LL.M. in INTERNATIONAL & EUROPEAN LAW

Abstracts of Master's Theses – Academic Year 2024–2025

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ALBERTZ SIMON

Between public curiosity and public information: privacy rights of prisoners of war under international law

This thesis examines the interpretation of Art. 13 (2) Third Geneva Convention and its role in protecting the privacy of Prisoners of War. Modern conflicts are no longer confined to the battlefield; they increasingly extend to the digital sphere. A key element of their strategy is the public display of Prisoners of War through which parties attempt to delegitimize the opponent, garner support for their own cause or - more broadly - establish their own narrative of the conflict. However, such practices are constrained by international law, in particular Art. 13 (2) Third Geneva Convention which protects the POW from exposure to public curiosity. Although the provisions' dignitarian dimension is widely acknowledged, its precise scope remains contested. Additionally, the value of privacy has not yet been given closer attention. This thesis adopts a systematic approach to interpreting the provision, drawing on Human Rights Law and International Criminal Law to clarify its relationship with human dignity. It further elucidates the links between privacy and dignity and summarizes real-life cases in groups that serve the assessment of a violation of Art. 13 (2) Third Geneva Convention. Finally, the thesis analyzes the publication of images through the lens of International Criminal Law and proposes potential avenues for criminal responsibility.

ARFANI MARIA-ELENI

The case law of EU courts in relation to the ECB's specific task to authorize and withdraw authorization of credit institutions

The present thesis outlines key judicial decisions of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) concerning actions for annulment or appeals brought against decisions of the European Central Bank (ECB) that grant or withdraw authorisations for credit institutions to operate. At the same time, it presents the main legislative framework governing the specific duty of the ECB to grant or withdraw operating licenses of credit institutions within the European Union.

ATHITAKI ALEXANDRA

Between Competition Law and Personal Data: Rethinking Exploitative Abuse under Article 102 TFEU

This thesis examines the intersection between competition law and personal data protection, focusing on whether violations of privacy may be conceptualized as exploitative abuses of a dominant position under Article 102 TFEU. The first part analyzes the traditional framework of exploitative abuse and its adaptation to digital zero-price markets, where personal data function as a form of consideration and privacy as a dimension of quality. It also explores privacy as an element of unfair trading conditions, with particular emphasis on the role of user consent and the Facebook/Meta case. The second part highlights the doctrinal and institutional limits of this approach, taking into account the distinct objectives of competition law and data protection law, as well as the risks of legal uncertainty and overlapping competences. The thesis concludes

by emphasizing the need for cautious and coordinated enforcement of the two regulatory frameworks, while respecting their distinct objectives.

AUBUGEAU-MILLER-WILLIAMS OSCAR-RICHARD-LOUIS

Family life and diplomatic law

This thesis contains an analysis of the relationship between family life and diplomatic law, with a focus on how law and practice define and shape notions of family. It begins with an attempt to define the word 'family' within both diplomatic and wider public international law, finding that there exists both a core conception of family - the traditional nuclear family - and an indeterminate wider concept of family. A review of State diplomatic practice suggests a consolidation around this core conception. In examining the substance of diplomatic privileges and immunities within the family sphere, the paper proposes a novel solution to protect victims of abuse in diplomatic families by drawing upon the receiving State's obligation to take all appropriate steps to prevent privileged individuals from any attack on their person, freedom or dignity. The paper concludes that current understandings of diplomatic law in this area are limited, and its flexibility underestimated.

BASARAN DERYA

AI-Generated Disinformation and International Human Rights Law: Challenges and Regulatory Responses

This thesis examines how international human rights law can guide the regulation of AI-generated disinformation, which has become faster, more convincing, and more harmful due to generative AI technologies. It explains how such disinformation affects elections, democracy, and rights such as freedom of expression, privacy, and access to accurate information. The study reviews when speech restrictions are legitimate under human rights law and compares regulatory approaches in the EU, United States, and Türkiye, which reflect different legal traditions. Using case studies from elections, conflicts, and public health crises, it shows the benefits and limits of current models. The thesis argues that combating AI-generated disinformation requires a balanced, human-rights–based approach. Effective regulation should limit harmful uses of AI while protecting fundamental freedoms and ensuring proper enforcement and oversight.

BILKE LEA-SOPHIE

The rule of law as a safeguard against populism: legal mechanisms for preserving democracy in the European Union

The thesis argues that the rule of law must be understood in two complementary dimensions: substantive principles (such as pluralism, equality, legal certainty, and fundamental rights) and structural guarantees (institutional checks and balances, especially judicial independence). The analysis shows how populist governments often exploit formal legality to entrench power while hollowing out the liberal-democratic substance of the rule of law. It then assesses how multilevel enforcement – through national institutions, public interest litigation, and supranational mechanisms – can enhance resilience against authoritarian drift. Using comparative examples including Hungary and Poland, the thesis evaluates the strengths and limits of EU legal and political tools (including Article 7 TEU, conditionality, and infringement procedures) in preserving democracy and Article 2 TEU values.

BOERDGEN HANNAH-SOPHIE

Pursuing Accountability for systemic pushbacks at the Poland/Belarus border under international law

The first part of the thesis will analyze whether Poland is in violation of their international human rights obligations and obligations under international refugee law and whether the situation at the border with Belarus give rises to state responsibility by constituting an internationally wrongful act. The second part will address the potentially shared responsibility of the European Union (EU) as an international organization (IO) for human rights violations. Going a step further the third part will examine if cases of systemic pushbacks fall under the legal definition of crimes against humanity pursuant to Article 7 of the Rome Statute and if Polish leadership and EU leadership is potentially individually criminally responsible before the International Criminal Court (ICC). In conclusion a reflection on the two regimes and their ability to bring justice and relief to migrants will follow.

BOVOLOS CHRISTOS

The role of solidarity in the New Pact on Asylum and Migration

This dissertation, starting from the observation that the Common European Asylum System should be based on solidarity and following binary logic, tries to explore the most recent attempt of the EU legislator to operationalise solidarity, through the establishment of a mandatory but flexible solidarity mechanism within the framework of the New Pact on Asylum and Migration.

