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REVIEW ARTICLE

Protection and governance of the HMS *Majestic* wreck

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Abstract

Wrecks of the Gallipoli Campaign form part of the underwater cultural heritage (UCH) of Türkiye and humanity, reflecting the distinctive Gallipoli Historic Site, which hosts the cultural heritage of World War I, both on land and underwater. They are also unique in terms of the rich marine biodiversity they host and their potential for sustainable diving tourism. The HMS *Majestic* wreck, as a well-known British wreck of warship, stands out in this regard. The Directorate of Gallipoli Historic Site not only regulates this heritage but also initiates preservation efforts, such as the opening of Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park in 2021 and the "Deep Heritage" project, aiming at the cathodic protection of the wrecks of the Gallipoli Campaign, including *Majestic*. In addition to the jurisdictional questions that may arise between the coastal State, the Republic of Türkiye, and the flag State, the United Kingdom, and the respect for human remains, the protection and governance of these wrecks are at the core of the long-term preservation of UCH in the Çanakkale Strait, within the territorial waters of Türkiye. This review article aims to examine the governance measures related to the *Majestic* wreck in light of the complexities arising under international law.

Keywords: *Majestic* wreck, Underwater Cultural Heritage (UCH), diving tourism, governance, Gallipoli Campaign

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Introduction

Wrecks of the Gallipoli Campaign have always found a place in different studies as an important component of underwater cultural heritage (UCH) in Turkish waters. HMS *Majestic,* torpedoed and sunk by the German submarine *U21* in World War I (WWI), 48 hours after sinking HMS *Triumph* (Kutluk 2023; Ediger 2026), is one of the most well-known wrecks in Türkiye among other wrecks with a rich historical background. While being a wreck situated in the territorial waters

of the Republic of Türkiye, at a depth of 18-23 metres off Seddülbahir Mehmetçik Lighthouse on the Gallipoli Peninsula, with its closest point 570 metres from the shore (Kedioğlu and Öz 2023; Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park 2026a; Ediger 2026; see Figure 1), it is not immune from complexities arising in international law regarding the legal status of wrecks of warships. The present review article aims to address the protection and governance of the HMS *Majestic* wreck in light of these complexities. The rule of sovereign immunity, the protection of human remains, and the governance of the wreck will be discussed separately, with a special focus on preservation and diving activities.

The first complexity is the flag State's continuing sovereign immunity over these wrecks as an emerging customary rule and the possible tensions arising between the coastal State and the flag State regarding the control or ownership of the wreck when it is situated in the territorial waters subject to the sovereignty of the coastal State. A second complexity concerns a new concept: the possible designation of wrecks containing human remains as maritime war graves and the protection of human remains regarding activities related to the wreck.

Diving activities and sustainable diving tourism, stand out in this regard as an important area to examine in close relation to the two above-mentioned complexities. Moreover, a wreck's being part of UCH further imposes certain international obligations on States to follow. HMS *Majestic*, a wreck looted in the 1960s, encompasses all these points as UCH of Türkiye, whose diving activities and preservation efforts should be regulated carefully, and as a wreck that also poses some jurisdictional questions between the coastal State, Türkiye and the flag State, United Kingdom (UK), that need to be answered.

HMS Majestic wreck and the flag State's sovereign immunity rule in international law

An international treaty specifically dealing with the legal regime of wrecks of warships does not exist in international law. This necessitates an examination of customary international law, under which the ownership and jurisdiction regarding the wrecks of warships are still unresolved matters. The emerging customary rule of the flag State's continuing sovereign immunity and property rights over wrecks of warships complicates the question. According to this emerging customary rule, the flag State's sovereign immunity and property rights continue over such wrecks wherever they are located and without a time limit, unless it has been expressly abandoned, transferred, relinquished, or surrendered or captured in naval warfare (Aznar-Gomez 2010). While capture and surrender constitute an important mode of transfer of title over such wrecks, the mere defeat or sinking of the ship by the enemy is not considered sufficient for the transfer of title (Roach 2015).

