

FOREWORD

A work making it into its fifth edition has no need of a foreword. And the writer of these lines could have left it at that. Once a degree of distinction has been attained, the merits of a book speak for themselves and are thus both self-evident and self-explanatory. Such is indeed the case of Shabtai Rosenne's by now classic in the literature of international law: *The World Court: What it is and how it works*.

But responding to the author's invitation to preface this fine work affords the President of the International Court of Justice a seasonable opportunity to settle a debt of recognition to Shabtai Rosenne. For no practitioner of international jurisdiction may shrink from the obligation of paying this author a tribute of gratitude. Service of the Court springs inexorably from familiarity with his writings, a necessity that none escapes! And this applies no less to the writer of these lines.

True, there is no shortage of good works on the International Court of Justice, as on its forerunner the Permanent Court of International Justice, whether their authors be named de Bustamante, Fachiri, Fitzmaurice, Gross, Guyomar, Hudson, Jenks, Lauterpacht, Politis, Salvioli, Shihata, von Stauffenberg, McWhinney, Dubisson or Witenberg. In the face of this host of prestigious legal writers, cited here simply as examples, in both senses of the word, Shabtai Rosenne occupies a quite distinct place. For he is, on the Court, the quintessential author, the reference and the standard of value, the jetty to which all studies on the Court are secured. The bulk of Shabtai Rosenne's academic work is indeed devoted, "*dedicated*", to the International Court of Justice. Rosenne observes the Court with both the long view of the astronaut and the microscope of the entomologist. He examines every facet of the principal judicial organ of the international community, from different distances and a variety of standpoints. He describes in detail all the characteristics of this singular entity in the international system. He also examines the relations maintained by the Court with the other components of this universe, States, great and small, and international organizations.

This latest edition brings back to us with the same interest, renewed by the perusal of fresh developments, the essential qualities of this work, which are clarity, comprehension and modernity.

This latest edition, like those before it, is suited to every category of reader. *The World Court. What it is and how it works* can be read by all. Every reader, whatever his or her intellectual or professional focus, whether

as historian or diplomat, student or academic, journalist or politician, will find an interest in the pages of this work. Rosenne surveys every nook and cranny of the Court. Nothing is left in the shade, whether its history, its organisation, its jurisdiction, its members, its finances or its case law, and much else. What makes the author's developments so fascinating is that they are ever attuned to the day, At all times the author rides the crest of unfolding events, with the result that current affairs come clad in their newest attire.

Like any jurist, Shabtai Rosenne is a being of flesh and blood. His work is, to be sure, marked by a spirit of research and objectivity. But Rosenne may also take sides on occasion, which can sometimes be held against him. When he does so, however, it is always in what he deems to be the cause of Justice. And Justitia is too enticing a goddess not to arouse some naturally partisan passions.

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