CHATZICHARALAMPOUS GEORGIOS

Sustainability issues in the context of ius in bello

The contribution of this thesis lies in demonstrating that sustainability is not external to international humanitarian law, but intrinsic to its logic of limiting suffering and preserving the conditions for human life. While humanitarian law was not drafted with sustainability concerns in mind, its principles can be interpreted and applied in ways that give effect to sustainability concerns. By linking humanitarian law inter alia to environmental protection, intergenerational equity, or the principle of integration, this work seeks to illuminate how international law can adapt to contemporary challenges. In doing so, it also highlights the practical importance of sustainability; unless warfare is restrained not only in terms of human suffering but also in terms of ecological destruction, the long-term survival and well-being of current and future generations will be imperiled.

CHONDROU MARIA-ATHANASIA

Revisiting the mens rea requirements of the crime of genocide

The subject of the thesis delves into the doctrinal debate surrounding the mens rea requirements of the crime of genocide. It aims to challenge the extremely high threshold that jurisprudence has posed, by committing to a purpose-based interpretation og the "intent to destroy" element, thus rendering genocide the hardest crime to prove.

DIAMANTARAS EVANGELOS

The impact of Blockchain Technology on Cross-Border International Trade and Investment Facilitation under WTO and International Investment Law

This thesis explores how blockchain technology affects and can enhance international trade and investment facilitation within the legal frameworks of the WTO and International Investment Law. It assesses the technology's potential to improve transparency, security, and efficiency, while also addressing the legal and regulatory challenges arising from its decentralized nature. Additionally, it provides a comparative overview of regulatory approaches in the EU, the US, and other innovation-driven jurisdictions, offering insights into the sustainable integration of blockchain into global economic governance.

EXARCHOS NIKIFOROS

The Three Key Functions of the European Central Bank in the European Economic Governance

This dissertation covers the three key functions of the European Central Bank in the European Economic Governance, by analysing the evolution of these functions through the recent changes of the E.U.'s legal framework and the case law of the CJEU.

FAKHOURY BASEL-FAREED-SALEM

Territorial annexation under contemporary international law: recent developments

This thesis examines territorial annexation as a violation of international law, focusing on its normative foundations, legal classification, consequences, and the coherence of international responses. It employs doctrinal analysis of treaties, customary international law, jurisprudence, and International Law Commission codification, complemented by a focused case study examined in light of contemporary international law and recent developments

FILOPOULOU ILIAANNA

The role of the principle of mutual trust in the execution of European Arrest Warrant

This thesis aims to investigate the challenges faced by the European Union in striking a fragile balance between effective judicial protection, achieved through the principle of mutual trust, and the protection of fundamental rights. In particular, these dynamics are not approached in abstract theoretical terms but in the context of the European Arrest Warrant (EAW), which stands as the first and most successful instrument to incorporate the principle of mutual recognition into European criminal law. This work is structured in two main parts. The first examines how mutual trust serves as a driving force for centralization, thereby creating a coherent legal framework for cross-border cooperation. The second part explores its limits, highlighting how national courts and the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) have introduced a necessary counterbalance to blind trust, particularly in cases where human rights are at stake. The present research relies on jurisprudential analysis, case law, and theoretical perspectives, with the aim of exploring mutual trust as both a mechanism of legal integration and a source of constitutional tension.

GEIER DOMINIK-ALEXANDER

ARSIWA and Contemporary Issues of International Law Is it still up to the task?

The thesis seeks to analyze the question of whether the Articles on the Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts (ARSIWA) are still able to sufficiently deal with issues of International Law nearly 25 years after their adoption. The analysis is conducted at the hands of two current fields of International Law: Cyberspace and Climate Change.

GERASIMOU MARIA-ANGELIKI

International legal aspects of autonomous shipping

This thesis examines the international legal implications arising from the introduction of autonomous vessels into international shipping. The scope of the research is intentionally broad, as the emergence of autonomous shipping affects a wide range of maritime activities and legal regimes. Autonomy is approached primarily as a technological development that may lead to the absence of humans on board and to a shift from traditional onboard operations to remote forms of control. This transition forms the core focus of the thesis. International maritime law has historically been developed on the implicit assumption that vessels operate with a crew physically present on board. The thesis therefore investigates how deeply this man–ship relationship is embedded in the existing international legal framework and how that framework is affected when human presence on board is removed. The central research question of the thesis is whether, and to what extent, international law governing vessels is based on the assumption of human presence on board, and how the introduction of autonomous vessels, where onboard operations are replaced by remote control, challenges this assumption. If such a structural link exists, the thesis further explores the limits of legal interpretation: how far current international legal rules can be interpreted or adapted to accommodate autonomous vessels, and at what point the development of new, autonomy-specific legal instruments becomes unavoidable. The thesis ultimately seeks to assess the impact of crew presence on the adoption, implementation, and effectiveness of international legal rules governing shipping, while identifying the legal challenges created by the absence of a crew. The analysis is structured into two main parts, addressing the legal implications of autonomous vessels in times of peace and in times of armed conflict. Although focusing exclusively on one of these contexts might have allowed for a more detailed examination, such an approach would have overlooked the fundamentally different operation of international law in bello and would have undermined the coherence of the research question. The thesis concludes that the absence of a crew on board constitutes, at its core, an interpretative challenge. Autonomous vessels expose the limits of traditional legal interpretation across multiple areas of international law, including the definition of a warship and the legal characterization of remote operators in relation to established concepts such as that of the "master." These issues highlight the point at which existing legal rules can no longer be extended through interpretation alone. Where such limits are reached, the thesis argues that the development of new legal instruments tailored specifically to autonomous shipping becomes necessary. Overall, this thesis aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the fundamental legal issues raised by autonomous vessels. By covering a broad range of topics and drawing on extensive bibliography, it seeks to offer a structured understanding of an evolving field and to contribute to future discussions on the international legal framework governing autonomous shipping.