The case of many wrecks of warships submerged in the Çanakkale Strait, including HMS *Majestic*, presents a similar scenario: ships sank in the naval battle

but without a mode of transfer of title, as the sinking of a warship is not considered as such, unlike the recently examined *AE2* submarine wreck which was surrendered and the crew of which was captured before sinking, resulting in the transfer of title from Australia to Türkiye (see Ünal 2026 for more details).

On the other hand, irrespective of the existence of such a customary rule, the acceptance of the continuity of the sovereign immunity rule as a custom does not mean that the wreck is under the flag State's control. Both legally and practically speaking, these wrecks of warships situated in the territorial sea or internal waters of a coastal State are under the legal and physical control of the coastal State exercising full sovereignty in such waters. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) does not address the question of UCH or wrecks of warships in much detail; it only sets forth a general obligation for States Parties to cooperate in the protection of objects of an archaeological and historical nature (United Nations 1982, art. 303-1), which may also apply to non-States Parties, such as Türkiye, as Article 303-1 is very likely to reflect customary international law (Dromgoole 2016; Aznar 2019).

Thus, the gaps in UNCLOS regarding UCH and its invitation to the looting of UCH by allowing salvage law, that Scovazzi (2026) calls freedom of fishing, have been addressed by a new convention (for the relationship between two conventions, see Aznar 2026). In this regard, the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage, to which neither Türkiye nor the UK is a State party, underlines the coastal State's "*exclusive right to regulate and authorize activities directed at underwater cultural heritage in their internal waters, archipelagic waters, and territorial sea*" in its Article 7 (United Nations 2001), which may be considered a customary rule, as the coastal State's sovereignty in territorial waters is not subject to any dispute in international law (United Nations 1982, art. 2; Aznar 2019). This exclusive right to regulate and authorize activities directed at wrecks constituting UCH ("*all traces of human existence having a cultural, historical or archaeological character which have been partially or totally under water, periodically or continuously, for at least 100 years such as…*" according to the definition of UCH accepted by the UNESCO Convention), nevertheless conflicts with the rule of continuing sovereign immunity and property rights when the wreck has been fully or partly recovered. While this does not necessarily mean an obligation to inform the flag State of every activity related to the wreck, it imposes on the coastal State an international obligation to cooperate with the flag State regarding the protection and the preservation of the wreck.

While the UNESCO Convention focuses more on the preservation of UCH without dealing with title over wrecks (Aznar-Gomez 2010), which, however, distinguishes between the maritime zones in which such UCH is located (Scovazzi 2026), a resolution on "*The Legal Regime of Wrecks of Warships and Other State-owned Ships in International Law*" adopted in 2015 by Institut de

droit international (IDI), which may be seen as an interpretative scholarly source without solely reflecting international custom, addresses this issue. The Resolution, reflecting the predominant position shared by major maritime States (see Vadi 2009; Dromgoole 2016; Forrest 2019), with existing objections in the doctrine as well (They 2016), underlines the coastal State's "*exclusive right to regulate activities on wrecks in its internal waters, archipelagic waters, and territorial sea*" without prejudice to the sunken State ships' immunity from the jurisdiction of any State other than the flag State, which is complemented by the flag State's continuing property rights over such wrecks (Institut de droit international 2015 arts. 3, 4 and 7).

