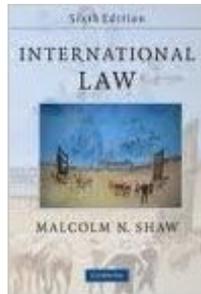


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International Law 6th (sixth) Edition



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The complexity of international law does not arise solely from the content of its statutes but also from the legitimacy of its enforcement. The laws of cities, states, and nations are typically accompanied by a monopoly on how to enforce these laws. Their citizens have agreed to conform to these laws and their legitimacy as cities, states, and nations arises from this agreement. If citizens choose to violate these laws they are punished accordingly. But what entity oversees the punishment when laws between nations are violated? Such laws come under the umbrella of international law, the subject of this book, and their enforcement is only possible if the nations agree to this enforcement. The question of enforcement usually arises in the context of the legitimacy of the use of force or acts of war between nations, and is dealt with in some detail in this book. But there are many other aspects of international law that are discussed, and some readers may want to deal with the sheer size of the book by selecting those areas they are most interested in. A study of international law has become essential in today's world, due in part to the many wars that have broken out, some of them definitely bearing the mark of aggression and "war crimes", but also because of trade and patent disputes, along with the availability of complex financial products that need to operate across borders. The book is heavily referenced, satisfying those skeptical readers who need to delve into even more of the details. The author presents international law as a 'separate system' of law, as one that is not merely an adjunct to the laws of two or more countries. There is no legislature, no system of courts, and no institution to establish legal rules.

I. In my Junior year at University, I was required to purchase this book for a 300 level International Law class (which was considered introductory). My entire class dreaded this book, as did every student I spoke with who had taken this class prior to me. The form is absolutely awful, its drier than the Sahara, and sloppy at that. The fact that this is considered an introductory book to International Law frightens me. II. Shaw's writing style seems to be contradictory with what every Writing 101

teacher would instruct you to do, "When possible, use simple words, and try to keep sentences short and concise". Shaw does not only abuse semicolons, he militantly does so. He often uses legal terminology as if it were common sense without explanation, and his use of obscure words to explain otherwise common ideas is aggravating. Example: (This is a "full sentence" taken directly out of the book, what it means is still quite a mystery to me, but the book is rife with this type of language.) "The traditional exposition of the criterion concentrated upon the stability and effectiveness needed for this factor to be satisfied, while the representative and democratic nature of the government has also been put forward as a requirement." The statement in the Preface of the book actually made me laugh... "The hallmark writing style provides a stimulating account, motivating students to explore the subject more fully, while maintaining detail and academic rigour." (What a great excuse for not paying attention to your audience.) III. I am wholeheartedly convinced that this entire book could be reduced a quarter of its weight if Shaw were to revise his sentence structure and cut out the bloat.

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