

INTRODUCTION

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This issue of the *Israel Law Review* opens with two articles based on presentations given at the conference on ‘Indirect Victims of Conflict: IHL Protections of the Rights and Interests of Relatives’, held by the Hebrew University’s Minerva Center for Human Rights in Jerusalem on 9 to 11 November 2020. Nasia Hadjigeorgiou’s ‘Truth and Closure in Cyprus: An Assessment of the Committee on Missing Persons’ addresses limitations of the literature that explores the relationship between truth and closure in post-violence societies. One limitation is that this relationship has been assessed mostly as part of a larger debate on the links between the truth and the seemingly related concept of reconciliation. The other limitation is that existing literature on the connection between truth and closure has focused almost exclusively on the operations and effects of courts and truth commissions. Hadjigeorgiou examines the relationship between truth and closure through the prism of a different institution, the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus. Relying on interviews with key stakeholders, including relatives of missing persons on the island, she argues that the Committee’s delivery of the truth has promoted closure in three distinct ways. At the same time, the way in which truth is delivered and the type of truth that is being delivered can have detrimental consequences in terms of the promotion of closure.

Grażyna Baranowska, in ‘The Rights of the Families of Missing Persons: Going Beyond International Humanitarian Law’, considers how states implement international humanitarian law with regard to the families of missing persons. Her article indicates relevant shortcomings in the law and compares them with rules applicable in cases of enforced disappearance. She then examines three core questions with regard to domestic legislation: (i) who is considered a missing person under domestic law; (ii) how the legal status of the missing person is regulated; and (iii) whether family members are provided with measures of reparation or assistance.

In line with the *Israel Law Review*’s long tradition, and after a COVID-19-imposed hiatus, we are pleased to feature in this issue the 2021 Lionel Cohen lecture by Lord Andrew Burrows, Justice of the UK Supreme Court. The lecture was delivered in the Faculty of Law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem on 25 October 2021 and explores the relationship between judges and legal academics.

This issue also carries reviews of two books. Sufyan Droubi’s review essay, ‘An Interdisciplinary Dialogue with the Business and Human Rights Literature’, draws on scholarship concerning international law, inequality and energy justice, in order to engage with Gwynne Skinner’s *Transnational Corporations and Human Rights: Overcoming Barriers to Judicial Remedy* (Cambridge University Press 2020) and in order to examine the literature with regard to business and human rights, particularly from the perspective of the global south and Latin America. Droubi argues that a more robust interdisciplinary approach shows the weakness of international

human rights law as the sole basis for action. Droubi also reflects on part of the narrative that supports Skinner's argument, which builds a negative image of the courts in developing countries and argues that expansion of the bases of jurisdiction should be implemented.

A final contribution to this issue is Milena Sterio's review of Timothy William Waters' *Boxing Pandora: Rethinking Borders, States and Secession in a Democratic World* (Yale University Press 2020). The review focuses on some of the most innovative and provocative features of Waters' proposal for a new right of secession. It considers the new definition of 'people' as a 'self-defined, self-constituted community forming a majority in some part of an existing state', the reliance on plebiscites as a mechanism for expressing a local group's democratic preference to secede from its existing parent state, and the argument for secession as a right rather than merely a remedy.

Finally, it is our pleasure to conclude this introduction with the announcement that the 2020 *Israel Law Review* Prize has been awarded to Tomer Levinger for his article 'Denying the Right of Return as a Crime Against Humanity', published in issue 54(2). Congratulations, Tomer!

We wish you all an interesting read and good health.

Professor Malcolm N Shaw QC

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