This possible jurisdictional conflict especially reaches its peak when the possible recovery of items or the wreck itself is on the agenda. Nevertheless, as mentioned, this does not give the flag State the right to control activities on the HMS *Majestic* wreck as UCH. Regarding the wrecks of the Gallipoli Campaign, including HMS *Majestic*, the Directorate of Gallipoli Historic Site (Çanakkale Savaşları Gelibolu Tarihi Alan Başkanlığı, hereinafter ÇATAB) under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, having its own public legal personality, is the relevant authority (T.C. Legislation Database 2018). In this regard, in addition to the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park, which opened many wrecks in the area to diving tourism in 2021, it initiated a new joint project called "Deep Heritage (Derin Miras in Turkish)" with the 1915 Çanakkale Bridge and Motorway Corporation for the long-term preservation of the wrecks and sustainable diving tourism (Directorate of Gallipoli Historic Site 2026). The project was presented to the public in January 2026, and the protection measures encompass cathodic protection and the establishment and renewal of anodes for the wrecks, the first of which was started with HMS *Louis* at a depth of 13 metres (Daily Sabah 2026; Western Front Association 2026).

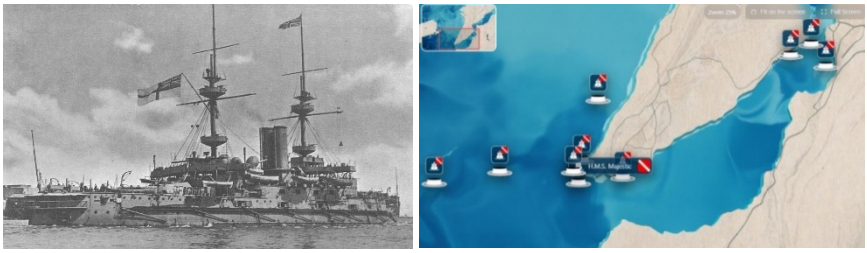


Figure 1. (Left) HMS *Majestic* (Wikipedia 2026) and (Right) an interactive map showing locations of the *Majestic* and other wrecks in the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park (2026a)

Without the need to resolve the complicated question of title over HMS *Majestic* or other similar wrecks having the UK as the flag State, cooperation on their preservation should be examined more closely. As neither Türkiye nor the UK is party to the UNESCO Convention, it may easily be argued that cooperation for

the protection of the marine environment, including underwater cultural heritage as a component, now forms an international obligation under customary international law (see International Court of Justice 2025, para. 140).

In this regard, both knowingly destroying or allowing the destruction of elements of UCH and persistently rejecting other States' requests for forms of cooperation aiming at the protection of UCH may result in a breach of an international obligation of a State (Scovazzi 2026). On the other hand, the obligation of cooperation does not mean that the coastal State cannot exercise a preservation project in its territorial sea. Being bound by a customary obligation of cooperation for the protection of UCH, the coastal State is still the State exercising full sovereignty in these maritime zones, which is not the case in other zones such as exclusive economic zone (EEZ), continental shelf, or the international seabed area. While the scope of the international obligation of cooperation may be open to debate, as a result of this sovereignty in the territorial sea, the coastal State, Türkiye, can determine the limits of cooperation related to the wrecks it hosts.

Another challenge which may affect both the preservation and immunity conflicts over wrecks of warships forming UCH is the protection of human remains and its possible effects on the activities on the wreck.

HMS Majestic wreck and the protection of human remains

The protection of human remains is a matter closely related to the preservation and governance of wrecks. On one hand, it may result in the possible designation of wrecks containing human remains as maritime war graves where preservation and diving activities may be regulated or exercised more carefully, *i.e.* via policies of absolute or preferred non-disturbance (see Hershey 2012). On the other hand, it is usually a bar against the possible future partial or full recovery of a wreck, thus reinforcing *in situ* preservation, which is legally and archaeologically accepted as the first option, but not the only one (see Aznar 2018; United Nations 2001, art. 2-5, Annex rule 1). In cases of wrecks which may still contain human remains, the obligation of States to exercise respect and care in activities on wrecks means that *in situ* preservation usually becomes the only option. Besides, human remains are also considered archaeological artefacts or part of cultural heritage themselves, including within the definition of UCH, due to concerns regarding their looting or commercial exploitation, which gives the topic another particularity (Forrest 2019; Scovazzi 2024).

