regulatory institutions are necessary in today's Western society, not only for the maintenance of social and economic harmony, but for the systemic continuation of public governance over global challenges such as the expanding effects of air pollutants. A well-functioning international community entails the active efforts to unite sovereign countries, that

participate with one another on the improvement of their shared challenges. Following David G. Victor's position on political action towards environmental policies, the need for a normative institutional change to make an impact on the global scale, will lessen the *power asymmetries*, as each given state would ideally be compensated depending on their active changes to their domestic "fragmented" environmental concerns (18). Such are the implications for Victor's very own position on the environmental *regime complex*, that even the author himself accepts to be futile for a complete cohesive compromise in the implementation of socioeconomic and technologic approaches to climate change. He sets the European Union as a long-standing example of an institutional regime that intends to set out a comprehensive form of governance, although its legitimacy inhibits the more economically challenged states to retract from international cohesion. "Where the creation of the EU benefitted, in part, from flexibility to allow for "multi speed" coordination of policy— under a common (at times leaky) umbrella of the common market and burgeoning EU law the many members of the EU moved at quite different rates"(14). National sustainable changes to a respective internal society from these Southern states is key for the improvement and diminishing of the harmful effects of air pollution attributed to the private and public sectors of the Mediterranean economies. In the international political realm, states that maintain stable foreign relations among other democratic states aim to cooperate through unified consensus. Socio-politically, areas of interest within international agreements tend to follow customary forms of law, which are conveyed by states along with non-state organizations. Countries that comply to the guidelines of customary international law accept the principles of morally-binding agreements. In order for intergovernmental policymakers to deem laws universal, they must apply to domestic and international grounds within the consenting states. The European Community is an example of a

hybrid form of governance, which proposes the economic and social model that all members should consider turning into. On that premise, the affluence of this transnational territory can be attributed to the individual states' efforts to cooperate in a harmonious society of "like-minded" actors. Whereas the EU promotes the formation of homogenous intergovernmental relations through democratic policy-making, member states that surround the Mediterranean coast have an undoubtedly similar trend of insufficient Euro-socioeconomic traits, correlating to the low policy enforcement and action. Regarding the varying levels of integration among EU member states, there are evident delineations among geopolitical divisions of member states, concurring with Bourdieu's social commentary on relations among sectors, which for the interest of the study on the appointed Southern states, are trivialized by the rest of the international community on their collective environmental welfare. "On the other hand, proximity in social space predisposes to closer relations: people who are inscribed in a restricted sector of the space will be both closer (in their properties and in their dispositions, their tastes) and more disposed to get closer, as well as being easier to bring together, to mobilize" (Bourdieu, 11).

Considering the decades of non-governmental outcries for a systematic and institutional control on the emission greenhouse gases in coastal regions [2], the latest unprecedented legislative measures set up by the European Commission indicates an active and collective need for change. The progress towards customary practice on emission regulations has encouraged a structural change to allow the international community to compare CO₂ emissions across the Mediterranean. The European Commission has released the first ever analytical report that identifies the prevalence of CO₂ as a prevalent emitted gas from maritime transport. While the existing data consists of the resourcing on efficiency levels for transport ships on monitored states, it demonstrates the lack of national and regional restrictions on air pollutant released from

the transport industries throughout states with maritime regions that are currently under EEA authority (EC, Climate Action). This significant step towards sustainable trade and international cooperation has finally come into reality due to the years, if not decades of activism by Europe's most notable environmental groups. The emission level comparisons in the report entails various forms of emission gases originating from transiting maritime vessels, which account to over 138 million tons of CO₂ emissions as of 2018 accounting the Mediterranean air pollution to be comparable to the state of Belgium (EC, 3). This report not only means greater transparency for the public, but a greater awareness on how the most profitable industry, trade, is causing eventually, more disadvantaged, and human costs, due to the harmful effects, not only on the environment, but to the human health. This long-awaited report is a positive and yet, symbolic indication of further international implementations in the future. Whilst we cannot halt every vessel from docking in the Mediterranean sea-ports, it is crucial to note the lack of action taken to implement limitations on emissions of raw fuel into open water, along with the transit to and from each of the sea-ports.

