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Italy's Mediterranean policy: Main features

السياسة المتوسطية لاطاليا: المحددات الاساسية

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Abstract

This paper investigates Italy's Mediterranean policy by examining the conceptual and practical challenges related to the region and analysing the main factors that played a major role in elaborating such policy (Geographical, historical, economical and political-cultural factors). Several findings emerge from this study. Firstly, the considered factors contributed to a dual vocation of Italy in its regional belonging. Secondly, that the economic interest is constant feature to the country's approach to the Mediterranean space, privileging a balancing or autonomous policy comparing to other European countries towards the region. Thirdly, the political-cultural background of the country privileged a bridging and balancing role in the Mediterranean context.

Keywords: Italy, Mediterranean, Foreign policy

الملخص باللغة العربية

تبحث هذه الورقة في سياسة إيطاليا المتوسطية من خلال دراسة التحديات المفاهيمية والعملية المتعلقة بالمنطقة وتحليل العوامل الرئيسية التي لعبت دوراً رئيسياً في بلورة هذه السياسة (العوامل الجغرافية، التاريخية، الاقتصادية والسياسية-الثقافية). ثمة العديد من النتائج سنتوصل إليها. أولاً، أن العوامل المدروسة قد ساهمت في ازدواجية المسار لإيطاليا في انتمائها الإقليمي. ثانياً، أن المصلحة الاقتصادية تشكل نقطة مرجعية لها في مقاربتها للفضاء المتوسطي، مع تفضيل سياسة التوازن أو الاستقلال الذاتي مقارنة بالدول الأوروبية الأخرى تجاه المنطقة. ثالثاً، أن الخلفية السياسية الثقافية للبلاد قد ساهمت في لعب دور توازني توافقي في السياق المتوسطي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: إيطاليا، المتوسط، السياسة الخارجية

1. INTRODUCTION

In addition to what is commonly considered the Atlantic dimension (partnership with the United States of America and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation), Italy's immediate projections in terms of foreign policy are, for historical and geographical considerations, closely linked to the European continent and the Mediterranean area. The Country's interactions with these two areas created, to some extent, the image of two competing aspirations (despite EU's Mediterranean dialogue launched in 1995). The complex geographical,

historical and cultural reference has a significant importance to Italy: the Mediterranean sea symbolises its glorious past and hegemony since the Roman empire and is today a source of challenges and opportunities and a key priority of the country's diplomacy on political and economic levels (investments and contracts, conflicts, Migration, Security).

The relevance of Italy to the Mediterranean space has been argued in major works of C. Santoro¹, De Leonardi², while historian Fernand Braudel emphasized a Mediterranean vocation or destiny to Italy³. Such

assertion, while historically and geographically motivated was further shaped by interdependent factors as we will develop further.

In comparison to other mediterranean actors, the italian Mediterranean diplomacy did not receive sufficient scholar's attention despite a very particular and rich history and a constant and multifaceted commitment towards the Mediterranean space.

The problematic

- As a founding member of the European Economic Community and European Union but also a major promoter of broader and stronger Mediterranean cooperation, Italy has **a dual vocation that brings to the forefront the main factors shaping its's Mediterranean policy.**
- the main research hypothesis that we will be arguing is that significant historical, geographical and systemic specificities of Italy played a major role in its approach to the Mediterranean area, giving room for a more balanced or a bridging role and sometimes an autonomous vision when it comes to specific issues of divergence between the European and non european Mediterranean countries when confronted with issues concerning the Mediterranean space.
- In order to discuss this problematic, we will be privileging a descriptive and analytical approach of the country's attributes and their impact on its international behaviour, specifically in the Mediterranean space, characterised by a multitude of contrasts and competing interests.

2. Foreign policy : A conceptual framework :

- The concept of foreign policy is a key component of International Relations studies and its definition attracted academic attention since the

establishment of foreign policy analysis as distinct discipline, structured around diverse approaches and schools of thought.