GKIRGKANI EVGENIA

The Right of Diplomatic and Consular Protection as deriving from EU Citizenship

The main aim of this thesis is to examine and analyse the external aspect of European Union's system of protecting its citizens, a system whose policies are so unique that they often collide with other international, regional and domestic mechanisms. Upon engaging into some significant clarifications regarding the concept of EU citizenship derived rights leading to the protection scheme that has been set up today, the analysis of the right to diplomatic and consular protection provided to all unrepresented Union citizens abroad through Article 23 TFEU and Article 46 of the Charter, will follow two main aspects. The first aspect concerns the review of

the procedural guarantees of the EU diplomatic and consular protection mechanism, through the EU legal-institutional framework established. The second part dives into the substantive scope of the protection regarding the constraints arising in practice, primarily set by the constant tensions with international law and state sovereingty. Overall, the thesis seeks to present a critical assessment of the effectiveness and implementation mechanisms of Article 23 TFEU's right, tackling significant issues regarding its viability. By recognising the influence of the international and domestic legal orders on the detailed EU provisions on consular and diplomatic protection, this research will focus on exposing the persistent gaps between the formal promises of Union citizenship and the reality that EU citizens face in third countries. By engaging in a comparative analysis of national legal frameworks, relevant international law and recent EU legislative initiatives, the practical operation of the EU consular model will be mapped out. The study argues that, though the EU consular model has great potential in establishing solidarity in consular assistance mechanisms, its effectiveness needs to be reinforced through substantial innovations. Only through a substantive entitlement, will the status of Union citizenship and the Union's impact beyond its borders be strengthened.

HAEFELE PAULINE-ISARA

The exception as normality: international law and the regulation of states of emergency in Latin America

This thesis explores the normalization of emergency powers in Latin America and the implications for constitutional democracy, human rights, and international law. It argues that states of exception, rather than remaining temporary responses to crisis, have become routine instruments of governance, eroding judicial oversight and weakening the rule of law. The study situates Latin American practice within broader theoretical and legal debates, examining the tension between necessity and legality, the framework of Article 27 of the American Convention on Human Rights, and the jurisprudence of the Inter-American Court. Through case studies of El Salvador, Ecuador, and Colombia, it demonstrates how emergency powers are used in distinct ways: to consolidate executive dominance, to militarize internal security, and to test judicial limits. At the same time, it highlights the structural limits of the Inter- American system, particularly the reliance on state cooperation through derogation notifications. The thesis concludes by calling for more flexible models to address sub-threshold crises and reforms to strengthen oversight at both the domestic and regional level.

HANNA THEODORE-JOHN

Financial stability as a legal mandate: a comparative analysis of financial crisis response in the U.S. and China

This dissertation demonstrates that while both the U.S. and China pursue financial stability as a core legal mandate, their response mechanisms diverge fundamentally. These distinct paths—shaped by contrasting economic structures, political systems, and legal traditions—highlight how context determines the framework for crisis management.

IORDANIDOU IRIS-STAVROULA

Responsibility of the Permanent Members of the UN Security Council for Exercising the Veto Power in Cases Involving the Crime of Genocide

This LL.M. thesis examines whether, and under what circumstances, the exercise of the veto by a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council may give rise to international responsibility when it obstructs timely action in situations involving genocide. It situates the veto

within the tension between political power and legal obligation, arguing that while the veto is a procedural right under the UN Charter, it is not immune from the constraints of international law. The prohibition of genocide, as a peremptory norm under international law and governed by the 1948 Genocide Convention, is used as the paradigmatic case for assessing the legality of veto use. The study, first, identifies the international obligations potentially breached by a veto: the duty to prevent genocide, the prohibition on aiding or assisting in its commission, the duty to cooperate to end serious violations of jus cogens norms, and the obligation to act in accordance with the UN Charter's purposes and principles. It then examines the frameworks governing responsibility under the Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts (ARSIWA) and the Draft Articles on the Responsibility of International Organizations (ARIO), with emphasis on the role of permanent members acting as individual sovereign States within the Security Council. Finally, it explores the legal consequences of responsibility, namely cessation, guarantees of non-repetition and reparation, highlighting the relevant legal challenges. The thesis concludes that, although establishing responsibility for the wrongful exercise of the veto is legally and practically challenging, international law provides tools to characterize such conduct as unlawful. Clarifying these limits is crucial to safeguarding the credibility of the collective security system and reaffirming that no prerogative, however powerful, lies beyond the restrictions imposed by international law.

JAKOBSEN TIRIL

Ensuring Legal Protection for Individuals Displaced by Climate Change: Does Human Rights Law Provide Effective Remedies?

This thesis examines the extent to which human rights law offers effective remedies for individuals displaced by climate change. As climate-related disasters and environmental degradation intensify, millions of people are forced to move, yet no universally accepted legal definition or comprehensive international framework currently protects them. Existing refugee law does not cover climate-induced displacement, and even though several attempts have been made to create different frameworks offering protection, none of these establishes binding or universally applicable protection. Given the limitations of these frameworks, the thesis evaluates whether human rights law - particularly the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) - can fill the gap. It analyses key jurisprudence, including significant cases such as Teitiota v. New Zealand, where climate impacts were linked to potential violations of the right to life and the prohibition of torture or inhuman treatment, and the principle of non-refoulement. While the case marked an important development, it set a very high threshold for the applicants in proving whether they face a reasonably foreseeable threat to their right to life, making successful claims difficult. The thesis further considers the protection of climate-displaced children as a particularly vulnerable group, and the emerging relevance of the human right to a healthy environment. Advisory opinions from international courts, including the IACtHR and ICJ, are examined with a particular focus on the evolving recognition of environmental rights and their relevance for displaced persons, potentially paving the way for stronger protection through future litigation. Ultimately, the thesis concludes that human rights law currently provides only limited and uncertain remedies for climate-displaced individuals. Although it offers potential avenues, especially through expanded interpretations of the principle of non-refoulement, the principle of the best interest of the child and the application of the human right to a healthy environment, significant legal barriers remain. Strengthening protection will require clearer legal standards, a lower threshold for risk assessment and sustained international cooperation.