The IPCC acknowledges the high fluctuation of long-range particulate-matter pollutants that arise from industrial production and transport. Yet, it is the states labelled as 'neorealist', like the USA, that serve as examples for defying the international balance of power. States that are economically driven find the socioeconomic transition into sustainable internal practices to be a challenge. Studies conducted by the American Economic Association point out that the monetization of *ozone pollution control* is not as prioritized in a national aspect, as the individual 'hedonistic' attitude held by homeowners with deliberate intentions to pay for air quality amenities (Currie, 13). It is to be discerned, that said feature found in US' led studies on

compliance towards environmental acts applies to the unilateral decision of the Clean Air Act, which was ratified in 1970.

On one hand, USA is the main economic model for the Southern European states' trade partnerships, it functions completely independently of external influences, yet maintains the national social and political efforts to invest in the reduction of air emission and the transition into cleaner practices. Even so and concurring with David G. Victor's attest to the aims for states' cohesion in the decision-making process for climate change action, there must be progression among each respective country's scientific community, to be able to share it to the international community for the accomplishment of common interests. "The optimal level of pollution in society occurs where the marginal costs of reducing emissions by one unit are exactly equal to the marginal social benefit of that same reduction on air emissions" (Currie, 6). Having indicated the innate grounds to the public sphere of international agreements, with respects to the European realm, it is fair to acknowledge that not every state has been fully true to a higher accordance of the law in modern times, as the modes of transition into the democratic representations of today are less than democratic, as envisioned by the Western myth of ideal supremacy. The level of authority in a state's legislation over a specific area of global interest, in this case, with respects to the broadened issue of the environment, is particularly ignored or deterred from any multilateral resolution, as argued by *neorealists*[1], in the very area of the Mediterranean coasts.

Consequently, there are existing cases of environmental skepticism, accounting for recognized global powers that have questioned said transnational measures, posing a risk to the overall international system, as it sets out a negative example, and denies the problem of climate change. In light of the plethora of factors that enhance the existence of greenhouse gases, it is

crucial to weigh in the vast responsibility attributed to the economic sectors and the measures taken by each independent state. The principle of state liability relies on the willingness for a state to cooperate in certain international agreements, and it is certainly not commonplace for Western states to recognize each their own inclination on such level of multilateralism (Yamineva & Romppanen, 1993). It is also the case for international conventions to come to a stage of hiatus, or discontinuation, given the situation where a considerable number of member states make reservations or reject certain articles of said conventions. It is followed by the European Research Council correspondents, Yamineva and Romppanen, that international laws pertinent to air pollution are delicate, as they become altered and “fragmented” depending on their relevance to regional and national affairs. UNECE’s report on the *Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution* (CLRTAP) is an accredited illustration to the limited authority that can be accounted to an individual state by an international figure of *common law*. The CLRTAP was released posterior to the Gothenburg Protocol in 1999, which fixed to the thematic of *Abating Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone*, yet it did not reach complete unanimity among member parties, until 2004, when the UN enforced a “Task Force” to strengthen the revised conditionality of its predecessor convention, CLRTAP. With this second example of defective international policy making, there is an inkling of unawareness on the diverse sources of air pollutants, despite the conciseness and ample examination on the diversity of air pollutants per PM dimension (particulate matter). The prevailing United Nations publication CLRTAP allocates the greater culprit of *Transboundary Air Pollution* to the emission of terrestrial mobile sources, with ranges of 40 to 60 per cent of Nitrogen and about 10 to 30 per cent of all fine particulate matter emissions in the different parts of the ECE region” (UNECE, 11-13). However, it is difficult to rely on the veracity of such statement, when there is a lack of

data and statistics on the other factors that impact the emissions. Under the CLRTAP's sectioned guidance on the Best Available Techniques (BAT) for the emission control of mobile sources, there is little to no empirical evaluation to the levels of particular matter (PM) on the diverse forms of fuel combustion on commercial sea vessels and maritime trade, in contrast to the detailed forms of emission reduction already implemented and proclaimed as BAT, regulating terrestrial and city air pollution levels. In such, there is a concise allusion to the currently implemented Emission Control Areas (ECAs), which are solely under effect in United States jurisdictional waters, the Caribbean Sea, and a more limited prototype of control area in the Baltic Sea, where Sulphur (SECA) is the target of regulatory measures in their regional maritime trade. Thus, the data offered by the EEA is inconsistent as it neglects to mention any regulatory concerns or measures to the European waters of the Mediterranean Sea.