- While Raymon Aaron has summed up the basic tools of such policy, arguing that Strategy and diplomacy are «the two faces of foreign policy»⁴, Clarke and White's definition highlighted the specificity of this part of governmental policy: «Like domestic policy is formulated within the state but unlike policy is directed and must be implemented in the environment external to the state»⁵.
- In other words, foreign policy is the expression of a political unit of the international system (traditionally sovereign States) interests, priorities, or even reaction on its non domestic domain; which can have different forms and aspects depending on domestic and international factors (range of the country, its military or economic assets, membership in military or economic alliances ex. NATO, EU, and strategic partnership...).
- Such field of study also covers a wide span of dimensions from diplomacy to conventional war and diverging interests (economic, political, security, military dimensions). Similarly, interaction between domestic/foreign policy can be a source of complexity of analysis (actions and reactions can be domestically motivated or implied by regional or international context).
- Hence, Foreign policy as a concept has been closely linked with the Nation State as the main actor of International Relations (we often talk about foreign actions or foreign affairs when addressing the behaviour from non state actors such as International Organisations or Non Governmental Actors), even tough this centrality has been put into question after the end of the bipolar world. The concept is also closely linked to the national

interest and such endeavour theoretically implies to abide by a number of conventional written and customary laws (diplomatic, consular conventions), the United Nations's charter and International law.

3. The Mediterranean area : etymology and limitations

3.1. Etymology

- « Mediterranean » is deviated from Latin « *Mediterraneus* » ; « *medius* » meaning middle and « *terraneus*, from terra in reference to land or earth⁶.
- In arabic, the usual denomination is « white mediterranean sea » (البحر الابيض المتوسط) which is equivocal to the latin meaning with one additional adjective (white), reportedly related to the colour of the Sea.
- Throughout history, the Mediterranean was coined differently ; famous as « *Il Mare Nostrum* » (our Sea) or « *Mare internum* » (internal Sea) during the Roman empire, In arabic litterature, it was previously coined the « Shami sea »⁷ by traveller and geographer « Cherif Al Idrissi » and « Roman or Shami Sea » (Al Bahr Ar Rumi /Al Bahr Shami) in Ibn Khaldun's *Mokaddima*⁸ in reference to Bilad El sham (Syria and Irak).
- Such conceptions brings to the forefront a cultural definition of the sea, in reference to the peoples or civilisations that lived on its shores.

3.2. Flexible boundaries

- Il «Mare Nostrum» is a semi closed sea⁹, a flexible area at the cross-roads between Africa, Europe and Asia that can be enlarged into neighbouring spaces (the Middle East, the Balkans, the Black Sea, the Persian Gulf,...) or divided into different

sub-regional spaces. Its is a complex area that can be structured on different grounds, because of a mutual causality between its geography and its history. It has attracted more or less interest on specific times and issues depending on the international context, episodic or longstanding conflicts and geopolitical positions related to different International powers's interests and strategies in the area.

Geographically, the Mediterranean could be divided into different sub regions: the Oriental bassin (from Egypt to Turkey) and the western one (North Africa and Southern Europe), or into two major shores; the northern and southern one with peculiar historical and political differences.

- We can build different conceptions of the Mediterranean given the complex historical, geographical and cultural features of the region but also due to competing/conflicting visions, diverse political and economical backgrounds on its different sub regional parts. Such definitions can only be slippery in essence.

- Moreover, trying to establish boundaries or limits to such space can be challenging; for instance basin gour analysis on direct exposure to the maritime space of the Mediterranean will exclude many countries with interests in the area (ex. Portugal, Mauritania and Western Sahara) while being members of regional organisations closely linked to the Mediterranean (Arab Maghreb Union, African Union, European Union, Arab League).

- Meanwhile, on the institutional level, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), as an international organisation specifically dedicated to strengthening cooperation and dialogue in this space counts up 26 countries¹⁰ (European Union member states by 2008 and 15 Southern and Eastern Mediterranean states). The Organisation might constitute a framework of reference when it comes to defining a political or economic interest towards this region but the

membership of countries such as Denmark or Ireland while excluding areas that are deemed as continuum of the Mediterranean on historical and cultural level (the Middle East and Arab Gulf) can be discussed.

Cultural and religious factors demonstrate the overlapping between history and geography, the region being the cradle of monotheism (Judaism, christianism and islam), and a contact zone between different cultures and hegemonies that extends beyond the region (to cite a few; Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Western, Arab, Ottoman, European).

