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The President on Trial: Prosecuting Hissene Habré. Edited by Sharon Weil, Kim Thuy Seelinger, and Kerstin Bree Carlson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020. 464 pp. \$125.00 hardcover

Reviewed by Alexa Koenig, School of Law, University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA

The President on Trial is a “case study” in both senses of the term: a deep analysis of a decades-long attempt to get legal justice for a series of horrific crimes, and the detailed study of an actual *case*.

In this unique book, the editors and their close to fifty contributors carefully—and in some instances, almost reverently—trace the contours of an unlikely but powerful development in the history of international criminal law: the thirty-year effort to bring former Chadian head of state Hissene Habré to account for international crimes, and the creation of a novel court in Senegal for that purpose.

As the international legal community struggles to efficiently and effectively achieve the multiple goals of criminal justice—including deterrence of atrocities, reparations for victims, accountability for perpetrators, and correction of an historical record too often perverted by politics—this book is both timely and important, illustrating not only the strengths but the weaknesses of legal processes in meeting social aims.

The editors’ acknowledgment of those weaknesses is a core strength of this book. While they applaud the creation of the Extraordinary African Chambers in Senegal and Habré’s successful prosecution (as they should), the taste that is left with the reader by the end is bittersweet. And that is to the editors’ credit. Instead of packing the volume with celebratory and self-referential praise from the survivors, nonprofit organizations, and prosecutors who worked so hard to see Habré held to account, the editors thoughtfully and smartly ensured that the book includes a rich diversity of voices and perspectives, which lends a depth and a legitimacy that the book would have otherwise lacked. While the prosecution’s critics *are* in the minority, some of the most interesting chapters are those that reflect the

experiences and reflections of Habré's defense team, and even Habré himself.

The book's opening section—"The Trial as Told By its Actors"—is the most raw, and in that rawness, the most powerful. We meet four people who emerge as the trial's protagonists. The first is Souleymane Guengueng, representative of Habré's Chadian victims, who began filing complaints against the former president as early as 2000 and ultimately participated in the trial as both a civil party and as a witness due to his imprisonment and torture during Habré's regime. The second is Reed Brody, who drove Human Rights Watch's efforts to back the survivors and played a key role in leading the case along a winding path from Senegal to Belgium and back, helping ensure that Habré would eventually be recognized as "the Pinochet of Africa." The third is Jaqueline Moudeina, president of the Chadian Association for the Promotion of Human Rights. Orphaned at a young age, Ms. Moudeina's early experiences appear to fuel her fierce determination in coordinating the legal team that represented close to 4,000 of Habré's victims. And last but certainly not least, there is Khadidja Hassan Zidane, who powerfully took to the stand to declare to the world that she had personally been raped four times by the President himself—triggering brutal retaliation from Habré's supporters but sparking a chain reaction that would result in the judges' acknowledging of the sexual violence that so many had suffered, but which had been omitted from the original charges. It is Ms. Zidane's story that generates the most outrage—while her courage ensured that the case would become a milestone in the jurisprudence of sexual and gender-based crimes, Habré would eventually be acquitted of Ms. Zidane's rapes on procedural grounds on appeal. The reader is left struggling with the due process rationale behind that acquittal, and grappling with what it means to realize legal justice for a victim, for a defendant, and for a broader public.

Part I also includes contributions from those who led the drafting of an amicus brief that helped the court to consider sexual violence charges, as well as reporters, donors, and academics who hovered on the trial's periphery. Composed of twenty-six chapters, the first section could have easily been a book in itself.

Part II pivots from the descriptive to the theoretical. The contributors reflect on the significance of the case, positioning the history and relationship of African courts and African justice to the broader, global enterprise of international criminal law and human rights practice.

Laudable throughout is the editors' broader-than-usual definition of who should be considered an "expert" on the case. Their criteria appear to range from proximity to the underlying crimes, to experience as engaged practitioners, to the academic pedigrees

more usually found in an edited volume. Their careful tethering of the book to the pragmatic realities of building not only a case but a court and the atrocities that gave rise to both are also evident in their insistence on publishing not only in English but in French, the common language of Senegal and Chad and thus those closest to the underlying events.

The Trial of the President should be required reading for any sociolegal scholar. Not just because of its theoretical value, which is impressive, but because of its powerful reflection of a variety of human experiences as the personal and professional lives of the contributors collide with the hard life of the law.

While the book celebrates the triumph of survivors over a powerful and ruthless dictator, it is not simply a victor's tale. Instead, it is a cautiously optimistic retelling of thirty years of struggle and a testament to the determination of each person who participated in the building of an historic case. One is left feeling that each of the participants was necessary to the trial's success and that each deserves applause. But the book also marks a milestone in the evolution of international law, especially the use of national courts and universal jurisdiction as tools to hold former heads of state to account and to bring trials for international crimes closer to the sites of atrocity. Finally, it compellingly illuminates how the fierce determination of an incredibly diverse set of individuals can collectively add up to an imperfect justice—but justice, nonetheless.

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Red Gold: The Managed Extinction of the Giant Bluefin Tuna by Jennifer F. Telesca. University of Minnesota Press, 2020. 311 pp., \$24.95, paperback

Reviewed by David Takacs, University of California Hastings College of the Law, San Francisco, CA, USA

The Giant Bluefin Tuna can swim fifty miles/hour to complete the longest migration—from the Eastern Atlantic to the Mediterranean—of any fish on the planet. It is, to quote David Attenborough, a “superfish” (xiii). Or, to quote the author, “How stunning she is.... She is the ocean” (xv). She (the author ascribes that personal pronoun to the fish, and thus I will, too) is also warm blooded, which results in red, prized, fatty flesh, rendering it prey “for global elites: a delectable consumed by the leisure