By illustrating the defectiveness of intergovernmental agreements when dealing with globally unrecognized issues, such as the widespread worsening conditions of air quality, it becomes clear that states cannot obtain a unified result in jurisdiction when it is not under their internal convenience. Systemized global outreach on the attempt to control pollution is diverted into the 'softer laws' that can be more easily achieved in *de facto* forms of international enforcement. In Peter M. Haas' terms, there is an *epistemic community*, where the realist mode of action in an international convention is enacted by the formalized resolutions in such way that it can be in accordance with all parties. "Policy-relevant" contributions to international customary law shift the significance of imminent threats to the environment, according to the scope of political and economic funding. International proceedings that fail to address the causal sources on coastal air pollution in a proper manner, fail to assist countries that depend more on higher form of law for a sustainable growth such as the states in discussion, as the negligent

emission in these countries reverberate on human safety, regionally, and globally. Overall, and as equally indicated by the various theorists on global outreach on environmental concerns, there is no kind of ratified undertaking on the collective change for the betterment of atmospheric solutions. What we can obtain from the current international accords set in all three states bordering the Mediterranean, is that environmental law has very loose ends, and for a consensus on proactive action to take place on a regional and even global basis, there must be representation of the existing problem of air pollution, and collective action.

CHAPTER 2 - *Corroborating science on the sociopolitical challenge of atmospheric pollution*

This chapter will consider the closely related political and economic developments in the Mediterranean countries in question: Spain, Italy and Greece, to follow with the theorized factors that will reveal the pattern of lack of efficacy within multilateral environmental accords. This form of top-down governance over the highly concerning collective problem that is the overall worsening conditions of air quality, appears insufficient to say the least. By maintaining the preciseness of the subject relating to the specific kinds of air pollutants originating from the highest emitters in these regions, the states' coastal regions will be placed under scrutiny in order to find a common ground. The aim of this chapter is to identify the relating socioeconomic

positions in these three states, which inhibit the effective implementation of domestic legislation towards environmental law. Each of these Southern states will be contrasted with one another according to their evolution into sustainability in the trade sector, as well as their domestic political positions previous to their accessions into the European Union.

Considering the overall economic developments of the Southern European states in the past century, it is certain that neither of the three listed countries: Spain, Italy and Greece, could have reached the peak of a globalized trading system, without forming foreign ties and accustoming their corresponding societies to such changes. One must take into account the roots of democracy, which entails the freedom of the people to elect and give voice to their needs. Yet, it is of utmost importance to consider the type of representation of each given people, and the inherent objectives these actors undertake, to guide and shape their society. These countries share a collective history of authoritarianism, which prevailed for a considerable period during the 1900s in all three states respectively. Furthermore, populism in these states have been heavily influenced by conservative remnants of former authoritarian elitist regimes. To assert that these states do not have the sufficient economic self-reliance to maintain geopolitical stability is an understatement, as the common setback for these countries is their economy; global economic recessions impact these sovereignties in a major scale as a result from their incomplete or failing transitions into democracies. Placing Italy as an example, "the economy of southern Italy was in decline even before the crisis; long-term growth in the region had been around 0.5 percent lower than the Italian average since the mid-nineties" (Ther, 246). By signaling this specific depiction of Italy's economy, it becomes distinguishable that Southern states rely on external powers to accumulate neoliberal assets, even before the emergence of a globally recognized crisis.

Following the 2008 global recession, European welfare states endured a period of instability, requiring aid from the European monetary fund, and elongating their debts up to this day. Might we ask ourselves how could the course of events that followed the 2008 economic recession have affected each of these countries' views on environmental action and pursuit? Unsurprisingly, the faith on international cooperation during such an impactful event negatively affected Spain, Italy and Greece, in order of arrangement due to their initial economic losses, accounted to a foreign struggle on financial control.