According to Fernand Braudel, beyond its current political divisions, the Mediterranean, can be divided into three distinct spaces on the basis of different parameters; three cultural communities, three big civilisations, three ways of thinking and believe: the West, or rather the christian or roman civilisation, Islam or a «counter-West» civilisation¹¹. Such assertion highlights the region as a well established place for human exchange, prosperity empires and great powers's quest for domination.

The Mediterranean is also the theatre of numerous tension zones, the Palestinian-Israeli longstanding conflict, instability in Syria, Irak, Libya and has a peculiar colonial history. New conflict subjects or at least competing interests are already looming: water crisis, *off shore* minerals resources, Economic Exclusive Zones delimitation...etc.

In the modern era, the North-South dichotomy is the most tangible, exacerbated by a significant economical gap, the Arab-Israel conflict, the terrorist upsurge, the prevailing instability in many regions and not only by the september 11, 2001¹². Illegal migration is also a main source of concern with two major routes: central (mainly through Libya) and eastern (Syria-

turkey-Greece) routes. The phenomena constitutes a major source of concern to Italy.

Even if it is often considered as culturally and politically conflictual¹³ as it covers one of the long lasting conflicts and constitutes a contact zone, it is worth saying that there is no clear or unique hegemony in the region. This further entertains competitiveness between Mediterranean countries and regional alliances in quest of influence.

The Mediterranean is definitely more than a geographical concept, it is a complex and flexible identity or construction with features of similarities, contrast and tension. It can also be considered as an idealistic, imaginary space that inspired philosophy, literature and mythology. The limits to such area are flexible with numerous neighbouring regions that can be integrated to it, and its key location made it a subject of hegemony and competition throughout history.

In the same vein, many countries are keen to consider themselves as Mediterranean due to political, economic, or security considerations, which can lead us to consider the Mediterranean as an abstract project or vision and most importantly due to the rich economic and strategic potential of the area (oil, minerals, maritime routes, military positions) that accounted for 60 billion € in Gross Value Added in 2018¹⁴.

4. Italy's Mediterranean policy: Overlapping factors

Italy is closely linked to the Mediterranean space for very diverse historical, economical and political-cultural considerations. It is historically a prime and natural space of influence and interaction of the country but gained up new dimensions with ambitions

and challenges throughout time, especially in the aftermath of World War II.

As such, the Mediterranean has always been present in the political discourse of Italian leaders and is considered as one of the three major pillars of the country's foreign policy (Europe, Atlantic Alliance and the Mediterranean). The different factors influencing such policy are very difficult to delimit as they interact and overlap with each other.

4.1 Geographical factors

With respect to its geographical assets; a peninsula, with more than 70 % of its territory being emerged in the Mediterranean waters, the maritime space vested key importance to the country, due to the symbolic past of domination of the Mediterranean area (Roman and Byzantine Empire), and constant ambitions in terms of trade and natural resources in the region. Nowadays, Italy is often considered as a frontier country of Europe facing a significant part of migration inflows from 2011.

Natural barriers played a significant part on the political game : the Alps constitute a barrier between Italy and continental Europe, the Appennini mountain chain divide the country between East and West. Sardinia and Sicily are insular parts of the country.

This double vocation of Italy ; being a peninsula and attached to continental Europe at the same time (which can be considered as part of the National attributes) impacted of the self perception of the country. There is a constant effort from Italian officials and intellectuals to balance between two different conceptions (maritime and continental) based on different intellectual perspectives and might lead to a dependency of the Northern part of the country to the southern part and *vice Versa*¹⁵.

Congruent with this geographic dichotomy, a significant socio-economic gap exists between the Northern and the Southern part (Mezzogiorno) of the country. From one side, there is an industrial flourishing Northern Italy, keen to look up to the European continent (continental aspiration), from the other, a central-southern Italy, with a less developed industry (agriculture, tourism, fishing) that has a significant interest in the regional southern space (maritime vision, alternative cooperation policy). This disparity also played a major role in the conception of the national identity and thus its political and international role.

Most of exports and imports of Italy transit by the Mediterranean, especially energy (pipelines). Very ambitious projects (Eastmed, Transadriatic pipeline) are scheduled to enhance Italy's position as an energy hub to the rest of Europe, taking advantage of new gas discoveries in Azerbaijan and the eastern Mediterranean and operating a diversification of resources as prompted by the European Union's energy strategy.

