

VARIASH Talk

The Mediterranean Legal Culture: Islamic and Christian Strategies in the Crown of Aragon in Fourteenth Century.

Law presents one of the main and formative parts of human culture, combining thinking about social needs and legal notions, elaborating the justice system, and developing people's consciousness. All of this makes the law, from its earliest beginnings, a profoundly artificial construct. In my talk, I will demonstrate how we can understand the uniqueness of Mediterranean culture through the socio-anthropological concept of the *legal space*.

From the perspective of Christian authorities, what was Islamic law, and how did they integrate it into the Christian Kingdom's management system? Did their law change in the eyes of the Muslims after they became subjects of Christian rulers?

The authorities of the Crown of Aragon elaborated a new socio-legal strategy by simultaneously incorporating the following elements into their approach: the Islamic socio-legal paradigm, the Roman *jus gentium* as a foundational concept, medieval customs as the basis of legal practice. These elements coexisted within the common legal space of the Crown.

The Muslims had their own law and used it. However, they were loyal vassals of the Christian señores, so they had to adhere to the entire body of Christian legal norms that pertained to religious minorities and applied to all subjects of the Crown. As a result, Muslims were not solely people of *Sunna* or *Sharia*. Their status, both in terms of norms and legal practice, became ambivalent.

Mediterranean medieval legal culture had a multi-compound nature, with each part containing different traditions and ideas, all of which interacted continuously.