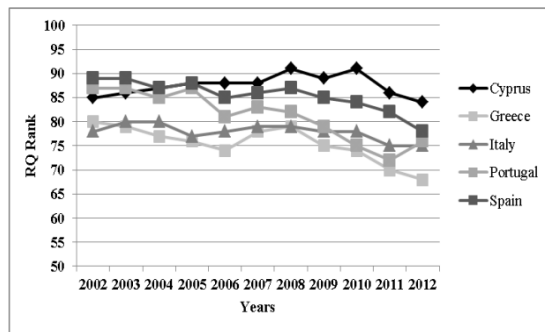


Figure 5. Evolution of Regulatory Quality
Source: World Bank Data (2002-2012).

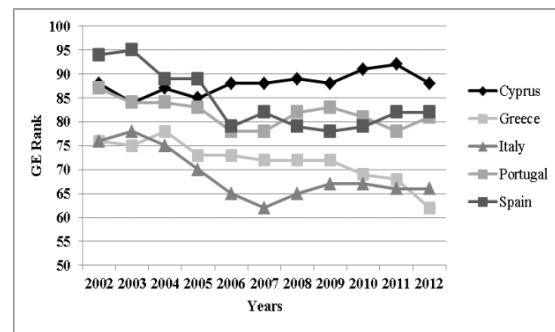


Figure 6. Evolution of Government Effectiveness
Source: World Bank Data (2002-2012).

The tables above refer to members of EU states after being subjected to the 2008 economic recovery plan, henceforth becoming known as welfare states. The convergent circumstance of the recession affected countries among the southern European region, leaving an irreparable stigma due to the weaker political and economic ties to the rest of the EU region. This occurrence ties in with the theoretical approach to the strong impetus attributed to these states later on, in order to become competent prototypes for the economic market.

The correlation between economic disparity and the need to suffice independently led the so-called P.I.G.S (Portugal, Italy, Greece, Spain) states to compete by opening their frontiers to wider forms of imports, manufacturing and industries (Ther, 250). The tables above represent the relatively similar effects undergone by the states in discussion, along with Cyprus, which was the

second to last sovereignty to access the common European market, becoming an EU state in 2004. Unlike Cyprus, the rest of the listed countries are part of the OECD; states expected to comply to multilateral regulatory measures accordingly to their levels of economic effects in the distinct socioeconomic fields. Due to this fact, these industrialized states play an active role in the proliferation of carbon emitting companies. The table on the left (Figure 5) indicates the evolutionary trends of the above-mentioned country-states, in terms of the changes to the Regulatory Quality; targeting “citizens’ views about the capability of authorities to boost growth in the private sector via efficient policies” (Batrancea, 65). It is worth noting that all 5 states in the chart present a peak on their domestic Regulatory Quality. This is the very same year where the economy reverberated on the global scene, with exceptionally negative effects on the states in discussion.

Greece can be underlined as the greatest debited state, as the Hellenic republic demanded the highest bailout, with over 200 billion euro granted by the EU monetary fund. As the ‘Troika’, or reconstruction period developed, the national legislative efforts to make amends with their bailout failed in some respects but thrived in others. National consumption and production percentages dropped drastically from the year 2006 to the target year of 2008, as the economic hardships progressed. As an attempt to balance out the economic debt, the Greek government considered the environment an asset to boost the economy, therefore diverse forms of taxation were implemented. The tax on fuel increased rapidly, resulting in a rejection by the general national public, accordingly to the lowering results in the chart above (see Table 6). In contrast to the rest of the southern states, Greece acknowledged the plausible ecological benefits that could come with an increase on taxes regarding polluting energy systems. Moreover, their mindful environmental implementations insinuated the use of public funds for the furthering of greener

endeavors, incorporating investments in renewable energies and compensating projects (Lekakis & Kousis, 319). In the table on the right, the loss of Government Effectiveness (GE) depicts a perceivable decline in Italy, second to Greece. The GE rank, as shown in the right-hand y-axis chart, is majorly due to the poor levels of government administration during the recorded decade.