KALYVIOTIS CHRISTOS-ANASTASIOS

WTO Law & E-Commerce: Regulating Digital Trade in the 21st Century

This thesis examines whether the current legal framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO) effectively regulates digital trade and cross-border e-commerce in the 21st century. It analyzes tariff barriers, focusing on the Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions, as well as non-tariff barriers such as data localization requirements, cybersecurity laws, and technical standards, and assesses their consistency with WTO obligations. The study evaluates how existing WTO agreements -including the GATS, the Information Technology Agreement (ITA), and the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)- respond to contemporary regulatory challenges in the digital economy, while highlighting their legal and institutional limitations. It further explores geopolitical tensions within WTO negotiations, particularly the positions of India and South Africa, and examines the growing influence of plurilateral processes such as the Joint Statement Initiative (JSI) on e-commerce. Through selected case studies (USMCA, GDPR), the thesis demonstrates the fragmentation of digital trade governance and the constraints of the multilateral system. The concluding chapter proposes reforms, including making the Moratorium permanent, strengthening WTO digital trade rules, and establishing a dedicated WTO agreement that balances trade liberalization with regulatory autonomy.

KARAKONSTANTIS PANAGIOTIS

Third Party State involvement in cyber warfare: evaluating the legal implications of cyber technology support and coordination as belligerent acts under International Law

Recognition of cyberspace as its own autonomous domain of operations has radically transformed the character of warfare for modern times, posing intricate legal questions for the international legal community. Operations in the cyber realm are now often run in conjunction with or as an alternative to conventional warfare, aimed at critical infrastructure, information systems, and state apparatus, and without inflicting physical damage on those within reach or that can be easily perceived. This transition has exacerbated the confusion about the legal categorization of cyber conduct according to existing international norms concerning the use of force and execution of hostilities. The present study explores cyber warfare from an international law perspective, paying special attention to the potential applicability and adaptation of the jus ad bellum and jus in bello principles concerning cyber warfare. Particular consideration is given to interpretation of the concepts of "use of force" and "armed attack" as found in the United Nations Charter, with reference to Article 51; and to the persistent issues around attribution and attribution of state responsibility from afar in cyberspace. It also covers the growing role of third-party actors such as allied states, private corporations, and even proxy groups and assesses their legal status under international humanitarian law and the principle of neutrality. Based upon recent trends in state practice, theories of customary international law, and interpretive instruments, including the Tallinn Manual, it analyses whether contemporary legal instruments can adequately regulate cyber hostilities. Through the case study analysis of several events like the cyber operations of the Russia–Ukraine war and proxy cyber interactions between large powers, this research shows great incoherency and regulatory deficiencies are evident in the actual legal system. The results signal the fact that international law is the cornerstone for the management and oversight of cyber-war, but is not widely applied, and in many cases inadequate, to face dynamic technical change and the increasing involvement of actors. The study eventually highlights that clearer normative guidance and, perhaps, some of the more specialized legal instruments are needed in order to provide legal certainty and accountability

mechanisms, while still allowing for more effective regulation of cyber operations through an armed conflict response system.

KARAMPETSOS GEORGIOS

The new Stability and Growth Pact of 2024: A step in the right direction or use of old recipes?

The current thesis examines the 2024 amendment of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), namely the European Union's economic governance framework. This legal framework was established in 1997 with the aim of aligning the finances of EU member states. The SGP's amendment in 2024 was deemed necessary after a decade and a half of crises (economic, fiscal, health) that stirred the EU's public finances, causing high levels of debt and deficit to the point that abiding by the old economic governance rulebook (multilateral surveillance & budgetary discipline) was simply not viable for the most heavily impacted Member States. The paper observes the reason for that amendment, the backdrop, both legal and economic, during the time of the amendment, as well as the reasons, the aims and the difficulties entailed in the amendment. Seeing that the old legal/fiscal regime could not respond to the unprecedented challegenges, the european legislator proceded with the overhaul of rules in an effort to make them legally more flexible, economically more proportionate, and institutionally more robust and enforcable. The purpose of the amendment was to bring back to the fore the need for sustainable finance and prudent fiscal behavior. In this framework, the SGP has been adjusted to account for a more tailor-made (to each Member States' capacity) approach, in terms of fiscal demands and legal prerequisites for the european "sign-off" of the Member States' own fiscal policy-making. To these endeavors of the EU, namely of acheiving financial stability and mitigating spill-over effects unto the Member State's economies in the EU, the lack of a common Economic Policy, such as the centralized Monetary one, has been the main hinderance. Additionally, as per Treaty provisions (esp. art. 125 TFEU), the EU cannot be held liable for commitments and payable obligations that the Member States have individually, of their own accords, assumed. These two facts have prompted the creation of this legislative framework, which, even though incomplete, is the only permissible course of action for the EU to align Member States' economies on a common ground - one that not only serves each one individually, but the EU as a whole, since it constitutes the ultimate purpose the EU strives for in its european integration process.

KARAMPINA VALENTINA-FREIDERIKI

The Legal Challenges and Turmoil in the Aftermath of Brexit

How did the referendum vote of Brexit kickstart and affect the fate of the UK as it concerns its relations to the EU and how did the legal landscape of the UK change?

KOSTARA MARIA-NATALIA

"Gender Apartheid" in International Law? Contemporary practices of gender segregation against women

This thesis asks whether contemporary regimes of systemic gender segregation and domination can be meaningfully assessed through the international law architecture developed to prohibit "apartheid", and, more concretely, to what extent existing international law adequately captures and prohibits practices described as "gender apartheid", and if and where norm gaps remain. Structured in four parts, the study (i) traces the origins of apartheid as a regime offence and distils the constitutive elements that contemporary scholarship associates with "gender apartheid"; (ii) maps how the phenomenon is currently addressed across four "prisms" of international law, human rights law, international criminal law, state responsibility, and other relevant

regimes; (iii) tests the framework through three case studies; and (iv) evaluates pathways to remedy the resulting accountability deficit. The thesis argues that while international law condemns many constituent abuses (discrimination, exclusion, and gender-based violence), it frequently fails to recognize, or respond to, the officially sanctioned, institutionalized project of structural gender segregation as such, producing an accountability gap that is both normative (how the wrong is legally characterized) and structural (how obligations and enforcement operate in practice). The Afghanistan/Iran/Saudi Arabia comparison identifies three recurrent routes to impunity: collapse of domestic enforcement under de facto rule, strategic non-ratification of key instruments, and sweeping reservations that hollow out obligations. To close the gap, the thesis advances a sequenced, dual strategy: (1) evolutive interpretation of existing treaty guarantees (via VCLT Articles 31–33 and "living instrument" reasoning) to capture regime-level segregation within instruments such as CEDAW and the Covenants; and (2) incremental normative development, proposing a UN General Assembly declaration condemning systemic gender-based segregation and a thematic Optional Protocol to CEDAW tailored to structural discrimination.

