

on many occasions today to show Japan's longstanding engagement with international justice.

Quoting the British jurist, Sir Edmund Hornby, Colombo states that "Japan had an opportunity of asserting herself as a new member of the Comity of the Nations due to Maria Luz incident" (p. 303).<sup>1</sup> In Chapter 3, Colombo unveils criminal procedure ambiguities confronted by Japan as Japan attempted to legitimize her position as a state with a proper legal order. Notably, Japan was the first Asian nation to adopt an international dispute resolution system, with the first matter being mutually agreed by both Japan and Peru to be arbitrated by the Czar of Russia in St Petersburg. Although María Luz remains the cardinal point of this book, it astutely signifies the admittance of Japan to the system of international law and the work deserves to be praised for its originality based on archival materials. However, it could have been a much more critical piece if the author had questioned how dubiously Japan used unequal treaties, a method they learnt from the West to oppress China on the question of Manchuria during that same period.

**Competing interests.** The author declares none.

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## Half Way Through: Feminist Approach to International Law Revisited After 20 Years

by Hilary CHARLESWORTH and Christine CHINKIN.

Melland Schill Classics in International Law Series.

Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000. xlix + 416 pp.

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This book by Hilary Charlesworth (who is currently a judge at the International Court of Justice) and Christine Chinkin, is a second edition published in 2022, following its first edition published in 2000. The highlight of the second edition is its new introduction. The rest of the book remains largely unchanged, with still relevant critical examinations of both theoretical and practical perspectives of international law. As the authors state in the new introduction, "Boundaries' may be showing its age, but many of its concerns remain current."

The new introduction begins with a reflection on the essence of "feminist analysis," explaining that the term feminism regards gender as a logic based on "binary oppositions and the establishment and the hierarchies between them" (p. xxiv). Feminist analysis,

<sup>1</sup> Edmund Grimani HORNBY, *Sir Edmund Hornby: An Autobiography* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1928) at 303.

following this logic, is the intellectual method of challenging the apparently gender-neutral principles. Following that, the book observes the way the international legal world reacts to this “exotic anomaly”. After reviewing the long history of feminist activism in international law, the journey of the term “gender” is outlined, which shows similar controversies and chaos. The last part of the new introduction turns to the agenda “Women, Peace and Security” (WPS), with which Chinkin is deeply engaged. She reminds the readers that the WPS agenda simplified feminist ideas. Further, the agenda reduces the meaning of “gender” to “women,” assumes women to be “good with peace” without exploring women’s agency, and focuses on sexual violence but fails to investigate the inequalities at the heart of the violence.

In the main content of the book, the authors borrow feminist theoretical “weapons” and place the international legal regime under a microscope, including the very basics of international law such as treaties, the idea of the state, dispute settlements, and topics such as human rights and the use of force, from which emerges an unfamiliar and gendered international landscape, with a seemingly deliberate intention to cause discomfort in its analysis of the law of treaties or the idea of the state.

As impressed as I am by this groundbreaking contribution, idealists may find it frustrating that the feminist approach to international law has been shrinking into a narrower, simpler sense. Also, general global development following the book’s initial publication has shown a very selective character, with significant attention being paid to human rights law, humanitarian law, and international criminal law, but with limited impact on any change in the world’s patriarchal structure.

The “age” of the book further compels the learning of newly emerged feminist theories as necessary. Currently, the critique of feminist approaches is more diversified and includes, for example, queer feminism or anti-imperialist feminism, covering more agendas and challenging the international legal structure in a more radical though, perhaps, marginalized way.<sup>1</sup> This challenge will continually refresh and update itself as with feminism’s inherently vibrant logic.

**Competing interests.** None.

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## **Rwanda Revisited: Genocide, Civil War, and the Transformation of International Law**

**edited by Phillip DREW, Bruce OSWALD, Robert McLAUGHLIN, and Jeremy FARRALL. Leiden; Boston: Brill Nijhoff, 2021. xvi + 327 pp. Hardcover: €89.00; eBook (pdf): €89.00; MyBook: €25.00. doi: 10.1163/9789004430129**

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<sup>1</sup> Karen ENGLE, Vasuki NESIAH, and Dianne OTTO: “Feminist Approaches to International Law”, in Jeffrey L. DUNOFF and Mark A. POLLACK, eds., *International Legal Theory: Foundations and Frontiers* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), 194–95.