Accordingly, despite changing international and regional context the importance of the Mediterranean is a constant feature in Italy and the interests evolved from political economic, military and security perspectives depending on internal, regional and international context.

4.2. Historical factors

Italy probably offers one of the most peculiar and multifaceted historical features; the Roman Empire's hegemony on the area left material (monuments) and immaterial (linguistic, cultural) signs on the Northern, Southern and Eastern Mediterranean and offers the advantage of being too remote historically to spark political resistance or colonial sensitivity from the southern and eastern Mediterranean societies. This domination left a common heritage in language, habits and literature.

As one of the last European countries to achieve its unification in 1861, Italy has a particular historical legacy. Its modern history is complex: decentralised, independent state, flexible boundaries, while its unification was made possible after three wars of independence “the Resurgence” (*Il Risorgimento*).

In particular, the city of Rome vests a symbolic importance. Only in 1871 was the fate of the Papal States which occupied the central part of the country solved, paving the way to the capital shift of the Kingdom of Italy from Turin to Florence and finally to Rome.

It is against this background that the country will join the colonial conquest and walk in the footsteps of its colonial peers (Great Britain and France), especially in the Eastern Africa (Erytrea, Ethiopia) from 1880 and in Libya from 1912.

However, the Italian colonial enterprise is considered to be an unusual model, that was set up very late and paved the way for decolonization very rapidly¹⁶.

As a defeated country, Italy has been sidelined after WWII from western allies who entertained suspicion and doubts about its position in regards to regional situations and the global context of the Cold War era. While the country has been admitted to the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO) in 1949, only 14/12/1955 was it allowed to join the United Nations.

Through the Constitutional referendum of 2 June 1947, the Italian people chose the Republican regime and a constitutional Assembly was installed to elaborate a constitution that would broker a political « rupture » with the fascist regime that prevailed for 20 years and dominated the political landscape.

What might be considered as a late return to the International arena, had some positive effects and played a significative role in the

country's image in the arab- Mediterranean countries. Indeed, as a latecomer to the United Nations, the country didn't have to play a significant role in the upsurge of tensions in the Mediterranean during this period, especially the western/arab tensions (ex. the establishment of Israel, the first arab-israeli war, the suez canal crisis).

Other key moments are important in this perspective: 1955 is considered as moment that kindled new dynamics and independence to the Italian foreign policy, that was previously absorbed by the resolving of Trieste fate (status of the disputed Italian city with Yugoslavia).

A few years later, in 1957, the signature of the Rome Treaties, along with the Marshall Plan induces industrial and economic development and reconstruction of Italy until the 70's and constitutes one key factor of Italy's industrialisation. The country has benefited from this cooperation framework to foster its economic sector development and will have one of the most promising economical prospects during the 60's -70's.

By the end of the Cold War, Italy will further try to foster its cooperation with the Mediterranean countries on bilateral level but also through the European framework. However, political instability and the economic situation will hinder this policy.

4.3 Economical ambitions:

Because of political instability, the economic priorities of Italy constituted a constant factor of Italy's foreign policy, with major interactions between the economic sphere and the political one.

Having the majority of its economic production directed to exportation and the « economic industrial districts » economic model structured around small-medium size societies, the economy of the country is also integrated in the value chain of the European production (Germany-France).

Enjoying considerable notoriety worldwide, the label « Made in Italy » is considered as the most famous trademark after Coca Cola and Visa worldwide¹⁷. With respect to the importance of the international market, the Ministry of Foreign affairs and International Cooperation has different instruments and agencies that support this specific track of diplomacy¹⁸: Italian Trade and investment Agency, ITA-ICE, the General Direction for Cultural and Economic Promotion and Innovation (Direzione Generale per la Promozione del System Paese) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, as well as the Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation (AICS).

Massimo d'Alema (Communist Party), in his quality of Minister of Foreign Affairs considered that « as a regional actor in the political and security level, Italy has, on the other hand, global and economic interests. And given the growing interaction between security and economic dynamics (the energetic question being the more evident example), the foreign policy must be conceived as an internationalisation policy»¹⁹.

With the flourishing of the Italian economy as a consequence of the European integration, the Mediterranean area represented a priority to the country as a potential market but also as a privileged area for energy sources (Libya, Algeria, Middle East).