KOUKOUFILIPPOU EFFROSYNI

Cybersecurity and use of force in Air and Space

In an era where cyber-attacks against aviation systems or facilities are an everyday phenomenon and those against satellites is not science fiction anymore, the need for application of international law in cyberspace, especially in the domains of air and space, becomes increasingly high. This thesis critically interrogates the adequacy of existing international legal frameworks in addressing the use of cyber force in the air and space domains. The study departs from general norms of public international law with regard to the notion of use of force under Article 2(4) and Article 51 of the UN Charter and contests their application within the scope of cyber operations in the absence of a uniform global cyber law. Even though plenty of air and space law treaties, indicatively the Chicago Convention, the Beijing Convention, the Outer Space Treaty and the ITU Regulations, where drafted without the contemplation of cyber-attacks, they have left the door open for the incorporation of coherent interpretations related to the thresholds of force or the legitimacy of defensive responses. Through a functional analysis and case-based examination of cyber-attacks against aviation and space systems, this thesis highlights that while there are no tailored legal standards, there is at least an effort to regulate cyber force via soft law instruments, like the Tallinn Manual. Thus, the inexistence of regulation risks either the over-extension of the jus ad bellum doctrine or the paralysis of lawful self-defence or countermeasures, both of which undermine international stability. The last chapter of the thesis addresses the complex interplay between preventive cybersecurity and jus ad bellum, which creates a broad legal gray zone potentially justifying anticipatory cyber operations in air and space under the guise of self-defence. Navigating through this nearly unexplored territory of international law, the study contributes original insight into the cyber-air-space nexus through cross-sector collaboration in the light of the increasing digitization of aviation and space activities in order to address the current cybersecurity concerns.

KRANIOTI CHRISTINA-ATHANASIA-DESPOINA

The transformation of the labor market in the AI era and the international challenges of the protection of the right to work and labor rights

This dissertation is divided into two main chapters. The first one examines the fundamental transformation of the structure and characteristics of the labor market as a result of the

integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into the professional environment. The analysis extends across three temporal dimensions, past, present, and future. Initially, the concept of AI is clarified, the technological foundations upon which it is built are presented, and particular emphasis is placed on the significance of Generative AI (GenAI), which introduces new and enhanced capabilities. Reference is made both to algorithmic management and to the use of this technological advancement by the workforce in the exercise of their work-related duties. A multifaceted approach to the subject matter is ensured through the examination of the advantages and disadvantages associated with the adoption of AI in the workplace. A central issue concerns whether this technology can be regarded, from the perspective of labour law and within the framework of legal analysis, as employer, a co-worker, or merely as an auxiliary tool. Subsequently, the chapter addresses a critical and complex question: how will the workplace landscape be shaped in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and which regulatory policies should be pursued in response? The second part of the thesis, which is purely legal in nature, addresses the challenge of ensuring the effective protection of a fundamental human right that is directly threatened by the rapid development of AI, namely the right to work, as well as related labour rights. This chapter begins by defining and delineating the scope of the aforementioned rights. It then proceeds to an analysis and critical assessment of the existing legislative framework at the international, european, and national levels. Particular attention is devoted to the crucial issue of the need to embed ethical principles into the use of AI within the employment context. Following this, the study seeks to outline an ideal blueprint governing this mode of technological deployment, incorporating legal and ethical elements. More specifically, the analysis examines whether the adoption of binding rules is required, and whether reliance on soft law instruments could be considered sufficient. At the same time, substantive issues are addressed through the presentation of selected regulatory measures that, in the author's view, would be beneficial to adopt. The study concludes by identifying areas in which legislative regulation poses particular challenges. With regard to methodology, the legal analysis entails a critical examination of legislation, soft law instruments, and relevant case law. However, the approach adopted becomes interdisciplinary through the use of academic literature, empirical evidence, statistical data published by international organizations, and scientific studies conducted in real workplace environments under conditions that allow for the generalization of their findings.

KUMAR RAHUL

Artificial Intelligence: Examining the Implications of Biased AI Algorithms on Human rights, with a Particular Focus on Discrimination Against Marginalized Groups.

The core aim of the thesis is to critically examine the international and regional legal frameworks established to mitigate and regulate algorithmic discrimination. It analyses the dual potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for technological advancement and efficiency, while highlighting the significant risks it poses, such as algorithmic bias, unfair outcomes, and breaches of human rights law. The research particularly focuses on how AI algorithms produce wrong results and bias against marginalized groups due to biased training and input data.

OKPAKO ALEXANDER-DAFE

Maritime security in Africa: challenges and the way forward.

Research Question and Objectives: The purpose of this thesis is to examine the challenges and efforts made so far by policy makers in Africa on maritime security arrangements. The study also examines the effectiveness and non-implementation of policies, both regional and sub-regional

security strategies in addressing the emerging security threats. The inadequacy of current security strategy in Africa, leads to a proposal for a more effective and robust strategy to counter evolving threats. What are the emerging maritime security challenges bedeviling Africa's development? Methodology and Scope: The thesis is aimed at identifying the challenges inhibiting the development of maritime security in Africa and the research relies heavily on qualitative and descriptive research methodology and this involves the collection, collation, review and interpretation of secondary materials like textbooks, journals, articles, gazettes, white papers and internet articles on Maritime Security in Africa.