Greece's transition into democracy was well needed, as their brief encounter with national right-wing extremism degraded the quality of the people's exposure to the international political realm and the basic rights and freedoms allotted to democratic powers. Their high emphasis on state-wide environmental technology development has attributed to the external reflection of this nation-state as undemocratic, as they continue to be in considerable debt in comparison to other Western countries. In 1975, the Greek constitution was reestablished after decades of censorship under the military-led *junta*, when former prime minister Constantine Karamanlis pursued the fortification of the people's social capital, by regaining "national reconciliation" that would promote national democracy. In addition, Karamanlis did not hesitate to reconstruct Greece's regime during his administration, as he envisioned to adhere to the Europeanized structure of multilateralism, that would influence the Greek society to attain pluralistic democracy. Greek's 'policy taker rather than policy maker' (Lekakis, 311) trend began after its inclusion to the EEC, when the Hellenistic state became rather diligent abiding to broadly devised environmental accords, such as the protection of marine environment (N.743/77), or revision and recommendations on waste management (50910/2727). A common theme on the evaluation of Greece's environmental resources concerning to the regulation of sea-port pollution, is the lack of consistency in reinforcement of a comprehensive policy on sustainable action. According to a Greek report on the prospects for *green* port projects [3], there must be national and public awareness on each of the respective needs that accompany the

actor's investment towards sustainable action. This response holds realistic grounds, as it embraces Greece's transition into the interdependent globalized system, where trade and transport have become fundamental for the functioning of a competent society in the Western world, thus becoming vital for the coastal states. Greece has sustained years of economic reconstruction, having leaned on the aid of the European support and legislative guidance. Their considerable prioritization on environmental technology development has attributed to the high capacity of becoming a prospective green state, as they are leading informants for demonstrating complete accountability to scientific reports on domestic and international levels. Greece's high level of collaboration can be tied to their reluctance to revert back to nationalistic political interests, as in their case, poses more danger to the ignorance towards policies on the improvement of air pollution, than advantages.

Italy's case follows Greece in the similarities between socioeconomic enterprises, but its Italy's transformation into a peaceful international actor that has affected its population, as well as the environmental conditions in its coastal cities. Italy's unification after WW2 posed a strain on the Italian people, as it became mostly the regions of the south that opposed the international engagement with their entrance into the Transatlantic treaty NATO in 1952. (Silvestri, 510). The expansion of shared powers over the Mediterranean realm contributed to Italy's expanding economic influx, which converted the leading democratic-right parties to seek neoliberalist gains with their expanding integration into EU policy. The reconstruction of Italy's industrial sectors was highly reliant on their initial dependence to US' Marshall Plan, which would impulse the Italian nation to agree to form a binding interdependent agreement of free market under the Treaty of Rome, establishing the European Economic Community (EEC).

Due to Italy's late industrial integration and expansion, the national interest on energy use fluctuated accordingly to external influences. Their initial plans to convert to nuclear energy failed in the late 1980s due to the significant social impact caused by the nuclear accident of Chernobyl, Ukraine. As a result, Italy became increasingly more dependent on energy imports, increasing the transportation on primary energy, resulting in soaring electricity prices, becoming the world's fourth most competent crude oil importer in 2010, coming behind US, Japan, and Germany (Standish, 2010). A relational force to air pollution exposure as a cause of the fossil fuel imports and usage is the considerable migration of Italian people from the inland mountainous cities to coastal port regions, which has contributed to the concentration of fossil fuels in coastal cities like Naples and Sicily, being the most studied coastal cities. A study conducted under the supervision of Italy's *Progetto Bandiera*, a state-wide macro-project based on the sustainable development of industrial sectors, deposed the lack of foundational evidence of greenhouse gases other than SO₂ in areas of maritime transit. These insufficient results signify the lack of profound testing and evidence of the varying factors that contribute to air pollution in the Italian sea-port cities. "In many port-cities, industrial development and port development have traditionally gone hand in hand. These forms of port-city industrialization were more or less spontaneous, occurred during various stages of port-city development and were in many cases determined by urban specificities and land site conditions and availability." (OECD, 1995) The significant outlying presence of SO₂ concentrations in the study of the port of Naples were correlated with 'naval emissions', although there was not a determinant factor of its true prevalence, as the 2015 studies proved to not have enough evidence and length to their monitoring procedures. Constituent to the theories on effective action and cooperation, the *Assessment of ambient air quality in the port of Naples* accounts to the

sustention of the global reports on air quality emissions, although through the offering of minimal testing, there is little reliance to empirical data. Conversely, Italy has been participant in EU-funded projects which have carried through detailed examinations of maritime traffic along the basins of the central Mediterranean coasts (Deidun, 1357).