In Italy, the maritime sector, or more broadly the Blue Economy is a strategic sector, it counted up to 80,334M € in turnover in 2018 with 13% gross profit margin²⁰.

This framework contributed to a particular situation where economic initiative sometimes took the lead on the political one as it presented a more stable and articulated vision. The Italian diplomacy is very active on the economic dimension as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation offers a wide range of

incentives to Italian economic actors (financial support, presentation initiatives taking part in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs's headquarters, follow up of international tenders, involvement of economic actors in the Italian international aid, local and international fairs).

One symbol of Italian solidarity and commitment towards southern Mediterranean countries and the Arab world is probably embodied in Enrico Mattei's initiatives, who was Head of the Azienda Generale Italiana Petroli (AGIP) and then Ente Nazionale idrocarburi s.p.a (Eni), and played a significant role in reviewing the logic of oil contracts's hegemony, in the 60's.

its strategy- often considered as a parallel Italian diplomacy- was based on a solidarity to the quest of previously colonised countries to realise economic independence with the willingness to have a more balanced and win win cooperation when it comes to energy prospecting (Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Algeria).

After several initiatives proposed on the Atlantic, European level, Mattei will be convinced that some economic and political priorities of Italy couldn't be satisfied through Atlantic alliance because they were conflicting with those of its principal ally²¹, i.e the United States of America and would seek to change the established rules through diverse initiatives that would undermine the Western domination on oil markets.

4.4 Italian political-cultural features :

The combination of the factors developed earlier interacted with and impacted the country's political culture and consequently its foreign policy and the general conceptions that Italian policy makers and

public opinion do entertain about such policy.

The historical and geographical factors (along with economic specificities) certainly played an ambivalent role in this perspective. To a significant extent, the fragmentation of the country into several States and Kingdoms (with different political background), the gradual unification under the Kingdom of Italy, fascism and finally the regime change into a parliamentary Republic in 1947 have heavily impacted the formation of an Italian nation and a feeling of belonging or “strategic narrative”²² specific to each nation which seems to be dualistic in the Italian case (North-South, European-Mediterranean, Continental-peninsular).

From 1945 onwards, the country was home to the most strong communist party in western Europe from one side and to heirs of right wing extremists and those of the fascist regime from the other²³, a situation that held pressure on the Italian politics and caused recurrent governmental crisis and collapse. The constant fear of the fascist past helped in adopting a balanced legislative system in order to avoid the scenarios of World War II.

This led to the predominance of consensus search in Italian politics and a tradition of bargaining that is time consuming and difficult to sustain in international politics.

As an example of the difficulty to get clear cut decisions due to long process and the complex electoral system, it is worth considering that it took 71 years (in 2017) for the Italian Parliament to adopt the national Anthem of Italy, « Fratelli d'Italia »²⁴ as it wasn't a consensual choice.

This process is also time consuming to policy makers, which frequently led the country to adopt a low profile in international affairs because of internal

crisis (suffice to consider that the country had 63 governments from 1946 to 2020).

This situation was further exacerbated by the cold war climate and the marginalisation of leftwing Italian parties which prevailed until the « historical compromise » of 1973²⁵ that paved the way for new perspectives in terms of domestic and foreign policy.

The end of the cold war and the gradual decrease of the US interest into the Mediterranean space allowed a more autonomous role of Italy in this space and sometimes even in stark contradiction to the US or European positions towards the regional context. We can recall for instance the « Achille Lauro » ship case²⁶, but equally the multiple mediation bids from the Italian part towards regional issues notably the Arab Israeli conflict and the position of the country towards the Organisation for the Palestine Liberation Organisation, though the success of such endeavour was hindered with contextual factors.

Behaviouralists scholars contributed in assessing the role of specific features of the cultural properties on the conception and shaping of the national foreign attitude, with distinct patterns.

Italy has a specific political culture where the symbolic and imaginary is very important; the Roman empire experience (*romanity*²⁷), the tradition of senate bargains and debates with sometimes unexpected outcomes created a very tense heritage: prolific political elite, long and difficult debates, skilful speakers, difficulties to foresee political outcomes. In parallel, coalitions can be very unusual and fragile and floor crossing (change of political affiliation of Members of Parliament) as well as Party's split and collapse are part of the normal business. Accordingly, the political landscape lacks bipartisanship on foreign policy (common ground on Foreign policy issues between the

Majority and opposition), even on major issues such as the EU's membership and migration policy.

