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Nussbaum: A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE LAW OF NATIONS

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A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE LAW OF NATIONS. By *Arthur Nussbaum*. New York: Macmillan. 1947. Pp. ix, 361. \$4.50.

Arthur Nussbaum is Visiting Research Professor of Public Law at Columbia University. Prior to coming to this country in 1934 he was Professor of Law at the University of Berlin, 1918-1933, and Lecturer at the Academy of International Law at the Hague, 1933. In this book he has undertaken the task of tracing the development of international law from its earliest known manifestation, a Mesopotamian treaty concluded about 3100 B.C., down to the period immediately preceding World War II. The book deals not only with the concepts and ideas developed during these five thousand years, but also chronicles the events through which these concepts have been manifested, such as the treaties, conventions, and agreements which evidence the law of nations. However, political history in general has been consciously excluded since it relates to, and affects, but is not a part of, international law. Professor Nussbaum's analysis is essen-

tially optimistic. He views the history of international law as primarily the story of growth toward a legal society and in this regard his concluding words are of particular interest. "German and Japanese ideologies . . . have been eliminated. The political picture of the earth has been greatly simplified. By and large, only two grand political systems remain. While the amount of dangerous friction has been lessened, the psychological and material barriers against large-scale armed conflicts have been immensely strengthened. There may be new complications through splitting processes and otherwise, but *in the light of history, the advent of 'two worlds' should be viewed, so it seems, as a progressive development.*"¹ The book is well written and is admirably suited to the general reader anxious to obtain perspective in the field of international law.

J. R. Swenson, S.Ed.

¹ (Italics supplied.)