



Reviews of *Transitional Justice and a State's Response to Mass Atrocity*

Transitional Justice and a State's Response to Mass Atrocity by Jacopo Roberti di Sarsina is an important addition to the burgeoning literature on transitional justice. The book's application is however much wider than transitional justice. It deals extensively with international criminal law and its intersection with a variety of other fields. The book has at its centre an assessment of the obligations imposed upon States to investigate or prosecute international atrocity crimes. The timeliness of the book is critical as such issues, while part of the debates about peace versus justice, and others, are far from settled. This book usefully examines some of the legal issues involved, carefully giving important insights into the ways such matters ought to be understood.

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In *Transitional Justice and a State's Response to Mass Atrocity*, Jacopo Roberti di Sarsina makes a valuable contribution to the transitional justice literature by examining state obligations to investigate and prosecute serious violations of international law when those states are undergoing transition. Calling for a flexible approach to the interpretation of international law, while remaining true to its rationale, the book emphasizes the importance of context and contingency. While calling attention to the political and capacity constraints faced by transitional states in addressing the legacies of mass violations, it also provides guidance on the tools available to states making genuine efforts to reach sustainable peace and reconciliation. Drawing on the case of Colombia in particular, the book helps us to locate the balance between universalism and particularism in pursuit of justice for extraordinary crimes.

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Transitional Justice and a State's Response to Mass Atrocity makes a significant contribution to the ongoing debate over how to restore the rule of law in post-conflict scenarios. One distinctive feature is the book's rigorous multiple analysis of various branches of law (PIL, IHL, IHRL and ICL). In examining the states' procedural obligations to investigate and prosecute, Jacopo Roberti di Sarsina focuses on the complex process of interpreting treaty and customary international law and what ensues from it in terms of accountability for atrocity crimes and the international responsibility of the state. Given the issues of international law raised more recently in Syria and Venezuela, as well as the still open question of amnesty in international law, this monograph not only makes a most timely appearance, but provides the tools for a better understanding of that thorny dilemma facing post-conflict countries: peace versus justice.

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