Both the 2001 UNESCO Convention and the 2015 IDI Resolution, as an interpretative document, give a place to the protection of human remains, respectively, with the latter adding the concept of war graves as well: "*States Parties shall ensure that proper respect is given to all human remains located in maritime waters", "Activities directed at underwater cultural heritage shall avoid the unnecessary disturbance of human remains or venerated sites*" (UNESCO Convention, art. 2-9 and Annex rule 5); "*Due respect shall be shown*

for the remains of any person in a sunken State ship. This obligation may be implemented through the establishment of the wreck as a war cemetery or other proper treatment of the remains of deceased persons and their burial when the wreck is recovered. States concerned should provide for the establishment of war cemeteries for wrecks" (Institut de droit international 2015, art. 12 titled war graves; see also Dromgoole 2016).

In this regard, as HMS *Majestic* is known to have sunk with 49 members of its crew (Kutluk 2023), there is a possibility that it still contains human remains even after so many years. Therefore, it requires a precautionary approach in both diving and preservation activities, beyond its UCH status.

In addition to the coastal State's respect for human remains, the concept of maritime war graves or war memorials is a very interesting and topical issue. There are even examples of flag States designating wrecks of warships located in the territorial sea of another State as a maritime war memorial (see the example of Scirè submarine from World War II, located in the Israeli territorial sea and designated as an underwater military memorial by a specific law in Italy; Scovazzi 2025). Another notable example is the HMS *Birkenhead* wreck, which is subject to an international agreement between the UK and South Africa that ensured respect for human remains and the military grave through an exchange of letters. Similar considerations apply to M/S *Estonia*, which has been defined as "*a final place of rest of victims of the disaster*" by the agreement between Estonia, Finland and Sweden, and to RMS *Titanic*, which has been recognized as a memorial under the special agreement between Canada, France, the UK and the United States (Hershey 2012; Aznar 2015; Scovazzi 2024). Specific agreements related to the protection of UCH are important tools not only for the protection of human remains but also for cooperation between States in the preservation of UCH, and both the UNESCO Convention and the IDI Resolution encourage these kinds of bilateral, regional, or other multilateral agreements to ensure better and multiple-level protection (Scovazzi 2026).

Examples of the extraterritorial extension of jurisdiction constitute another interesting topic, although such jurisdiction is not enforceable without the cooperation of the coastal State, which means that the coastal State is the key actor in the protection of human remains. For the cases of the wrecks of the Gallipoli Campaign and the HMS *Majestic* wreck, as a historic site together with the land and the sea, this scenario is unlikely due to the particularities of the Gallipoli Historic Site. It may even negatively impact the preservation of wrecks due to possible sovereignty-related reactions. While the author is not aware of any specific work dedicated to human remains on the wrecks of the Gallipoli Campaign or of any designation of a maritime war grave in the waters of Çanakkale, the Gallipoli Historic Site is unique in terms of its extension across both land and sea, which are inseparable from a cultural heritage perspective.

On the other hand, the position of the UK regarding WWI wrecks and the UNESCO Convention may also be relevant to this issue. The UK, as a major maritime State with numerous WWI wrecks around the world, has nevertheless abstained from voting in favour of the 2001 UNESCO Convention, although it supports many of its articles and the Annex (Dromgoole 2016; Forrest 2019). Not having become a party to the Convention, the UK is one of the leading supporters of the rule of flag State's continuing sovereign immunity and has fragmented legislation related to wrecks, including indirectly to human remains, namely the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986, the Merchant Shipping Act 1995 and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (Forrest 2019).

According to the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986, the purpose of which is to "*secure the protection from unauthorised interference of the remains of military aircraft and vessels that have crashed, sunk or been stranded and of associated human remains*" (Forrest 2019), there are two types of designation of a wreck, either as a "protected place" (divers permitted, look-don't-touch) or as a "controlled site" (diving without a licence banned) (Forrest 2019; Western Front Association 2026). The Act can apply extraterritorially in theory, encompassing UK territory, UK waters or international waters; however, such extraterritoriality does not extend to the territorial seas of other States (Legislation.gov.uk. 1986; Forrest 2019), which is the case for HMS *Majestic*. In this regard, a designation of *Majestic* by the UK as a protected place or a controlled site is not possible, which also indirectly includes the designation of a maritime war grave or a war memorial. However, as will be mentioned below, ÇATAB is the responsible authority for both the governance of these wrecks and designation of a maritime war memorial or war grave in the Historic Site.

