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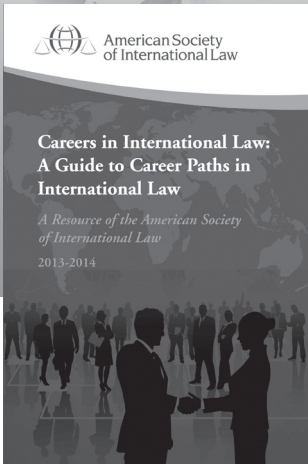
American Journal of International Law

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Exploitation Creep and the Unmaking of Human Trafficking Law
Janie A. Chuang
- Groundwork for International Law
Anthony D'Amato
- Agora: Reflections on Anthony D'Amato's "Groundwork for International Law"
Jean d'Aspremont
Mónica García-Salmones Rovira
Tom Farer
Anthony D'Amato
- Featured Decision:
Judicial Review of Investment Treaty Awards: *BG Group v. Argentina*
Anthea Roberts and Christina Trahanas



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Cyber Statecraft Initiative at the
Atlantic Council

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CONTENTS

PAGE

Exploitation Creep and the Unmaking of Human Trafficking Law *Janie A. Chuang* 609

The U.S. government and influential NGOs have been promoting a greatly expanded legal and policy understanding of the problem of human trafficking, recasting (1) forced labor as trafficking, and (2) trafficking as “modern-day slavery.” The aggregate effect is a doctrinally problematic “exploitation creep.” For strong legal and policy reasons, anti-trafficking efforts should target structural vulnerability to trafficking through strengthened labor frameworks. On the same grounds the article contests initiatives to conflate human trafficking with slavery and to address trafficking primarily under an ex post crime-control paradigm focused on perpetrator accountability and victim protection.

Groundwork for International Law *Anthony D’Amato* 650

Referring to many fundamental facets of international law, and utilizing general systems theory as a heuristic, this article offers a comprehensive account of how international law is formed and structured, and why it has generally succeeded in the peaceful resolution of interstate cases and controversies.

Agora: Reflections on Anthony D’Amato’s “Groundwork for International Law”

Send back the Lifeboats: Confronting the Project of Saving International Law

Jean d’Aspremont 680

Who Is the System? On Commitment, Biology, and Human Beings in the Politics of “Groundwork for International Law”

Mónica García-Salmones Rovira 689

Can the United States Violently Punish the Assad Regime? Competing Visions (Including That of Anthony D’Amato) of the Applicable International Law

Tom Farer 701

Anthony D’Amato Responds

Anthony D’Amato 715

Notice

Annual Acknowledgments from the Co-editors in Chief

José E. Alvarez and Benedict Kingsbury 721

Current Developments

State Responsibility for Aiding or Assisting International Crimes in the Context of the Arms Trade Treaty

Nina H. B. Jørgensen 722

International Decisions

Edited by David P. Stewart

Featured Decision: Judicial Review of Investment Treaty Awards: *BG Group v. Argentina* (Anthea Roberts and Christina Trahanas)

750

U.S. Supreme Court decision on the standard of review for determining whether an arbitral tribunal has exceeded its powers under investment treaty law

<i>Questions Relating to the Seizure and Detention of Certain Documents and Data (Timor-Leste v. Australia)</i> (Ronald J. Bettauer)	763
International Court of Justice order of provisional measures on interference with communications between a state and its legal advisers	
<i>The M/V "Virginia G" (Panama/Guinea-Bissau)</i> (Bernard H. Oxman and Vincent P. Cogliati-Bantz)	769
International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea judgment on coastal state regulation and confiscation of vessels for fisheries violations in the exclusive economic zone	
<i>FG Hemisphere Associates v. Democratic Republic of the Congo</i> (Shen Wei)	776
Court of Final Appeal of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region judgment on sovereign immunity in Hong Kong since its reversion to China	
Contemporary Practice of the United States Relating to International Law	
<i>Edited by Kristina Daugirdas and Julian Davis Mortenson</i>	
United States Condemns Russia's Use of Force in Ukraine and Attempted Annexation of Crimea	784
In Wake of Espionage Revelations, United States Declines to Reach Comprehensive Intelligence Agreement with Germany	815
United States Defends United Nations' Immunity in Haitian Cholera Case	819
French Bank Pleads Guilty to Criminal Violations of U.S. Sanctions Laws	826
D.C. Circuit Strikes down Administrative Order Requiring Divestment by Foreign-Owned Corporation	831
United States Adopts New Land Mine Policy	835
United States Claims That Russia Has Violated the INF Treaty	837
Recent Books on International Law	
<i>Edited by Richard B. Bilder</i>	
Review Essay	
Hard Facts: Implications of Policy Diffusion for International Law	
Linos, Katerina. <i>The Democratic Foundations of Policy Diffusion: How Health, Family and Employment Laws Spread Across Countries</i> (Karen Knop)	843
Book Reviews	
Xue Hanqin. <i>Chinese Contemporary Perspectives on International Law: History, Culture and International Law</i> (Jacques deLisle)	850
Weiler, Todd. <i>The Interpretation of International Investment Law: Equality, Discrimination and Minimum Standards of Treatment in Historical Context</i> (Stephen M. Schwebel)	856
Hollis, Duncan B. (ed.). <i>The Oxford Guide to Treaties</i> (Jean Galbraith)	859
Guilfoyle, Douglas (ed.). <i>Modern Piracy: Legal Challenges and Responses</i> (Donald L. Brown)	862
Books Received	865
International Legal Materials, Contents, Vol. LIII, Nos. 4, 5	871
Table of Cases	873
Index	876

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