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The five-volume *Historical Origins of International Criminal Law* is the most comprehensive overview of the roots of international criminal law undertaken to date. Morten Bergsmo, the project’s architect and coordinator, is rightly congratulated in the preface by the chief prosecutor of Norway for his ‘systemic intellectual approach’. Volume 5, the focus of this review, concerns itself with the birth of the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. Bergsmo led the process of establishing the OTP and Volume 5 sets out the methodical approach which he, Klaus Rackwitz and their team took during the critical institution-building phase of 2002–04. With forty-eight chapters of previously unpublished materials, the volume constitutes something of a history of the founding of the Office. Of particular interest is Chapter 1, in which Bergsmo recounts the incisive consultation processes which he conducted in concert with the leading criminal-justice authorities of that time. Most valuably, the author places the exercise in the context of present-day
challenges facing international organisations, making in the process a compelling argument for a sociology of international justice designed to facilitate the development of internal cultures of quality control and professional accountability. Amongst other considerations, Bergsmo points to the highest standards of integrity required of those in leadership positions – standards which were manifestly not evidenced by the first ICC Chief Prosecutor, during his tenure or since. Given the tsunami of allegations of professional and moral failings on the part of Luis Moreno Ocampo, Bergsmo’s opening chapter makes for a particularly timely as well as important read.

Independent – International – Interdisciplinary

The Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) conducts research on the conditions for peaceful relations between states, groups and people.