Governance of the HMS Majestic wreck

The governance and protection of UCH in the Çanakkale area are of crucial importance for the long-term preservation of these unique WWI wrecks, as well as for marine biodiversity and diving tourism in such a remarkably rich area. The HMS *Majestic* wreck is not only a leading spot for diving activities but also hosts rich marine biodiversity, as wreck habitats serve as highly species-rich areas in the marine environment, in terms of marine flora, fish and invertebrates (Evcen and Özalp 2023). The marine invertebrate fauna of the HMS *Majestic* wreck comprises both sponge and coral species (24 Porifera species and 5 Anthozoa species for both *Majestic* and *Helles Barges* Sites), including the sponge species *Pseudosuberites sulphureus* reported for the first time from the North Aegean coasts of Türkiye, and the endangered coral species *Cladocora caespitosa* (Evcen and Özalp 2023). Wrecks of the Gallipoli Campaign also support diverse marine fauna, including numerous cryptic and carnivorous fish species, small crustaceans, gastropods, echinoderms and other invertebrates (17 floral and 110 faunal species, with 47 fish species and 12 algae species, as well as 20 species with economic value and 4 species listed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened

Species, were identified across the 7 wreck sites examined in the Çanakkale area), amongst which the dusky grouper (*Epinephelus marginatus*), a species of high commercial value, was observed at the *Majestic* wreck site (see Öz *et al.* 2023).

While *in situ* preservation of UCH is the first option, the HMS *Majestic* wreck, like many other wrecks which may still contain human remains, is suitable for sustainable diving tourism which has already begun with the opening of the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park (Caymaz 2023; Boz 2023). It appears that ÇATAB has updated its Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park website by including travel plans and diving guide sections, as well as detailed underwater photos and videos of the 27 wrecks, and an interactive map of their locations, in parallel with the importance the Directorate gives to the potential sustainable diving tourism the Underwater Park creates (see Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park 2026b). The author has also learned from the representatives of ÇATAB that a management plan for the underwater park is being prepared.



Figure 2. Underwater photos from the *Majestic* wreck site (Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park 2026a)

The HMS *Majestic* wreck, already salvaged in the 1950s and 1960s, with Sokullu-Sezen Company being one of the salvors that carried out such activities with the necessary permits, had its looting/salvage activities later stopped in the 1970s (see Kolay *et al.* 2013). At that time, the rules on the protection of UCH were not yet well developed. *Majestic* still constitutes a leading, well-known wreck, and its historical value requires special attention with its actions and loss in the Gallipoli Campaign (see Kutluk 2023). On the other hand, its looting and scrap-metal salvage story (with cutting off and selling of its huge cannons, cannonballs, deck

and valuable parts) imposes a stricter and more careful preservation approach for Türkiye. A Belgian short documentary screened in 1967 shows these salvage operations on wrecks, including dynamiting, where concerns on their preservation also were shared (Royal Belgian Cinematheque 1967). Despite having faced such an unfortunate damage fate in the 1960s, the HMS *Majestic* wreck is still a remarkable diving spot and its fore and aft turrets, conning tower, twin funnels, wheelhouse remains and numerous unexploded artillery shells, with 93 ammunition items documented (Kartal 2022), are still visible on the site (Kedioğlu and Öz 2023; see Figure 2).

As the governance and the protection are usually linked to each other, the coastal State should always be welcoming of any cooperation efforts coming from the flag State or the State with a verifiable cultural, historical or archaeological link to it, in order to achieve better governance and better protection of UCH located in its territorial waters. This includes an active and passive international obligation encompassing both not damaging UCH and preventing any harm to UCH in the territorial waters.