ONUKAWA INYEAKACHI-CONFIDENCE

Right of access to EU documents

This dissertation examines the right of access to documents in the European Union as a fundamental component of transparency and democratic governance. Rooted in Article 15(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and Article 42 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the right is primarily implemented through Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001. The study analyses the legal foundations, scope, and procedural requirements governing access to EU documents, with particular attention to the role of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) in shaping the interpretation of transparency as a constitutional principle. Key judgments such as Sweden v Commission, Turco, and Access Info Europe are examined to demonstrate how judicial oversight has strengthened access rights, especially in legislative contexts. The dissertation further explores the limitations and challenges affecting the effectiveness of the transparency regime. These include the broad interpretation of exceptions under Regulation 1049/2001, the absence of a general public interest override, administrative delays, institutional resistance particularly within the Council and the inadequacy of existing rules in addressing modern digital communications. A comparative analysis with national freedom of information laws reveals that the EU framework is generally more restrictive in scope and enforcement. While many Member States provide stronger oversight mechanisms and public interest balancing tests, the EU relies largely on judicial review and the non-binding interventions of the European Ombudsman. The study also assesses the democratic implications of access to documents, arguing that transparency enhances participation, accountability, and public trust, while persistent secrecy contributes to perceptions of a democratic deficit. The role of the European Ombudsman is highlighted as a key driver of transparency reform, albeit limited by the lack of binding authority. The dissertation concludes that although the EU's transparency framework is constitutionally robust, it is practically deficient and outdated. It recommends a comprehensive reform of Regulation 1049/2001, including the introduction of a public interest override, expanded institutional scope, stronger proactive disclosure obligations, and improved oversight mechanisms. Ultimately, the study argues that transparency should be understood not as an administrative burden but as a constitutional necessity for democratic legitimacy in the European Union.

PAPADOPOULOU CHRYSANTHI

Redefining Tax Sovereignty: The CJEU's Impact on Direct Taxation in the European Union

This master's thesis examines the gradual redefinition of the tax sovereignty of the Member States of the European Union in the field of direct taxation, under the influence of the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union. The first part analyses the limitation of national tax autonomy through negative and positive integration, with particular emphasis on the application of the principle of non-discrimination and the fundamental freedoms to national tax rules,

as well as on the role of EU directives and CJEU case law in shaping a common framework for direct taxation. The second part explores the possibilities for Member States to preserve or regain elements of tax sovereignty through justifications based on overriding reasons of public interest, as recognised by the CJEU's case law, and examines the Court's review of such justifications, especially through the application of the principle of proportionality. The thesis highlights the dynamic relationship between EU law and national tax policy and contributes to the broader discussion on the limits and future prospects of tax sovereignty within the EU legal order.

PAPANASTASIS KONSTANTINOS

The evolution of the EU's external competence in the field of investment

This thesis analyzes the evolution of the European Union's external competence in the field of investment following the signing of the Treaty of Lisbon. This analysis is conducted through a thorough examination of the nature of this competence both before and after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon. At the same time, the most significant judicial decisions of the Court of Justice of the European Union are examined, as well as the manner in which they delineated this competence by interpreting its content. Finally, the thesis presents the way in which these institutional and jurisprudential influences have shaped contemporary mechanisms for the resolution of investment disputes within the European Union, as well as the position adopted by the European Union on the global economic stage following these reforms.

PAPIOTIS IASON

The doctrine of the lack of horizontal direct effect of directives: A critical examination in the light of the opinions of Advocates General

The doctrine of the lack of horizontal direct effect of directives, established by the Court of Justice in Marshall I, holds that a directive cannot of itself impose obligations on an individual and therefore cannot be relied upon as such against such a person. In order to mitigate the adverse effects resulting from that prohibition and enhance the legal effects of directives, the Court progressively developed a far-reaching system of alternative mechanisms. In practice, however, the doctrine has been marked by complexity, incoherence, and legal uncertainty. This judicial policy has generated a series of divergent opinions from Advocates General, who have emerged as strong proponents of the recognition of the horizontal direct effect of directives. In light of the evolution of the EU legal order, the rise of horizontal disputes, and the expectations of Union citizens, EU law practitioners, and economic operators, the Court's doctrinal entrenchment in the absence of horizontal direct effect of directives calls for a critical reassessment. This thesis seeks to provide a comprehensive and intelligible presentation of the Court's case law and to subject the legal reasoning underpinning the doctrine to rigorous legal scrutiny, using the opinions of Advocates General as the primary analytical tool. It ultimately argues for a reconsideration of the Court's ruling in Marshall I and explores an alternative conception of direct effect grounded in a unified principle of direct effect of general application.

PREISS NOA-SOPHIE-JULIKA

Effectiveness of data protection under the GDPR

The thesis assesses how effective the GDPR is in practice, especially under fast-moving technologies, cross-border enforcement, and global data transfers. It finds effectiveness is strengthened by robust data-subject rights and remedies plus independent, well-powered supervisory

authorities, but undermined inside the EU by fragmented national procedures, one-stop-shop frictions, uneven sanctioning, and chronic resource shortages that slow or blunt enforcement. Outside the EU, legal tools like adequacy decisions and transfer safeguards can support protection, yet practical control over third-country recipients, state access, and limits of extraterritorial enforcement often make real-world protection harder, so the GDPR's promise ultimately depends on consistent, well-resourced enforcement and workable cross-border mechanisms.

PSALTI DANAI-MYRSINI

Naval warfare in the cyber age: legal challenges under international humanitarian law

This thesis argues that the current law of naval warfare is inadequate for cyber operations because it is based on a kinetic warfare model that does not fit cyber realities. The tension between legal certainty and cyber adaptability creates uncertainty for commanders and legal advisors, increasing the risk of miscalculation and escalation. Instead of creating new treaties, the study proposes practical improvements to existing manuals and greater informal expert dialogue. The ultimate goal is to develop a stronger legal framework capable of addressing modern cyber challenges.

RIPPI AIKATERINI

New trends in the interpretation and application of the Istanbul Convention

Unlike long-established human rights treaties, the Istanbul Convention is a comparatively recent addition to the international legal framework. Nevertheless, its interpretation and application have already undergone significant development through the work of GREVIO, the Convention's monitoring body. Against this background, the thesis examines how GREVIO adapts the Convention through evolutive interpretation in order to respond to emerging legal, social and technological challenges. It focuses on three core areas: the digital dimension of violence against women and girls, the legal notion of consent in defining sexual violence, and the evolving scope of states' obligations in response to the rise of femicides and gender-based violence–related suicides. Through this analysis, the thesis identifies the interpretative tools employed by GREVIO.