Lastly, the Spanish kingdom, being the utmost southern region of all Europe, it has strategic geopolitical jurisdiction over the entrance into Mediterranean waters. Similar to Greece, Spain had an arduous time attempting to infiltrate its frail and novel democratic governance into the EEC, as the transition from dictatorship to the parliamentary monarchy was devised by the elitist powers of the dictator Francisco Franco himself, who focused his nationalistic interests into the privatization of the primary economic sectors, seeking to enhance the economy of Spain's semi-autonomous regions. Interestingly enough, the pattern of industrial constructions in the Iberian Peninsula were allocated within territorial plains of sociopolitical groups opposing to the authoritarian regime, attributing to the drastic and irreplaceable changes in the surrounding cities, ecosystems, and by default, seaports. Areas in the southern region of Spain, like the Strait of Gibraltar, or Catalan-legislated seaports of Valencia and Barcelona have increasingly incorporated more petrochemical plants to substantiate the maritime transport sector in the past half century. According to social studies carried out in the autonomous and coastal region of Andalucia, there is an epistemic negligence by regional and national authorities to the emissions the greatest polluting industries in the coast, due to the economic advantages that have emerged in the last half of the century as an outcome. (Vidal, 64)

Insofar as to Spain's alliance to multilaterally signed treaties, it presents far lower transparency than its peer states, appearing as 6th least active participant under OECD standard in the *global network*, encasing low indexes of international cooperation and research, and even

lower in funding incentives for international co-operation. (Spain, 53) While Spain is a highly competent actor for renewable energy in the global realm, it remains hesitant to collaborate in multilateral projects to provide consistent quantifiable data for structural reforms concerning to their national policies on air pollution abatement.

All three states have faced comparable political reconstructions, compromising on democratic terms to instill Europeanized customs independently and accordingly to each of the sovereignties' domestic interests. Adding Spain's social inability to exteriorize their regional problems as a result from sociopolitical oppression, Italy's lack of comprehensive data adjoining the more preempted knowledge and enforced measures on land transport, and the socioeconomic setbacks instilled by the Greek country upon itself, there cannot be room for doubt that these countries all have the unified all-encasing issue of air pollution within the same transitory region of the Mediterranean Sea. All three countries have been set to maintain unified ethical approaches to the environment; there are fundamental rights reserved to the preservation and recreation within cultural and social groups towards their respective environments, as firstly implemented in the Spanish Constitution, article 45 in 1979, followed by Greece, ratifying the duty of the State as the essence to protect their environment, in art.24 of the Greek Constitution, revised in 2001. Italy's determination to the environment is reflected in an innovative mode, by promoting the "development of culture and scientific and technical research", in article 9, but also maintaining executive legislation over environmental concerns, in art. 117, s. These distinct laws offer open-ended interpretations, which are considered and enforced respectively to each of the states' internal political interests. Albeit, with the presented knowledge, it must be attested that these three Mediterranean states have not complies to internationally imposed strategies to tackle their pollution problems. Within the region of the Mediterranean, there is little to no active

multilateral accords to investigate and contribute to the concurring efforts of air pollution mitigation. The role of the industrial corporations should follow accordingly to a cohesive supranational law on emission controls and abatement regulations, through a constructivist approach, in order to subsidize their faulty contributions to the environment.

[1] P. Haas xxi

[2] Longhofer, W., Schofer, E., Miric, N., & Frank, D. (2016). NGOs, INGOs, and Environmental Policy Reform, 1970–2010. *Social Forces*, 94(4), 1743-1768.

[3] “How will Greek ports become Green ports?”. 7.

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