More recently, the country witnessed peculiar political cases such as the « clean hands »²⁸ case which accelerated the collapse of the Christian Democracy in the mid-80's, at the same time, social contest sparked the political violence coined « *Lead years* » that constituted a collective trauma to the Italian Society²⁹.

The cultural identity in North and South of the country is different and has different regional linkages (European-continental in the North, Mediterranean- insular in the South).

Such ambivalence is congruent with the economic reality: the industrialised north is more liberalist- right wing parties while southern, economically stressed South is more lenient to socialist policies and parties. Moreover, there is a tendency to consider institutions in the peninsula differently, according to the political affiliation of their leadership³⁰.

Consequently, we can witness a relative leeway on decision making in Foreign Policy in comparison to other countries such as the USA or other European countries, as Italy seems to consider long term consequences and privileges negotiated outcomes. This could be linked to the political system but also to the frequent governmental instability in Italy that prevented from conducting an ambitious and continuous foreign policy, even if the country is considered to have one of the most professional diplomacy³¹.

The legacy of the Roman hegemony on the Mediterranean region fosters a cultural linkage between Italy and the Mediterranean, enhanced on the scientific-cultural level with technical cooperation : Archeology, history, Latin language that

influenced most European languages but is commonly used in social sciences and humanities as a bridging means of diffusing knowledge but also exerting a cultural soft power of Italy in the region.

Such elements constitute important assets of the foreign policy of the country with a tendency to prefer consensual options in accordance with European-Western Alliances rather than through a narrow nationalist optic.

While this might be considered as a fault line, especially at the national level, the cautious attitude along with the tendency to seek cooperation and consensus from the Italian diplomacy in the Mediterranean, with diverse sensitivities, constitutes an advantage to the Italian foreign policy, which is traditionally considered as more conciliant with non European Mediterranean countries, in comparison to other Western and European countries.

5. CONCLUSION

Throughout this research, we analysed the diverse factors impacting the Italian Mediterranean policy, highlighting specificities of this regional space as well as the special features, assets and linkages from an Italian perspective.

While historical and geographical features established the general framework of such policy, they underpinned a key symbolic character of the Mediterranean in the Italian imaginary (Roman empire, shared legacy throughout the Mediterranean), and a conciliated approach toward the actors of this space.

Economic features gave the country a constant interest in the regional (exports, energy, international tenders) and fostered a very active economic diplomacy in the region, enhanced by a shared cultural heritage.

Finally, the political-cultural landscape of the country, based on political instability, consensus and ambivalence led to a cautious and balanced attitude, presenting interesting assets in favour of dialogue and continuity in the constantly evolving Mediterranean context.

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⁸ ولي الدين عبد الرحمن محمد ابن خلدون (2004)، المقدمة، دار يعرب، سوريا، ج1، ط1، ص. 437.

⁹ Inside which marine actions and endeavours are regulated through articles 122-123 of the Montegobay or United Nations Convention on the Sea Law -UNCLOS-, adopted in 1982 and entered into force in 1994.

¹⁰ Qui sommes Nous ? Etats membres :<https://ufmsecretariat.org/fr/qui-sommes-nous/etats-membres/> (visited on october 19,2020, 12:50).

¹¹ Fernand Braudel (1949), Méditerranée, Op.Cit, PP. 157-160.

¹² As sustained by Denis Bauchard, Denis Bauchards (2008), « l'Union pour la Méditerranée; un défis européen », Politique étrangère, Vol. 73, No. 1, pp. 51-64.

¹ Carlo Maria Santoro (1991), la politica estera di una media potenza ; L'Italia dall'Unità ad oggi, Il Mulino, Italy.

² Massimo De Leonardis (ed.) (2003), Il mediterraneo nella politica estera italiana nel secondo dopoguerra, il Mulino, Italy,

³ Fernand Braudel (1949), La Méditerranée : l'espace et l'histoire, Champs, France, PP.17.

⁴ Raymon Aaron (1962), Paix et guerre entre les nations, France, P.3.

⁵ M. Fatih Tayfur(1994), « Main approaches to the study of foreign policy: a review », METU studies in development, 21, P.117.