While the Republic of Türkiye does not have a specific law for underwater cultural heritage or wrecks, the definition of "cultural property" in the *1983 Law on the Conservation of Cultural and Natural Heritage*, which reads as "*movable and immovable property on the ground, under the ground, or under the water pertaining to science, culture, religion and fine arts of before and after recorded history, or that is of unique scientific and cultural value for social life before and after recorded history*" (T.C. Official Gazette 1983), covers UCH as well. Furthermore, Article 5 of the same law qualifies such cultural property, including *Majestic*, as State property. As mentioned earlier, ÇATAB, responsible to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and established in 2014 by the *Law on the Establishment of the Directorate of Gallipoli Historic Site,* and subsequently amended by the *Presidential Decree No. 4*, regulates the activities in the Historic Site. Its duties and authorities include carrying out or commissioning restoration, conservation, reconstruction, restitution and renovation work within the Historic Site and protecting, enhancing and managing the natural, historical and cultural values of the Historic Site in accordance with the principles of military history and in harmony with the environment (T.C. Legislation Database 2014 and 2018). In this regard, ÇATAB is the correct address for better governance and preservation of UCH located in the Çanakkale area, and it is playing a leading role in the identification, documentation, conservation, oceanographic studies and scientific assessments of wrecks, with the *Majestic* site chosen as a pilot zone (Kartal 2022). The preservation efforts in the Historic Site, as a unique example of peace and tranquillity, were focused more on land site than the underwater area before. Yet, it seems that in the last 5-10 years, UCH of the Gallipoli Historic Site has gained importance for both the protection of marine biodiversity hosted by the wrecks and the opening of the area, which was previously forbidden, to

sports/touristic diving, which is recorded as 27 historical shipwrecks and two natural reefs (Daily Sabah 2026).

The opening of Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park has also contributed to other governance measures carried out by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK) Marmara Research Centre in cooperation with ÇATAB. These include the geophysical and underwater imaging survey of the *Majestic* wreck, in which bathymetric maps, side-scan sonar imagery, and other data and evaluations regarding the depth, location, and extent of the wreck have been analysed and contributed to the scientific understanding of the wreck, the marine biodiversity, as well as its preservation and diving tourism (see Ediger 2026).

Returning to diving, sports diving activities have been regulated under the *Regulation on Diving with Equipment as a Sport in Turkish Territorial Waters* where "*it is prohibited to touch, damage or disturb archaeological and cultural assets, or to remove cultural and natural assets from the seabed and bring them to the surface, even for the purpose of showing them to museum officials. If such assets are sighted, they must be reported to the relevant and competent authorities. During dives, no actions may be taken that would disrupt the underwater ecological balance*" (T.C. Official Gazette 1990). Although this regulation prohibits damage to UCH during diving activities, it dates back to 1990 and may be updated through a specific regulation for the wrecks of the Gallipoli Historic Site in order to better preserve the UCH in the area and regulate the diving tourism initiated with the opening of the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park. Insertion of a part dedicated to the protection of marine biodiversity would be appropriate. In this regard, the management plan currently being prepared for the underwater park is a key tool for the preservation of UCH, the regulation of diving activities, and the protection of marine biodiversity.

While a designation of the HMS *Majestic* wreck as a maritime war grave or memorial by the UK is not likely to be accepted by Türkiye, as a potential extension of jurisdiction to the Turkish territorial sea, considering the special case of the Gallipoli Historic Site as a unique war memorial site for both land and sea, where different nations lie in peace together, the protection of human remains may be implemented through raising awareness activities and a symbolic wreck which may be recovered and displayed in a specially built pool for long-term desalination, as a unique maritime war memorial, such as the *AE2* submarine wreck, located in the Marmara Sea, which does not contain any human remains and is isolated from the other wrecks in the Çanakkale Strait (Kolay 2026). HMS *Majestic,* on the other hand, is not suitable for any recovery; however, it needs better protection like other wrecks in the Historic Site. These governance measures include monitoring the numbers of divers visiting the wreck, diving schools in the area and the condition of the wrecks, mitigation of the impact of ghost fishing around wrecks, establishment of buoy systems and public awareness

campaigns on the protection of UCH and marine biodiversity (Acarlı and Kale 2023).