RUOTSALAINEN HANNAH

The Principle of Subsidiarity and the European Climate Neutrality and Sustainability Transition

The thesis examines the impact of the principle of subsidiarity on democratic legitimacy in EU climate and energy governance. A politico-legal conception of subsidiarity is used in the analysis of participation and proximity in multi-level governance, concluding that subsidiarity has a positive but somewhat ambiguous impact on the examined input and output legitimacy in the climate context.

SALA IRO

Addressing climate (im)mobility through the lens of corrective environmental justice

The objective of this thesis is to examine the phenomenon of climate (im)mobility through the lens of corrective environmental justice. In particular, it first aims to conceptualise the potential compensatory role that climate mobility can play in the context of reparations for the climate debt that is owed by developed countries, which have contributed the most to climate change, to developing countries, which experience the disproportionate burden of climate change. It then reviews the potential responses to climate (im)mobility, both in terms of migration and in terms of adaptation, and proposes an analytical framework that is aligned with a corrective

environmental justice approach, to assess such responses. This research is important and timely, given that, despite projections that about 143 million individuals in the Global South will be displaced due to climate change impacts by 2050, there is no universally binding international legal instrument, to date, that includes provisions for climate-induced cross-border movements and the protection of climate-displaced persons, who are not granted any distinct legal status. At the same time, calls for environmental justice are increasingly being brought to the forefront of discussions on climate change and climate mobility in particular.

SKOKOU ANTONIA-MARIA

The dual dynamics of arrest warrants: balancing effectiveness and rights protection in European and international law, especially in the fight against terrorism

This paper discusses the European Arrest Warrant as the main instrument of cross-border co-operation inside the European Union relating predominantly to terrorism cases. Quantitative research among professionals in the field of justice has highlighted general effectiveness, but also serious challenges regarding proportionality, different practices between member states, and a mechanism for the protection of fundamental rights. The results have found out that, despite the EAW's value in addressing serious crimes expeditiously, transparency and accountability plus judicial training and institutional harmonization are the areas that need improvement to allow EAW to be effective while staying consistent with rule of law values.

SOMOGYI DOROTTYA KLARA

Maritime migration and the duty to rescue: legal responsibilities of states and humanitarian organizations

My thesis examines the international legal obligations of states in relation to the rescue of migrants and asylum seekers at sea, with a particular focus on the obligation to rescue under the law of the sea and human rights. As illegal maritime migration continues to challenge the capacities and policies of coastal states, particularly in the Mediterranean, the issue of state responsibility has taken on renewed legal and political importance. Rooted in customary international law and codified in treaties such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) and the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), the obligation on states to assist persons in distress at sea and to ensure safe disembarkation. However, the practical implementation of this obligation has become increasingly controversial. Some states have sought to avoid or delegate responsibility by cooperating with third countries, restricting access to territorial waters or hampering the efforts of non-governmental rescue actors. This research uses doctrinal legal analysis and selected case studies to examine how states reconcile their legal obligations with border security and migration control in practice. Maritime migration has become a significant legal and humanitarian issue, especially for coastal states in regions such as the Mediterranean. Every year, thousands of people embark on dangerous sea journeys in unseaworthy vessels, hoping to escape conflict, persecution and poverty and reach safety. Against this backdrop, the legal obligation of states to assist individuals in distress at sea has become a focal point of international debate. International agreements clearly oblige states to rescue people in distress and transport them to safety. However, it will become increasingly difficult to fulfil these obligations if the number of arrivals does not decrease and reception capacity and infrastructure do not improve. Not only are states responsible for organizing and maintaining adequate search and rescue (SAR) services in their maritime zones, but they must also ensure that these services are conducted in accordance with human rights and refugee law. In many cases, however, there is

a significant discrepancy between the law as written and its application. Well-worded legislation and protocols are useless if they are difficult to apply in real life when human lives and destinies are at stake. This research aims to explore the obligations that international law and regional norms impose on States and humanitarian organizations in maritime rescue operations. The research focuses on the legal interpretation and practical application of the obligation to rescue, with a particular focus on migration-related situations.

TACHYRIDIS ATHANASIOS

Renewed emphasis on procedural rights and guarantees in EU Competition law enforcement

The aim of the present study is to examine the modalities of application and the institutional functioning of procedural safeguards under European Union competition law, in light of the evolving enforcement framework governing competition rules in digital markets, as heralded by the adoption of the Digital Markets Act (DMA). Conceived to ensure the effective enforcement of Articles 101 and 102 TFEU, the system of public enforcement of competition law, as established by Regulation (EC) No 1/2003, has, broadened the range of competent enforcement authorities through the decentralisation of the application of EU competition law and expanded the European Commission's administrative powers to investigate distortions of competition resulting from coordinated or unilateral conduct by undertakings in the relevant markets. Within this framework, the establishment and observance of procedural rights in favour of undertakings subject to investigation–deriving from the rights of the defence as enshrined in Article 48 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union–were intended to serve as a guarantee of an appropriate balance between the objective of effective enforcement of competition law and the obligation to respect the fundamental rights enjoyed by undertakings. In this respect, procedural safeguards operate as a structural constraint on the potential for arbitrary exercise of institutional powers by both national competition authorities and the European Commission. Nevertheless, the structural features of this enforcement system, have proven insufficient to address the novel competitive dynamics emerging in digital markets. This inadequacy ultimately prompted the adoption of the Digital Markets Act (Regulation (EU) 2022/1925). Specifically, the transformation of competition law enforcement in digital markets effected by the DMA, through its ex ante regulatory logic and its emphasis on compliance with predefined obligations designed to ensure fair and contestable digital markets, raises fundamental questions concerning the evolution of both the application and the institutional role of procedural safeguards under the new enforcement conditions introduced by the DMA. At the same time, the legislatively mandated complementarity of the traditional public enforcement regime under Articles 101 and 102 TFEU with the DMA enforcement system, rise concerns regarding the effective protection of specific procedural guarantees in situations involving the initiation of parallel proceedings. Accordingly, through a comparative analysis of the two enforcement regimes of EU competition law – namely Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 and the DMA – the present study focuses on the mechanisms for safeguarding procedural guarantees afforded to undertakings under investigation, the extent to which these guarantees have been reconfigured under the DMA, and the potential challenges to their effective realisation arising from the parallel application of the two enforcement systems. In doing so, the study seeks to elucidate the balancing considerations required to reconcile effective enforcement of EU competition law with the protection of undertakings' fundamental rights in the face of contemporary challenges, particularly those stemming from the rapid expansion of digitalisation and the growing centrality of digital markets.