⁶ Collins online dictionary,
<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/mediterranean> (consulted on 21/08/2020, 20:15).

entre histoire et mémoire, Autrement éditions, France, P.5.

²⁴ Press Article (without author): « Fratelli d'Italia é ufficialmente l'inno nazionale italiano; il senato approva la legge con 71 anni di ritardo », available at : <https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2017/11/15/fratelli-ditalia-e-ufficialmente-linno-nazionale-italiano-il-senato-approva-la-legge-con-71-anni-di-ritardo/3980468/> (02/12/2020).

²⁵ « *compromesso storico* » in italian, is often considered as a key moment in the 70's, availing a rapprochement between the Christian Democracy Party and the communist Party putting an end to decades of political exclusion that impacted the political business and led to the fragility or collapse of italian Governments.

²⁶ « The Achille Lauro » or « signonella crisis » refers to the crisis in the aftermath of the highjacking of the ship from palestinian nationals in Alexandria, Egypt, on October, 7th, 1985, causing the death of an american national. It led to a major crisis between the United States and Italy on the processing of the highjackers. This case is considered as one of the main signals of an autonomous policy of Italy with respect to the United States of America.

²⁷ See Laura Malvas Bechelloni, « Le Mythe de la romanité et la politique de l'image dans l'Italie fasciste », Vingtième siècle, Revue de l'histoire, 2003/2 (N°78), PP.111-120.

²⁸ *Mani Pulite*, a judicial inquiry on the connections between actors of the political and economical sphere that involved two former President of the council (Prime Minister), 1000 local delegates and hundreds of functionaries, see Gérard Cahin (2001), « L'évolution de la République italienne », Revue française de droit constitutionnel ,N°48, P.708.

²⁹ Marc Lazar, Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci (ed.), Op.Cit, P.5.

³⁰ Fabio Bordignon(2009), « citoyens, institutions et politique » confluences Méditerranée, N°68, P.93,

³¹ François Puaux (1981), « Regards sur la politique étrangère de l'Italie », politique étrangère, N°2, 46ème année, PP.307-322, P.320.

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¹³ Yves Lacoste (2009), « La Méditerranée, espace géopolitique », Questions internationales, un avenir en question, La documentation française, n°36, Mars-avril, P.29.

¹⁴ European commission, « Report on blue economy 2020 », P.162, available at : https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/sites/maritimeaffairs/files/2020_06_blueeconomy-2020-ld_final.pdf (consulted on 26.11/2020).

¹⁵ Carlo Maria Santoro, op.cit, PP.53-58.

¹⁶ see Dubois Colette (1993), L'Italie, cas atypique d'une puissance européenne en Afrique : une colonisation tardive, une décolonisation précoce In: Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps, n°32-33, Colonisations en Afrique . pp. 10-14;

¹⁷ Giulinao Noci (2014), « Se Made in Italy fosse un brand, sarebbe il terzo al mondo », **Il Sole 24 ore** (Italian daily newspaper), https://st.ilsole24ore.com/art/commenti-e-idee/2014-08-27/se-made-italy-fosse-brand-sarebbe-terzo-mondo-063909.shtml?uuid=ABdARknB&refresh_ce=1 (28/09/2020, 10:30).

¹⁸ for more information in this regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs's organigramme offers a glimpse on the importance of economic and cultural cooperation <https://www.esteri.it/mae/en/ministero/struttura/organigramma.html> (visited on 24/11/2020; 11:00).

¹⁹ Massimo d'Alema, PP. 3-4, in Gruppo di riflessione strategica dell'unità di analisi e programmazione del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, « Rapporto le scelte di politica estera 2020 », https://www.esteri.it/mae/doc/rapporto2020_sceltepoliticaestera_090408.pdf (18 novembre 2020, 08:02)

²⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/sites/maritimeaffairs/files/2020_06_blueeconomy-2020-annexes-ld-part2_final.pdf

²¹ Luciano Tosi, « l'Italia e la cooperazione internazionale nel Mediterraneo: aspirazioni, interessi nazionali e realtà internazionale » in Massimo De Leonardis (ed.), op.cit, P.196.

²² P.Isernia, Francesca Longo (ed.), La politica estera italiana nel nuovo millennio, Il Mulino, 2019, P.121.

²³ Marc Lazar, Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci (ed.), L'Italie des années de plomb le terrorisme