Conclusion

To conclude, the wrecks of the Gallipoli Campaign, including HMS *Majestic*, deserve better governance and care in both the planning and implementation of long-term preservation objectives. As a site containing UCH of unique historical, cultural and archaeological importance and the first underwater park dedicated to WWI, the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park has significant potential for sustainable diving tourism in the region and for raising awareness of the Gallipoli Historic Site locally and globally, which encompasses both land and sea and where traces of humanity from WWI lie beneath the water.

The Republic of Türkiye, as the coastal State, acts as both the guardian and custodian of this UCH on behalf of humanity and gives particular importance and care to the protection of these wrecks through ÇATAB. An integrative approach to marine biodiversity and UCH is key to the success of such governance measures, and the Gallipoli Historical Underwater Park may serve as an example.

While regulating preservation and diving activities related to the wrecks, Türkiye is not immune from challenges arising under international law. These concern jurisdictional questions between the coastal State and the flag State, the international obligation of cooperation, and the protection of human remains, as discussed in this article. In this regard, Türkiye, exercising sovereignty in its territorial sea, has an international obligation to preserve this UCH, which includes both an obligation to ensure respect for human remains and an obligation to cooperate. International cooperation may also encompass preservation projects such as the "Deep Heritage" project. A final question related to the governance of these wrecks, and a future challenge in international law, concerns potentially polluting wrecks, which pose a threat to the marine environment, as they may contain hazardous objects or themselves constitute navigational, munition, or pollution hazards (see Aznar 2015; Forrest 2019), with 93 ammunition items documented at the *Majestic* wreck (Kartal 2022).

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Majestik Batığının Korunması ve Yönetimi

Öz

Çanakkale Savaşı batıkları, kara ve denizdeki Birinci Dünya Savaşı kültür mirasını kapsayan eşsiz Gelibolu Tarihi Alanı'nın bir parçası olarak, Türkiye'nin ve insanlığın sualtı kültürel mirasıdır. Bu batıklar, ev sahipliği yaptıkları zengin denizel biyoçeşitlilik ve sürdürülebilir dalış turizmi potansiyelleri bakımından da benzersizdir. Bu kapsamda, iyi bilinen bir İngiliz savaş gemisi batığı olan *Majestik* batığı öne çıkmaktadır. Çanakkale Savaşları Gelibolu Tarihi Alan Başkanlığı, bu mirası düzenlemenin yanı sıra, 2021 yılında Gelibolu Tarihi Sualtı Parkı'nın açılması ve *Majestik* batığı da dahil olmak üzere Çanakkale Savaşı batıklarının katodik korunmasını amaçlayan Derin Miras Projesi gibi koruma çalışmalarında da öncü konumdadır.

Kıyı devleti Türkiye ile bayrak devleti Birleşik Krallık arasında ortaya çıkabilecek yetkisel sorular ve batıklardaki insan kalıntılarına saygı meselesinin yanında, söz konusu batıkların korunması ve yönetimi, Çanakkale Boğazı'nda, Türkiye'nin karasuları içerisinde yer alan sualtı kültürel mirasının uzun vadeli korunmasının temel unsurlarını oluşturmaktadır. Bu değerlendirme makalesi, *Majestik* batığına ilişkin yönetim tedbirlerini, uluslararası hukuktan kaynaklanan karmaşıklıklar ışığında incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Majestik* batığı, sualtı kültürel mirası, dalış turizmi, yönetim, Çanakkale Savaşı

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