THIELE JONATHAN

Between mandate and reality - Legal boundaries of peacebuilding and transitional governance and the case of Timor-Leste

This Master Thesis is aimed at describing international peacemaking mechanisms under the UN-Charter Law the light of a legal pacifist reading. Further it analyses transitional governance as a possibly non-violent post-conflict peacebuilding mechanism that can lead to positive peace as apposed to the mere absence of armed conflict. For this, the thesis aims at introducing the legal philosophy of legal pacifism into the 21st century, to then be applied to peace enforcement, peacekeeping and peacebuilding law as well as the existing (or the lack of) international law of transitional governance. This doctrinal analysis is then applied to the case of Timor-Leste, which gives a suitable example of the interplay between peacebuilding and transitional governance in a full life-cycle.

TRIANTOU ZOI

Advancing Corporate Responsibility for Environmental Crimes under international and regional legal instruments: Recent Developments and Future Directions

This dissertation investigates the possibility of ecocide being added to the Rome Statute's list as a fifth international crime and the effect of such an initiative to criminal corporate accountability parallel to the evolving regional and international legal framework surrounding corporate criminal accountability for environmental harm. The study looks at how regional innovations could spur global legal reform, drawing on developments such as the definition of ecocide provided by the Independent Expert Panel, the 2024 EU Environmental Crime Directive, and the Convention on Environmental Protection through Criminal Law from the Council of Europe. Articles and researches from scholars around the globe, EU legislation, international legal documents, and relevant case law will be reviewed in order to gain a deeper understanding of the key concepts of the dissertation (them being ecocide, environmental crimes and corporate criminal accountability) ,as well as how they are linked to one another.

TROUMOUCHI CHRISTINA-TSAMPIKA

"Combating Corruption in International Law: The Impact of New Technologies"

Corruption is one of the most complex challenges, which governments, societies and institutions have to deal with nowadays. This phenomenon undermines the values of a democratic society, as well as the public trust, enhancing at the same time the economic and social inequalities, and it is exaggerated by the globalization that takes place today, which leads to the fact that the corruption practices are not limited into the national borders and affect both the public and the private sphere. In this context, international law has been crucial for the coordination of the anti-corruption initiatives. However, it has to be mentioned that international legal instruments are not yet capable of addressing alone such issues, and for that reason new technologies, such as blockchain, artificial intelligence or big data analytics, have started playing a more and more significant role in enhancing transparency, accountability and figuring out in real time if there are any irregularities. This thesis examines the way that technological innovations have an intersection with legal frameworks in order to prevent, detect and punish actions that are grounded on corruption. More particularly, it explores how the international conventions, such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) or the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, are capable of incorporating provisions regarding the use of new technologies in the field of the anti-corruption initiatives. It also analyzes how regional and national laws are evolving so that they could adopt the use of new technologies regarding procurement,

protection of whistleblowers, ownership registries or other sectors with high danger of corruption. If the new technologies are integrated into institutional and regulatory systems in an effective way, then they could have the power to render possible the transition of the anti-corruption efforts from reactive enforcement into proactive prevention. The study is based on three main concepts. The first one is associated with the fact that corruption takes many forms, such as embezzlement, fraud, nepotism, trading on influence or misuse of powers. Consequently, there has to be a diversity in the anti-corruption efforts, because laws on their own are not enough and institutions and technologies play a vital role. It also highlights that technology is not a panacea, and that it has to be combined with ethical systems, solid data protection and fair access to the new technological tools. Another essential aspect that is emphasized is the fact that there has to be an international collaboration, in order for the anti-corruption initiatives to truly work. The thesis analyzes also five main fields into which there is an essential intersection of new technologies with the anti-corruption efforts, namely the blockchain and the distributed ledger systems, artificial intelligence, big data analytics, digital whistleblowing tools and crowdsourcing platforms. Despite the fact that there are significant anti-corruption efforts, various challenges arise, characteristically anonymizing tools are being exploited by corrupt actors, a fact that shows that there are still many gaps that have to be filled. For that reason, this thesis presents real-world case examples that show how technology is being used in the context of the anti-corruption initiatives. This thesis examines closely two standards by taking a closer look at the function of the fundamental international and regional laws and the technological applications in the context of them, highlighting that international law needs to evolve beyond static treaty obligations, by adopting dynamic standards that are technologically updated and reflect the realities of the digital age.

TSIRONIS ARTEMIS-CHRISTINA

Exploring the Effectiveness of International Law in Combating Human Trafficking

This thesis explores the effectiveness of international law in combating human trafficking, with particular emphasis on the Palermo Protocol, human rights obligations, and state responsibility. It argues that definitional inconsistencies, weak enforcement, and reliance on a criminal justice approach undermine victim protection and accountability. The thesis concludes that a victim-centered, rights-based framework grounded in international human rights law is essential to address trafficking and its emerging global challenges.

WILSON LAUREN-RACHEL

The influence of far-right movements on EU Migration and asylum policy: the case of the new pact on migration and asylum

This dissertation asks the following research question: To what extent, and through which mechanisms, have far-right political pressures shaped the design, adoption, and anticipated implementation of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum? The topic reflects my interest in the tension between the European Union's legal commitments and the political pressures that seek to reshape them.

XENOS CHARALAMPOS

Freedom of religion in the EU legal order

The purpose of this thesis is to show how the EU legal order, within the framework of the competences conferred upon it, tries to resolve the issues entailed by the existence of these different identities while maintaining its autonomous character as a community of law, within the

framework of its good faith cooperation with the Member States. The second part provides a general reference to the protection of religious freedom in the context of primary EU law, followed by an overview of the issues that have recently concerned the Court of Justice regarding the protection of religious freedom in the workplace. Essential case law analyzes the way Article 10 of the Convention of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (CFR) is relevant in the interpretation of secondary law (Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, OJ L 303, 2.12.2000). The third part analyzes the horizontal application of the principle of non-discrimination and the balance between equality and religious freedom.